Maltese Style Guide

Contents

What's New?

Last Updated: February 2011

New Topics

The following topics were added:

- n/a

Updated Topics

The following topics were updated:

- n/a

Introduction

This Style Guide went through major revision in February 2011 in order to remove outdated and unnecessary content. It conyains information pertaining to all Microsoft products and services.

About This Style Guide

The purpose of this Style Guide is to provide everybody involved in the localization of Maltese Microsoft products with Microsoft-specific linguistic guidelines and standard conventions that differ from or are more prescriptive than those found in language reference materials. These conventions have been adopted after considering context based on various needs, but above all, they are easy to follow and applicable for all types of software to be localized.

The Style Guide covers the areas of formatting, grammatical conventions, as well as stylistic criteria. It also presents the reader with a general idea of the reasoning behind the conventions. The present Style Guide is a revision of our previous Style Guide version with the intention of making it more standardized, more structured, and easier to use as a reference.

The guidelines and conventions presented in this Style Guide are intended to help you localize Microsoft products and materials. We welcome your feedback, questions and concerns regarding the Style Guide. You can send us your feedback via the [Microsoft Language Portal feedback page](#).

Scope of This Document

This Style Guide is intended for the localization professional working on Microsoft products. It is not intended to be a comprehensive coverage of all localization practices, but to highlight areas where Microsoft has preference or deviates from standard practices for Maltese localization.

Style Guide Conventions

In this document, a plus sign (+) before a translation example means that this is the recommended correct translation. A minus sign (-) is used for incorrect translation examples.

In Microsoft localization context, the word *term* is used in a slightly untraditional sense, meaning the same as e.g. a segment in Trados. The distinguishing feature of a term here is that it is translated as one unit; it may be a traditional term (as used in terminology), a phrase, a sentence, or a paragraph.

References to interface elements really only refer to translatable texts associated with those interface elements.

Example translations in this document are only intended to illustrate the point in question. They are not a source of approved terminology. Always check for approved translation in the Microsoft terminology database.

Sample Text

Lawrence Gafà
9 Kenn il-Għasel
Triq Missirijietna
Ħaż-Żebbuġ
ZBG 0099

Tel.　　+356 2199 9999
Mowbajl +356 9999 9999

25 ta' Lulju 2008

Ġorġ Casingena
99 Vulkan
Triq il-Mitjar tal-Ingliżi
Ħal Luqa
LQA 9999

Għażiż Ġorġ

Qed niktiblek bi tweġiba għat-talba li kont għamiltli xi ftit ilu biex nagħtik linji gwida qosra li jistgħu faċilment jgħinu lil min ma jkunx jitkellem bil-Malti jasal għall-konklużjoni li t-test li hu jew hi tkun qed tara jkun fil-fatt bil-Malti. Dan jista' jsir billi wieħed jipprova jidentifika fit-test xi kliem komuni, ittri kkumbinati, jew karattri li huma uniċi għall-Malti. Hawnhekk ġbartlek xi eżempji.

Il-karattri kkumbinati "għ" ("Għ" bħala ittra inizjali kbira) hija "ittra" komuni ħafna, miktuba b'żewġ karattri separati skont ir-regoli uffiċjali tal-ortografija, u tista' titqies bħala unika għall-Malti.

Is-sing "-" fl-artiklu definit huwa karattru ieħor li jidher b'tant frekwenza f'kitbiet bil-Malti li ma tistax titqies li mhix konsiderevoli. Dan faċilment jintgħażel mis-sing li jgħaqqad kliem kompost, li fil-verità fil-Malti huwa għażla għall-kompożizzjoni ta' nomi, aġġettivi, eċċ., minn żewġ kelmiet separati.

Is-sing tal-artiklu definit fil-Malti meta jiġi applikat waħdu, bħalma ħafna drabi jiġri fil-prattika, dejjem jiġi wara "(i)l". L-"i" murija fil-parentesi hija l-"i" tal-leħen. Bħala regola din taqa' meta qabilha jkun hemm kelma li tispiċċa b'vokali jew bl-appostrofu "'" li jirrappreżenta l-"għ" li ma nleħħnux, kif ġa għedna, li wkoll tkun ippreċeduta minn vokali. Minflok l-"l" wieħed jista' jsib ittra xemxija qabel is-"-", l-istess bħall-ittra xemxija inizjali tan-nom mal-artiklu. L-ittri xemxin huma: *ċ, Ċ, d, D, n, N, r, R, s, S, t, T, x, X, ż, Ż, z, Z*.

