2017

Alibaba Style Guide

ENGLISH US

Introduction

Hello and welcome to your Language Style Guide. The Alibaba Style Guide is intended to provide everybody involved in the localization of EN-US Alibaba products with professional, consistent, and clear standards that are specific to Alibaba's needs. The guide will help ensure the EN-US version maintains consistency, accuracy, fluency, and usability.

The SG in the Quality Ecosystem

The Style Guide is part of a "Quality Ecosystem" which includes other important references that translators and reviewers should be aware of when translating and reviewing content for Alibaba. These additional references include:

- Product-specific information and trainings
  When kicking-off new products, Alibaba will provide trainings and learning materials for translators to better understand the products and language expectations. All the training recordings and materials will be archived in one place for future reference.
- Glossaries
  Our glossaries are stored in LARK and will be provided to translators along with projects when applicable. When using the glossaries, remember not to limit yourself only to the glossary for the product line of the project you are currently working on. Feel free to search online and make your best judgment based on context in each case.
- LQE tool and error categories
  The LQE Tool is not just an error logging tool: its main purpose is to provide continuous feedback to translators and create a transparent communication channel. Reviewers mark each error with an error category associated with a specific error type. Translators and reviewers can then engage in a discussion that may result in an arbitration of the issue.

Our principles

Golden rules

1. Focus on the user and all else will follow.
2. Familiarize yourself with the document type and target audience.
3. Make sure localized content is grammatically and syntactically correct.
4. Ensure terms are translated consistently across all content.

5. Translate the overall meaning of the text, not just the words.

6. Make good use of all resources and reference materials.

Style and tone

General rules

- Never use a heavy, staid, or arrogant tone; translations should be clear, concise and flowing.

- Avoid awkward, unprofessional or offensive wording.

- Never translate literally or word-for-word. You won't be penalized for improving on the source content.

- When deciding on the right tone to use, it is crucial to look at the different products you are working on, the type of audience you're aiming for, and the original text used (the three are often compatible).

Terminology

General rules

As words and phrases occur repeatedly in localization, consistency in translation is very important.

1. For general technical terms not listed in the glossary, use the officially defined standard term whenever available.

2. If no standard terms have been officially defined, use the Microsoft glossaries as they are the de facto industry standard for computer terminology in many languages.

3. If no appropriate translation for a term can be found through either the official channel or Microsoft term base, consult sources such as dictionaries, published software, books, journals, and technical documents. Once you have consulted a range of sources, adopt the most widely-used expression.

4. Using search engines is often a good way to locate various translation options and identify which translation option is most used or most popular in the industry.

5. Only when all the above steps have failed is the translator justified in selecting his/her own terminology.

While it is important to adhere to the glossary, it should be emphasized that context is the deciding factor. Often a word may take on a different meaning in a certain context not listed in the glossary.

Not all Chinese words or phrases have matching English translations. In some situations, semantically equivalent translations rather than word-for-word translations

are allowed or even encouraged. The goal for translators is to convey the essential meaning of the source content in natural target language.

Product related guidelines

Depending on the Alibaba product lines you are working on, the level of formality required will vary. Different products have different target audiences. Therefore, always take target audience into consideration when choosing formality and tone while translating.

PRODUCT	FORMALITY LEVEL	AUDIENCE
Ding Talk	Medium	Consumers
YunOS	Medium	Consumers
LAZADA	Medium	Consumers
AliExpress Seller Center	Medium	Partners
AliExpress Top Seller	Medium	Consumers
AliPay	Medium	Consumers
Youku	Low	Consumers
Alibaba Group IPP	High	Legal owners
Alibaba.com	Medium	Partners
eWTP	Medium	Partners

Humor & cultural references

Humor

There is frequent use of humor (or social jargon) in Alibaba products and marketing materials. While the translation must attempt to capture the humor of a certain phrase or sentence, it should not do so at the cost of clarity.

Forms of politeness

The appropriateness of polite words and expressions such as "please," "thank you," and "congratulations," varies according to the situation and the product. Be careful not to overuse these phrases. The use of the word "please" differs between Chinese and English, although it is used to make requests in both languages. It is appropriate to translate "请" into English in the context of a request, as in the following example.

SOURCE	✓ CORRECT EXAMPLE
请您耐心等待，不要关闭此页面	Please wait patiently, and keep this page open.

In Chinese, though, the word "请" may be used to establish an imperative tone, and is frequently used in Chinese language instructions. "Please" is not commonly used in English language instructions, and so "请" should not be translated as "please" in this context. The following example shows the kind of context in which "请" should not be translated as "please."

SOURCE	X INCORRECT EXAMPLE	✓ CORRECT EXAMPLE
请点击【滴滴出行】，输入目的地，点击【呼叫出租车】	Please select **Didi Taxi**, enter your destination, and touch **Call a cab**.	Select **Didi Taxi**, enter your destination, and touch **Call a cab**.

Cultural references

Translating idioms and metaphors

Many common Chinese idioms may be specific to Chinese culture, and their meaning may not be immediately evident to non-Chinese if translated directly. This is particularly true of idioms based on stories that are unfamiliar to readers outside of China.

Use the following guide lines to determine how an idiom or metaphor should be translated:

Is there an English equivalent?

- If an English equivalent exists and is contextually appropriate, use the English equivalent idiom instead of translating the metaphor directly. Do this even if a direct translation of the Chinese idiom could be understood by the reader.

Is the meaning of the idiom immediately apparent?

- If there is no English equivalent or the English equivalent is not suited for the context, you may translate the idiom's meaning directly, if the meaning will be apparent to the reader.
- In the example below, "领头羊" is translated as "No.1" rather than as "bellwether" or "leader of the flock."

SOURCE	CORRECT EXAMPLE
作为跨境进口电商领头羊，天猫国际继续以 22.3%份额保持市场规模第一。	Tmall continues to be the No. 1 provider of cross-border e-commerce imports in the Chinese market, with a market share of 22.3%

If there is no English equivalent and the meaning of the idiom is not apparent to non-Chinese, then you may abandon the idiomatic form and simply portray the meaning of the idiom.

In English texts, avoid mixing metaphors or using partial idioms. All parts of a figurative phrase should be related to one another.

References to Chinese holidays and culturally specific matters

In some cases, a text may reference a culturally specific item that cannot be localized, such as a reference to holiday. These references may not be understood by non-Chinese readers and require a brief explanation to be added in the translated text.

SOURCE	INCORRECT EXAMPLE	CORRECT EXAMPLE
也包括她双 11 狂欢节的预付款。	It also included her advanced payment for the 11.11 Shopping Carnival.	It also included her advance payment for the 11.11 Shopping Carnival, a large sale held on the day known in China as "singles' day."

Culturally inappropriate topics and words

Sensitive words

Avoid use of any words which may be culturally sensitive, or which may be viewed as derogatory to specific groups, nationalities, ethnicities, religions or cultures.
Certain words may seem inappropriate or rude if translated directly. Such words should be translated using their culturally-sensitive form.

Pay attention to words that involve color and describe people. In some cases, target audience may misinterpret the translation as an indication of race.

SOURCE	INCORRECT EXAMPLE	CORRECT EXAMPLE
黑业者	Black trader	Unlicensed trader

Note: Certain terms such as "black market" and "black cab" are acceptable, as they do not describe people. Terms which include both color and occupation should be used very carefully.

Weight is also a potentially sensitive topic. If a word such as "胖" is directly translated into English, it can be extremely offensive, as the following incorrect example shows. As the following example shows, it is essential to find a translation which is positive and non-offensive.

SOURCE	INCORRECT EXAMPLE	CORRECT EXAMPLE
胖妹妹衣装	Fat girl's clothing	Curve-sized ladies' clothing

Sensitive topics

If referring to any of the following topics or issues, make sure you do so in a way which is respectful to all groups and could not be offensive to any group. Take particular care regarding the following issues:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Sex and sexual orientation
- Religion
- Politics
- Culture
- Weight and body image
- Gender
- Age

As values and taboo subjects vary with cultures, potentially sensitive topics are not limited to those listed above.

Content type specifics

UI language

This section aims to lay out consistent guidelines for language used within a user interface. The language rules laid out within this section are specific for UI language, and cannot be applied to other areas of Alibaba content.

Location

When describing the location of items within a user interface, whether for a mobile device, laptop, or desktop computer, use the following language:

- Use "in the upper left/upper right/lower left/lower right" to describe an item in the corner of the screen.
- Use "on the left side/right side." Do not use "Left hand side" or "right hand side."
- Use "center of the screen" rather than "middle of the screen."
- Use "top of the screen/bottom of the screen" rather than "lower/upper part of the screen."

Describing actions for mobile and computer UI interfaces

The specific language you use to describe actions will depend on whether you are describing actions on a mobile device, or on a laptop or computer.

Use the following language to describe actions taken within a computer/laptop UI:

- Use "click." Do not use "click on."
- Use "click and hold" to describe holding the mouse button for an extended period.
- Use "drag" to describe holding the mouse button on an item and moving it across the interface.
- Use "double-click/triple-click" to describe pressing the mouse button two or three times in succession. Do not use "click twice/three times."
- Use "select" and "deselect" to describe clicking a checkbox to change its status.
- Use "enable" and "disable" to describe clicking a switch to change its status.