L-"Għ" fiha wieħed mill-karattri dijakritiċi, li x'aktarx ma tarahom f'ebda sett ta' ittri, pereżempju l-alfabett ta' kwalunkwe lingwa oħra magħrufa, b'mod partikolari bħala sett komplet t'erbgħa: *ċ, Ċ, ġ, Ġ, ħ, Ħ, ż u Ż*.

Okkorrenzi eċċezzjonali tal-ittri dijakritiċi t'hawn fuq f'xi lingwa oħra bħala karattri individwali huma l-ftit ħafna u remoti.

Karattri estiżi oħrajn li nsibu fil-Malti huma l-vokali konvenzjonali b'aċċent gravi fuqhom f'tarf xi kelma Rumanza: eż. "università", "kafè", "Ċilì", "burò", "menù". Dan jista' jitqies ukoll fiż-żgur bħala karatteristika li tappartjeni biss lil xi biċċa test bil-Malti.

Note: The above text applies all the extended characters of Maltese.

Source: This is a translated adaptation of the first paragraphs under "What Language Is It?" in this Style Guide.

Maħluq fl-1 ta' Frar, 2011 4:30 PM

Recommended Reference Material

Use the Maltese language and terminology as described and used in the following publications.

Normative References

These normative sources must be adhered to. Any deviation from them automatically fails a string in most cases. When more than one solution is allowed in these sources, look for the recommended one in other parts of the Style Guide.

1. Akkademja tal-Malti (2004). *Tagħrif fuq il-Kitba Maltija II.* Malta: Klabb Kotba Maltin.
2. Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ilsien Malti (2008). *Deċiżjonijiet 1.* Malta: Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ilsien Malti. http://www.akkademjatalmalti.com/filebank/documents/Decizjonijiet%201.pdf
3. Awtorità Maltija dwar l-Istandards. Published standards. DMS 200:2009. http://www.kunsilltalmalti.gov.mt/. MSA ISO 1000:2002. Other standards.
4. Il-Liġijiet ta' Malta. Kap.16: Kodiċi Ċivili. Art. **4.** http://docs.justice.gov.mt/lom/legislation/maltese/leg/vol_2/kap16.pdf

Informative References

These sources are meant to provide supplementary information, background, comparison, etc.

1. Aquilina, J (1999). *Maltese-English-Maltese Dictionary.* Malta: Midsea Books.
2. Aquilina, J (1977). Fehmiet dwar l-Ortografija tal-Malti, *Il-Malti* (Ġun-Diċ 1977), pp. 3-16.
3. Azzopardi C. *L-Ortografija Uffiċjali tal-Malti: Analiżi lingwistika kritika b'suġġerimenti għal titjib.* Master's Thesis, Università ta' Malta, 1997.
4. Azzopardi, C (2000). L-Ortografija, *Il-Malti* (LXXIV), pp. 71-89.
5. Azzopardi, C (2003). *Gwida għall-Ortografija.* Malta: Klabb Kotba Maltin.
6. Cassar, M (2002). *Ir-Reqqa tal-Kitba.* Malta: Merlin Library.
7. Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ilsien Malti (2007). *Innaqqsu l-Inċertezzi 1: Il-Varjanti Ortografiċi.* Malta: Kunsill tal-Malti.
8. Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ilsien Malti (2008). *Innaqqsu l-Inċertezzi 2: Il-Kliem ta' Nisel Ingliż fil-Malti.* Malta: Kunsill tal-Malti.
9. Mifsud, M (1999). Ir-Regoli tal-Kitba tal-Malti, *Il-Malti* (LXXIII).
10. Truss, L (2003). *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation.* Auckland: Profile Books.

Language Specfic Conventions

This part of the style guide contains information about standards specific to Maltese.

Country/Region Standards

Characters

Country/region	Malta
Lower-case characters	a, b, ċ, d, e, f, ġ, g, (għ), h, ħ, i, (ie), j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, ż, z
Upper-case characters	A, B, Ċ, D, E, F, Ġ, G, (Għ), H, Ħ, I, (Ie), J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Ż, Z
Characters in caseless scripts	n/a
Extended Latin characters	Ċ, Ġ, Ħ, Ż (ċ, ġ, ħ, ż)
Note on alphabetical order	Alphabetical order is not necessarily indicative of sorting order.
Total number of characters	28 (excluding "għ" and "ie" which, though official alphabet letters, are not separate keyboard characters.
Unicode codes	A 0041 a 0061 B 0042 b 0062 Ċ 010a ċ 010b D 0044 d 0064 E 0045 e 0065 F 0046 f 0066 Ġ 0120