Describing actions for a mobile or touchscreen UI:

- Use "touch" to describe touching the screen to select buttons, icons, or other elements within a mobile UI screen. Use "tap" to describe touching the screen very quickly, as in "double tap." Do not use "press."
- Use "touch and hold" to describe holding a finger on the screen for an extended period.
- Use "double tap" to describe pressing the screen twice in succession.
- Use "toggle on" and "toggle off" to describe pressing a switch to change its status.
- Use "swipe" to describe moving a finger from one side of the screen to the other.
- Use "pinch two fingers" to describe moving two fingers together on the screen.
- Use "spread two fingers" to describe moving two fingers apart on the screen.

Series of actions

For a series of actions taken within a UI, use the greater-than sign (>). Do not use hyphens. Use bold to mark language which the user will see on the interface. Add one space before and after each greater-than sign (>).

SOURCE	INCORRECT EXAMPLE	CORRECT EXAMPLE
首页 > 支付宝 > 扫一扫	Home-AliPay-Scan	**Home** > **AliPay > Scan**

Terminology

When referring to elements of the user interface, use the following terminology and corresponding language:

ELEMENT TERM	DEFINITION	CORRESPONDING LANGUAGE
Checkbox	A box in a list that allows the user to select one or	*Select* the checkbox.

	more of the options. Also use this term to describe radio buttons, which only allow the user to select one item at a time.	
Dropdown list	A list of items that drops down, allowing the user to select one item at a time.	*Select X from* the dropdown list
List box	A box that allows the user to select multiple list items at a time.	*Select X from* the list box.
Field (NOT box)	An area that allows the user to input text.	*Enter* the information *into* the X field.
Slider	A bar that allows the user to slide left or right/up or down to adjust values.	*Drag* the slider *to* X.
Icon	A simplified image, likely hyperlinked, to allow the user to navigate the interface.	*Click/touch* the X icon. (Use "click" for computer UIs and "touch" for mobile touch screen UIs)
Button	An item that indicates an action when pressed, often labeled with text and/or icon.	*Click/touch* the X button.
Tag	A hyperlink that allows the user to find similar content.	
Message box	A small window that provides information and allows the user to take an action.	A message box then *appears*.
Pop-up	A small window that requires a user to interact with it before returning to the main interface (such as by signing in).	A pop-up then *appears*.
Progress bar	A bar that indicates how far the user has progressed	

	as they complete a series of steps.	
Navigation path	A series of links that allows the user to view their current location within a system.	
Notification bar	Bar at the top of a mobile UI that can be pulled down to view notifications.	
Notification card	A card shaped notification box.	
Switch	A switch which can be toggled on and off to enable a certain function, such as airplane mode.	Toggle on the switch to enable airplane mode.

Mobile UI

Language within a mobile UI has specific requirements and constrictions, such as an increased requirement for conciseness. For rules on language to use when describing actions within a mobile UI, see *UI language.*

Conciseness

To aid conciseness, use contractions where appropriate, and use the context of where the string will appear to omit any unnecessary information. For example, instead of "Confirm Payment" it may be possible to write "Confirm" if the user will know from context that what they are confirming is a payment.

The importance of conciseness varies with the string type. A button will usually have a very low character count as it needs to appear within a limited space on a UI. A pop-up notification will usually have a larger character limit.

String type and capitalization

Home screen items, and menu items, as in the example below, should be in title caps.
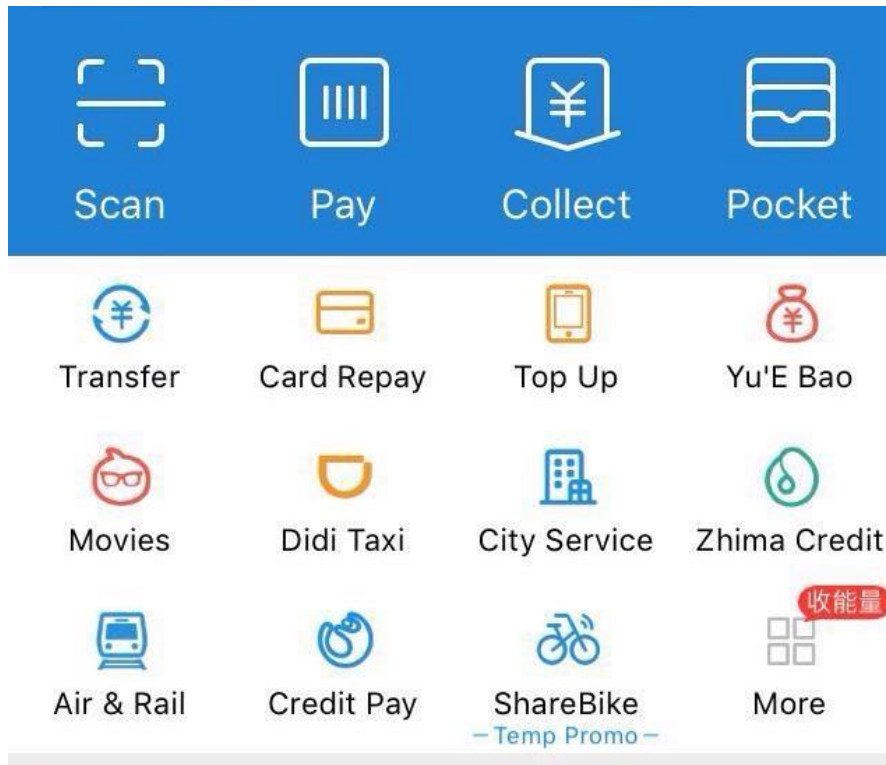
Short, one sentence notifications or messages, as in the screenshot below, should not be followed by a period. If a message or notification is two sentences or longer, use a period at the end of each sentence including the final sentence.
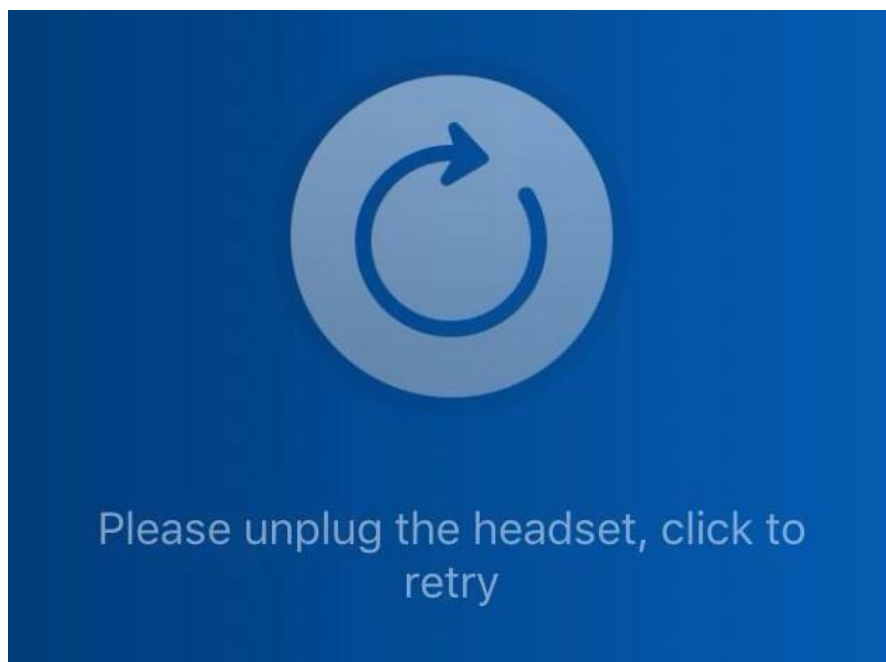
Video

Subtitles and captions

Captions and subtitles should take care to quote the speaker as accurately as possible. For brevity and speed of reading, it is acceptable to leave out:

- False starts, for example when the speaker says, "I think that, um…" but does not finish the sentence).
- Fillers (sounds such as "um" "err" and words which add no meaning). If sounds such as "uh-huh" add meaning, they should be kept.

If in doubt about whether to omit a word, ask yourself whether the word adds meaning. If the word adds meaning to what the speaker is saying, keep it.

Subtitling punctuation

- Use standard punctuation, including periods, for subtitles.
- There is no need to add ellipsis (…) between subtitles, as it can take up unnecessary space.
- Add a single space after commas, periods, colons, and semi-colons, when these punctuation forms appear in the middle of a subtitle.
- Punctuation such as exclamation marks should be used very sparingly, if at all, as the viewer will be able to pick up the intonation in the speech.

Help content

FAQs

FAQ titles should always be phrased as questions, as the following example shows.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
阿里巴巴集团的使命是什么？	Understanding Alibaba Group's mission	What is Alibaba Group's mission?

The text below the title should directly answer the question posed in the title, as the following example shows.