Country/region	Malta
	ġ 0121
	G 0047
	g 0067
	Għ 0047, 0127
	għ 0067, 0127
	H 0048
	h 0068
	Ħ 0126
	ħ 0127
	I 0049
	i 0069
	Ie 0049, 0065
	ie 0069, 0065
	J 004a
	j 006a
	K 004b
	k 006b
	L 004c
	l 006c
	M 004d
	m 006d
	N 004e
	n 006e
	O 004f
	o 006f
	P 0050
	p 0070
	Q 0051
	q 0071
	R 0052
	r 0072
	S 0053
	s 0073
	T 0054

Country/region	Malta
	t 0074
	U 0055
	u 0075
	V 0056
	v 0076
	W 0057
	w 0077
	X 0058
	x 0078
	Z 005a
	z 007a
	Ż 017b
	ż 017c
Notes	C and Y (c and y) are also used in some proper names and acronyms. Five accented vowels are also possible: à, è, ì, ò, ù (À, È, Ì, Ò, Ù).

Date

Country/region	Malta
Calendar/Era	European
First Day of the Week	Monday
First Week of the Year	Starts first Monday of the new year after week 52 of the previous year. Example: Week 1 for 2012 shall start on Monday, 02/01/12. (Week 52 for 2011 ends on Saturday 31/12/11)
Separator	Slash (/)
Default Short Date Format	d/M/yyyy
Example	17/3/2011
Default Long Date Format	d ta' MMMM, yyyy
Example	17 ta' Marzu, 2011

Country/region	Malta
Additional Short Date Format 1	ddMMyyyy
Example	17032011
Additional Short Date Format 2	n/a
Example	n/
Additional Long Date Format 1	dddd, d ta' MMMM yyyy
Example	Il-Ħamis, 17 ta' Marzu, 2011
Additional Long Date Format 2	d ta' MMMM yyyy
Example	17 ta' Marzu, 2011
Leading Zero in Day Field for Short Date Format	No
Leading Zero in Month Field for Short Date Format	No
No. of digits for year for Short Day Format	4
Leading Zero in Day Field for Long Date Format	No
Leading Zero in Month Field for Long Date Format	n/a
Number of digits for year for Long Day Format	4
Date Format for Correspondence	d ta' MMMM, yyyy
Example	17 ta' Marzu, 2011
Notes	• Sometimes, date format for correspondence is also written with the day name preceding the number for the day but this is becoming increasingly rare.

Country/region	Malta
	• If separators are not used, the day and month shall have 2 digits, in terms of the official standards (link provided in Style Guide References).
Abbreviations in Format Codes	**d** is for day, number of d's indicates the format (d = digits without leading zero, dd = digits with leading zero, ddd = the abbreviated day name, dddd = full day name) **M** is for month, number of M's gives number of digits. (M = digits without leading zero, MM = digits with leading zero, MMM = the abbreviated name, MMMM = full name) **y** is for year, number of y's gives number of digits (yy = two digits, yyyy = four digits)

Time

Country/region	Malta
24 hour format	The 24-hour time format is the most frequently used form in text. In speech, the 12-hour system is common. Yes
Standard time format	hh:mm:ss.
Standard time format example	03:24:12 PM; 03:24 PM; 06:34:10 AM; 06:34 AM.
Time separator	Colon ":"
Time separator examples	03:24:12 (AM/PM)
Hours leading zero	Yes
Hours leading zero example	03:24:12
String for AM designator	AM
String for PM designator	PM
Notes	n/a

Days

Country/region: Malta

Day	Normal Form	Abbreviation
Monday	It-Tnejn	Tne
Tuesday	It-Tlieta	Tli
Wednesday	L-Erbgħa	Erb
Thursday	Il-Ħamis	Ħam
Friday	Il-Ġimgħa	Ġim
Saturday	Is-Sibt	Sib
Sunday	Il-Ħadd	Ħad

First Day of Week: Monday (It-Tnejn)

Is first letter capitalized?: Yes

Notes: The letters in brackets are further abbreviations for use on small calendars only:

(T)

(T)

(E)

(Ħ)

(Ġ)

(S)

(Ħ)

Notes: Days of the week are rarely abbreviated in Maltese using the 3-letter abbreviation, and the 1-letter abbreviation is even less common (mostly due to the confusion of the T and Ħ – both appearing twice.