SOURCE	CORRECT TRANSLATION
阿里巴巴集团的使命是"让天下没有难做的生意"。我们的创始人是一群小企业的拥戴者，他们相信互联网能够创造公平的竞争环境，让小企业通过创新与科技扩展业务，并在参与国内或全球市场竞争时处于更有利的位置。	Our mission is "to make it easy to do business anywhere." Our founders started our company to champion small businesses, in the belief that the Internet would level the playing field by enabling small enterprises to leverage innovation and technology to grow and compete more effectively in the domestic and global economies.

Marketing

Formality

Alibaba marketing communications should use a style that is at once informal, clear, professional, and accessible. Avoid phrases that may appear outdated or overly formal. Marketing language can be conversational, but technical buzzwords, jargon or colloquialisms should be avoided. In the following example, "break through the barriers" is more colloquial than "set a new record" and is harder to understand.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
梵高-艺术衍生消费品众筹新纪录	Van Gogh – Break through the barriers for art merchandise crowdfunding success	Van Gogh - Set a new record in art merchandise crowdfunding

Contractions

Contractions such as "let's," "isn't," etc. can be used in marketing communications to establish a conversational tone. Though contractions can be used, they are not compulsory, and can be dropped when a more formal tone is required.

Second person voice

Write in the second person to establish a rapport with the user. Phrases like "Summer Looks You'll Love," can work better than phrases that do not involve the reader directly, such as "New Summer Clothing." That said, use "you," your" and "you'll" in moderation in marketing copy.

Product title

Consider where the product title will appear and include only the most relevant information.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
纯棉床单单件清新条纹粉色字母单人 1.0/1.2 双人 1.5/1.8 床被套枕套	Cotton sheets single piece fresh striped pink letters single 1.0/1.2 double 1.5/1.8 bed quilt pillowcase.	Cotton sheets and pillowcase set with striped pink letter design.

For brand names, the first letter of each word in the brand name should be capitalized. If the brand name has its own specific capitalization style, follow that style even within

titles or at the start of sentences. For example, write "Nike," "Under Armour," "iPhone." Even if a brand name such as iPhone appears at the start of a sentence or in a title, the first letter should not be capitalized, and the brand name specific capitalization style should be followed.

Product description

Write in clear, straightforward language. Introduce the main features and functions of the product. Use lists to break apart large amount of information and for product specifications. Use sentence case for headings as well as for normal text.

Key features

- Punctuation at the end of bullet points should be consistent within a list.
- Periods should only be used at the end of bullet points if all the items within the list are complete sentences.
- Translations should be concise, with key information presented first.
- Translated bullet points can be re-ordered, so that the most important information is presented to the user first.

Item specifications:

- Use sentence case for item specifications listed before and after a colon
- Add a space between the colon and the information that follows
- Add a space between numerals and any measurement unit, unless the measurement unit is a non-letter symbol

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
项目类型：石英手表	Item type:quartz wristwatches	Item Type: Quartz Wristwatches

Legal

Legal content should be translated into clear, unambiguous legal language. A mistake in legal writing can result huge losses, both financial and to a company's image and reputation.

All legal translations must be reviewed by the Alibaba legal team before being released for use. Though the legal review process is not the responsibility of translators, translators must ensure quality and accuracy before the product is passed to the legal team.

Accuracy, clarity, and succinctness are the watchwords of good legal writing. Legal writing emphasizes facts, and as such facts should be stated clearly and placed before other forms of information when possible.

Plain language should be used in legal writing to aid ease of understanding. Legal terminology such as "herein," "hereafter," "including, but by no means limited to" should also be used where appropriate. Legal and professional terms should be used to add clarity to legal statements and to ensure that such statements hold weight in court. They should not be used to the extent that they obscure the meaning or make it less clear to understand.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
YunOS 可根据实际情况随时中断一项或多项钱包内服务，中断时不需对任意第三人承担责任。	This contract hereby declares that YunOS holds the right to terminate one or more YunOS wallet services items at any point in time which it may deem appropriate. YunOS will thereby incur no liability to any third party due to interruptions to service.	YunOS has the right to interrupt one or multiple service items of YunOS Wallet at any time according to the actual situation, and will assume no liability to any third party for such service interruption.

To aid clear writing:
- Always write in the active voice. The active voice avoids confusion as it makes it clear who the actor is in a sentence. Use "Party A will deliver goods to Party B," not "Goods will be delivered by Party A to Party B."
- Use "must" to show binding obligation, "will" to predict future action, "must not" to indicate prohibition, "should" to indicate non-binding obligation, and "may" to indicate a party has discretion to perform a certain action, but is not obliged to do so.
- Use the present tense when describing existing regulations.
- Avoid gender-specific terminology such as "fireman", and use gender-neutral terms such as "fireperson" or "firefighter." Also avoid use of gender-specific pronouns such as "his" or "her." If you cannot avoid gender-specific terms or pronouns, use the term for both genders. For example, write "Mr./Mrs.," "his/her," and "waiter/waitress." The exception to this rule is when you are referring specifically to an individual of a specific gender.

Linguistics

Spelling

English translations should use American style spelling unless the material is for a specific non-American/Canadian audience such as a British audience.

Guidelines for American style spelling:

- Ensure your keyboard is set to US English, and carry out spellcheck before submitting your work.
- Use "-ize" instead of "-ise."
- Do not use the "ae" form of a word. Use "encyclopedia" not "encyclopaedia." Use "eon" not "aeon."
- Use "-or" instead of "-our." Use "color" not "colour." Use "neighbor" not "neighbor."
- Use "-er" endings instead of "-re" endings. Use "center" not "centre."

Grammar

This section covers some common grammatical issues that occur in CN-EN translation and provides guidelines for grammatical style. A full list of grammar rules is not included here. For any questions concerning grammar rules not covered in this section, consult the suggested reference material at the end of this style guide.

Sentence subject

The subject of a sentence should be included at the start of a sentence in English. This aids understanding and readability.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
在类目属性设置哪些品牌值要被授权了才能使用。	In the category attribute set which brand value needs to be authorized to use.	In the category attribute set which brand value needs to be authorized to use.

Prepositional phrases

Sentences are easier to understand if prepositional phrases are closer to the verbs they modify.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
在不同业务场景下，不同状态的商品允许卖家修改的字段有哪些，允许小二修改的字段有哪些	In different business scenarios, which field does the different status of products allow the seller and server to modify?	Which fields are the seller and the shopkeeper respectively allowed to modify for products of different statuses in different business scenarios?

Active Voice

When possible, use the active voice.

It is acceptable to use the passive voice in context when the active voice would appear awkward, and when describing an action performed by a computer or system.

Article usage

Improper nouns that refer to a specific entity require the "the" article, (unless another specifying article is used in its place, such as "these" or "those"), regardless of whether the noun is plural or singular.

Do not use "the" if the noun refers to an idea rather than an entity.

Singular nouns that refer to generalized entities require the article "a" or "an." Plural nouns do not require an article when referring to generalized entities.

In a list, it is not necessary to add an article for each noun. The article at the beginning of the list can serve as the article for all the items within the list.

Other guidelines

For clarity, use "that" to connect clauses, even if omitting it is technically correct.

Make sure that elements of a clause are grammatically parallel.

Avoid long noun phrases.

Avoid phrasal verbs if using only the verb provides the same meaning.

Common issues

In CN-EN translation, the Chinese adverb "及时" is often translated as "timely." While "timely" may appear to be an adverb, it is in fact an adjective, and therefore it is incorrect to use it in the same manner as "及时." Often, it is appropriate simply to omit this word in the translated text. When it essential to the meaning however, use an adverb such as "quickly" or a noun phrase such as "in a timely manner."

The Chinese word "放心" is often translated as "rest assured." However, when this translation is inappropriate, a more localized phrase that fits the context of the target language should be used.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
请放心购买	Please rest assured to shop	Please feel free to shop around.

Translators often use the "welcome to," followed by a verb. Note that this construction requires the addition of a pronoun at the *beginning* of the phrase. On the other hand, no pronoun should be used if followed by a noun.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
欢迎您联系我们	Welcome to contact us.	You are welcome to contact us.

On the other hand, no pronoun should be used if the phrase "welcome to" is followed by a noun.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
欢迎您来阿里巴巴	Welcome you to Alibaba.	Welcome to Alibaba.

Capitalization

Alibaba currently uses sentence capitalization for titles (not including product titles), subtitles, and normal content. The following is a guide to the differences between sentence and titles capitalization.

Sentence capitalization

When using sentence capitalization, capitalize the first letter of the sentence and any proper nouns.

Product category names are proper nouns, and should be capitalized as the following table shows:

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
17 个国家地区馆，覆盖母婴、美妆、保健、食品、服饰、家居、个护等 3700 多个品类。	17 regional pavilions covering more than 3,700 categories including mothers and babies, beauty, health, food, clothing, home and personal care.	17 regional pavilions, covering more than 3,700 categories, including Mothers & Infants, Beauty, Health, Food, Clothing, and Home& Personal Care.