Months

Country/region: Malta

Month	Full Form	Abbreviated Form	Long Date Form
January	Jannar	Jan	Jannar

Month	Full Form	Abbreviated Form	Long Date Form
February	Frar	Fra	Frar
March	Marzu	Mar	Marzu
April	April	Apr	April
May	Mejju	Mej	Mejju
June	Ġunju	Ġun	Ġunju
July	Lulju	Lul	Lulju
August	Awwissu	Aww	Awwissu
September	Settembru	Set	Settembru
October	Ottubru	Ott	Ottubru
November	Novembru	Nov	Novembru
December	Diċembru	Diċ	Diċembru

Is first letter capitalized?: Yes

Notes: n/a

Numbers

Phone Numbers

Country/region	International Dialing Code	Area Codes Used?	Number of Digits – Area Codes	Separator	Number of Digits – Domestic	Digit Groupings – Domestic
Malta	356 (+356/00356)	No	n/a	Space (optional, except following international code)	3 (Note 1); 4 (Note 2); 8 (subscribers)	### (Note 1); ####, ### # (Note 2); ########, Written with spaces (optional) : ## ### ###,

Country/region	Number of Digits – Local	Digit Groupings – Local	Number of Digits – Mobile	Digit Groupings – Mobile	Number of Digits – International	Digit Groupings – International
Malta	Same as	Same as	3 (Note 3); 8	########,	11	+356 ########,

"Number of digits – domestic"	"Digit groupings – domestic"		With spaces (optional):## ## ####, ## ######		With other spaces (optional): +356 ## ### ### (land lines), +356 ## ### ### (mobile Go), +356 #### #### (mobile Vodafone)

Notes:

1. Emergency (ambulance, fire or police)

2. Directory enquiries or overseas operator

3. Service provider's helpdesk

4. Spaces are optional; use of spaces is recommended following the international code 356. For fixed and mobile telephone numbers a blank is recommended between the fourth and the fifth digit.

Addresses

Country/region: Malta

Disclaimer: Please note that the information in this entry should under no circumstances be used in examples as fictitious information.

Address Format:

1. [Title/Honorific] FirstName LastName
2. [CompanyName]

3. Address1
4. [Address2]
5. City

6. PostalCode
7. Country

Example Address:

Dr Lawrence Borg
Medical Instruments Ltd
45 Triq San Pietru

Ħal Qormi

QRM 1403
Malta

Local Postal Code Format: ZZZ xxxx

Notes:

Country code not applicable.

The newly launched Postal code format is: ZZZ xxxx. Since no Postal Code directory has been issued, it will take some time until the general public effectively switches from the previous three letter-two digit ZZZ xx format to the new one.

Not all premises and residences have a number. Some have only a name (name replaces number); others only a number. If an address has a number and a name the number is written first, then the name alongside and the street name on the next line:

[Address1]   45 Il-Ħolma

[Address2]   Triq San Pietru

[City]   Ħal Qormi

[PostalCode]   QRM 1403

[Country]   Malta

45 Il-Ħolma [= DoorNumber DoorName] Triq San Pietru [= StreetName]

Ħal Qormi [= City] QRM 1403 [= PostalCode] Malta [= Country]

For addresses with only a door name (no number):

[Address1]   Il-Ħolma

[Address2]   Triq San Pietru

[City]   Ħal Qormi

[PostalCode]   QRM 1403

[Country]   Malta

Il-Ħolma [= DoorName Triq San Pietru [= StreetName]

Ħal Qormi [= City] QRM 1403 [= PostalCode] Malta [= Country]

Currency

Country/region	Malta
Currency Name	Euro
Currency Symbol	€
Currency Symbol Position	Directly in front of amounts with no spaces after €
Positive Currency Format	€500.00
Negative Sign Symbol	-
Negative Currency Format	- €500.00
Decimal Symbol	.

Number of Digits after Decimal	2
Digit Grouping Symbol	,
Number of Digits in Digit Grouping	3
Positive Currency Example	€50,000,000.00
Negative Currency Example	- €50,000,000.00
ISO Currency Code	EUR
Currency Subunit Name	cent
Currency Subunit Symbol	c
Currency Subunit Example	€50.55

Digit Groups

Country/region: Malta

Decimal Separator: .