Certain brand names may use stylized capitalization that capitalizes letters other than the first. Use the brand's stylized capitalization method, even in titles or at the start of a sentence. Even if a brand name such as iPhone appears at the start of a sentence or in a title, the first letter should not be capitalized, and the brand name specific capitalization style should be followed.

Title capitalization

When using title capitalization, capitalize the following:

- Nouns
- Verbs
- Adjectives
- Adverbs
- Subordinating conjunctions (as, because, that)
- The first word of the title

  Do not capitalize the following, unless at the first word of a title:

- Prepositions
- Articles (a, the, this, that, these, those)
- Coordinating conjunction (and, or, nor)
- For hyphenated words in titles, capitalize both words if they could both standalone by themselves. Otherwise, capitalize only the first word.

Colons and capitalization

In a product description, or any context in which a single item or category is introduced with a short phrase followed by a colon (eg. "Product type: Clothing"), capitalize the word after the colon.

In other contexts, capitalize the first letter after a colon only if the sentence part which follows the colon can stand independently as a complete sentence, as in the following example.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
1、花呗支付：指买家在线使用花呗服务进行付款，由支付宝完成代收代付的服务。	1.1 Ant Credit Pay: this refers to the service where buyers use the Ant Credit Pay service online to pay and entrust Alipay to complete collection and payment services.	1.1 Ant Credit Pay: This refers to the service where online buyers use the Ant Credit Pay service to make payments, and entrust Alipay to collect payments and access payment services.

If the sentence part which follows the colon cannot stand independently as a complete sentence, then the first sentence after the colon should not be capitalized.

Preferred forms

The following table shows preferred word forms for use in Alibaba documents:

X	✓
Thus	Therefore
Do	Perform
Way to release	Release method
Can not	Cannot

Formatting

Chinese formatting conventions are different from English formatting conventions. Ensure the target text follows English language formatting and spacing conventions. For example, in Chinese text there may be a space both before and after a colon, but in English there should only be a space after a colon and not before.

In the following example, there are two issues. The first is that there is a space added both before and after the colon. The second is that using a colon is not the standard way to write a version number in English:

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
Ver：1.0.2	Ver：1.0.2	Ver. 1.0.2

Syntax

When translating long Chinese sentences, try to separate one long Chinese sentence into two or more English sentences. This can significantly help readability.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
2、交易流量（交易款项）：指由支付宝/淘宝平台经营者软件系统所统计的您通过其选定服务类型使用支付服务所完成交易的金额（包括但不限于货款、运费等）。	1.2 Transaction Traffic (Transaction Payments): this refers to the amount of money from transactions you completed via payment services for selected service types, which is counted by Alipay/Taobao platform operator software systems (including but not limited to payments, fares, etc.).	1.2 Transaction Traffic (Transaction Payments): This refers to the amount of money from payment service transactions (including but not limited to payment for goods, transport fees, etc.) that you completed for the selected service type. This amount is determined by Alipay/Taobao platform operator software systems.

Punctuation

This section focuses on disputed punctuation rules to ensure consistent punctuation style throughout Alibaba's English translations, as different parts of the English-speaking world observe different punctuation standards. As a rule, the punctuation rules laid out in this section are based on American punctuation rules. Internationally agreed-upon punctuation rules are not covered in this style guide. For questions regarding punctuation rules not covered here, consult the suggested reference material at the end of this style guide.

Serial/oxford commas

In a list of three items or more, always include a comma before the "and" or "or," as in the below example. This is known as the serial or oxford comma, and is useful for ensuring clarity, especially in legal documentation.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
在接受本协议之前，请您仔细阅读本协议的全部内容（特别是以粗体下划线标注的内容）。	Before accepting this Agreement, please read all its contents carefully (especially segments that are highlighted, underlined or in bold).	Before accepting this Agreement, please read all its contents carefully (especially segments that are highlighted, underlined, or in bold).

Comma after abbreviation

If a comma follows an abbreviation that uses periods, do not use the comma in place of the period. Instead, place the comma after the period.

Quotation marks

Always place periods and commas inside quotation marks, regardless of whether they are part of the quoted material.

Place question marks and exclamation points inside the quotation marks if they are part of the quoted material. Otherwise, place them outside.

Place colons and semicolons outside of the quoted material unless they are part of the quoted material.

Use apostrophes in place of the inner set of quotation marks if quotation marks appear inside of another quotation.

Parentheses

Place punctuation inside of the parentheses if the parenthetical sentence stands by itself.

Place punctuation outside of the parentheses if the parenthetical phrase occurs within a sentence.

Use parentheses when the name of a value is shown, as in the following example:

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
其中加速度测量值 A 和车辆行驶的加速度 A2 是已知的，所以重力的分量值 A1 也知道了。	Since the accelerometer measurement value A and the vehicle acceleration A2 are known, A1 the gravity component value can then be derived.	As the accelerometer measurement value (A) and the vehicle's acceleration (A2) are known, the gravity component value (A1) can also be determined.

Abbreviations

Do not punctuate initialized abbreviations.

X	✓
U.S.	US
F.B.I.	FBI
N.B.C.	NBC

For abbreviations that are made up of the first and last letter of the word, use a period.

X	✓
Dr	Dr.
Mr	Mr.
Mrs	Mrs.
St	St.
Rd	Rd.

For abbreviations consisting of only the first part of a word, use a period. This is not necessary for abbreviations of months or days of the week. For example, write "Nov" or "Tue."

X	✓
Misc	Misc.

Abbreviations

When translating, it is often best to use the full term rather than the abbreviation. However, in some cases it is best to use the abbreviated form.

Use the abbreviated form in the following scenarios:

- The English abbreviation was used in the source text
- The abbreviated form is more commonly known (such as FBI, NASA, or NBA)
- A commonly abbreviated title is used with a name (such as Mr., Dr., Sr, or Jr.)
- For abbreviations in dates and addresses, see the sections *Date/Time Format* and *Addresses, Email Addresses, and Phone Numbers* below.
- For abbreviated units of measurement, see the section *Units of measurement.*

Lists

When translating bulleted or numbered lists, maintain the list format of the source (that is, if bullets are used in the source, use bullets in the target). If the source uses a Chinese comma (、) at the end of each item in a numbered or bulleted list, use a period after each item in the English version of the list.

Make sure that lists are grammatically parallel. All items in the list should either be a full sentence or a segment and should maintain the same structure.

Locale Conventions

Numbers, dates & currencies

Spell out the numbers one to nine and use numerals for numbers after that. For example, write "one," "three," "90."

Date/time format

Dates should be written in the following format:
Sep 14, 2017.
When abbreviated, the months should be abbreviated to a three-letter format as follows:
Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec.
Months should be abbreviated when character count is an issue, but do not have to be abbreviated when character count is not an issue.
Time should be written in 12-hour format, followed by AM or PM. For example, 1:15 PM. Also note that a colon should be used rather than a period.

Thousands, separators and large numbers

For large numbers, add a comma between each set of three numbers. Write "1,000,000,000,000" not "1000000000000."

Units of measurement

Add a space between the unit and the unit of measurement, unless the unit of measurement is a non-letter symbol. Write "$10" not "$ 10," write "10 USD" not 10USD." Abbreviated units of measurement should be written with their standardized abbreviations. Capitalization should remain the same regardless of whether they appear in titles or standard text. The following table shows the standard abbreviations including correct capitalization for the major units of measurement.

UNIT OF MEASUREMENT	ABBREVIATED FORM	FORM TO USE IN STANDARD OR TITLE TEXT
Gram	g	g
Kilogram	kg	kg
Metric ton	t	t
Meter	m	m
Centimeter	cm	cm
Kilometer	km	km

Millimeter	mm	mm
Liter	L	L
Milliliter	ml	mL

Addresses, email addresses and phone numbers

Addresses

Addresses should be written in the following order: Street Number/ Street/ District/ Town or City/ Country/Postcode/Country. Separate address lines with commas.

SOURCE	INCORRECT TRANSLATION	CORRECT TRANSLATION
中国上海市静安区常德路 100 号 100 室 200042	China, Shanghai City, Jing An District, Changde Road, No 100, Apartment 100, 200042	Apartment 100, 100 Changde Road, Jing An District, Shanghai, 200042 China

Email Addresses

Write email addresses in standard format such as

thisismyemailaddress@myserver.com . Ensure that email addresses are completely correct. Email addresses should be written all in lower case, unless the format of an individual email specifically requires the use of upper case. Email addresses are in practice not usually case-sensitive, but it is possible for use of the incorrect case to cause issues in rare cases.

Phone numbers

Phone numbers should include the country code, which should be marked with a + sign and placed in parentheses, and separated from the rest of the phone number with a space. If there is an area code at the start of a phone number, separate the area code from the rest of the phone number with a hyphen.

X	✓
8602112345678	+(86) 021-12345678

Tags and placeholders

When translating web pages and UI messages, you may see HTML tags and placeholders. Both tags and placeholders must be handled with care. Unless instructed otherwise, do not alter tags and placeholders, and as far as is possible, ensure they are in the equivalent position in the target content as they were in the source content.