Decimal Separator Description: Period (full stop)

Decimal Separator Example: 23.4567; €2.50; €42.05

Thousand Separator: ,

Thousand Separator Description: comma

Thousand Separator Example: 1,000

Notes: n/a

Measurement Units

Metric System Commonly Used?: Yes

Temperature: Celsius

Category	English	Translation	Abbreviation
Linear Measure	Kilometer	Kilometru	km
	Meter	Metru	m
	Decimeter	Deċimetru	dm
	Centimeter	Ċentimetru	cm
	Millimeter	Millimetru	mm
Capacity	Hectoliter	Ettolitru	hl
	Liter	Litru	l

Category	English	Translation	Abbreviation
	Deciliter	Deċilitru	dl
	Centiliter	Ċentilitru	cl
	Milliliter	Millilitru	ml
Mass	Ton	Tunnellata	t
	Kilogram	Kilogramma	kg
	Pound	Libbra	lb
	Gram	Gramma	g
	Decigram	Deċigramma	dg
	Centigram	Ċentigramma	cg
	Milligram	Milligramma	mg
English Units of Measurement	Inch	Pulzier	ins
	Feet	Pied	ft
	Mile	Mil	n/a
	Gallon	Gallun	n/a

Notes: n/a

Percentages

No space is added between the % sign and the amount: e.g. 50%.

Sorting

Sorting rules	The following are sorting rules for Maltese:

1. For homonyms or homonymic introductory parts of words capital letters come before small letters, i.e. the order adopted in the official alphabet.

2. The five vowels common to both English and Maltese could be accented with the sole officially recognized graphic accent, namely the grave accent (`), as follows: À à È è Ì ì Ò ò Ù ù.

Whether accented or not these letters do not affect the alphabetizing order except for homonyms or homonymic introductory parts of words. The accent is found on the vowel at the end of words of Romance origin comprised of more than one syllable: "kafè", "università".

3. Maltese has adopted words from Italian and English. The letter "c" found in both English and Italian, and the letter "y" found in English, are not uncommon in words retained in the original form. For the alphabetizing order of the foreign "c" and "y" in Maltese, the official alphabet is to |

	be adhered to – Ġ, G, Ż, Z – therefore Ċ, C, D. The letter "x" comes before "y" which comes before "ż".
	4. Non-accented letters come before accented letters. Regarding the precedence of accents, the rule is:
	i) *a* comes before *à*, which comes before any other accented *a* in a foreign transliterated word, say *â* in a French word retained in its original form;
	ii) *e* comes before *è*, which comes before any other accented *e* in a foreign transliterated word, say *é* in a French word retained in its original form;
	iii) *i* comes before *ì*, which comes before any other accented *i* in a foreign transliterated word, say *î* in a French word retained in its original form;
	iv) *o* comes before *ò*;
	v) *u* comes before *ù*, which comes before any other accented *u* in a foreign transliterated word, say *û* in a French word retained in its original form.
	Note: Accented foreign letters at the third level are equal with no distinction to be made between them though consistency in any given sorted set is recommended, i.e. (1) non-accented Maltese, (2) accented Maltese, (3) accented foreign letter
	5. Non-alphabetical characters (i.e. symbols like @ ! #) sort before the letters of the alphabet.
	6. Digits sort after the non-alphabetical characters and before the letters of the alphabet.
	7. Though "għ" and "ie" are made up of two separate letters, both "għ" and "ie" are considered as one letter, that is, "g" comes before "għ" which comes before "h"; "i" comes before "ie" which comes before "j".
Character sorting order	A 65
	a 97
	B 66
	b 98
	Ċ 266
	ċ 267
	D 68
	d 100
	E 69
	e 101
	F 70
	f 102
	Ġ 288
	ġ 289

	G	71
	g	103
	Għ	71, 295
	għ	103, 295
	H	72
	h	104
	Ħ	294
	ħ	295
	I	73
	i	105
	Ie	73, 101
	ie	105, 105
	J	74
	j	106
	K	75
	k	107
	L	76
	l	108
	M	77
	m	109
	N	78
	n	110
	O	79
	o	111
	P	80
	p	112
	Q	81
	q	113
	R	82
	r	114

	S 83
	s 115
	T 84
	t 116
	U 85
	u 117
	V 86
	v 118
	W 87
	w 119
	X 88
	x 120
	Z 90
	z 122
	Ż 379
	ż 380
Examples of sorted words	The following words have been arranged in the sort order according to the rules outlined above: @ 1 Aaron andere ändere chaque chemin cote coté côte côté čučēt Czech hiša irdisch lävi lie lire

	llama
	lõug
	Löwen
	lòza
	Lübeck
	luč
	luck
	lye
	Männer
	màšta
	mîr
	möchten
	myndig
	piña
	pint
	pylon
	sämtlich
	šàran
	savoir
	Šerbūra
	Sietla
	ślub
	subtle
	symbol
	väga
	verkehrt
	vox
	waffle
	wood
	yen
	yuan
	yucca
	žal
	žena
	Ženēva
	zoo
	Zürich
	Zviedrija
	zysk
	zzlj
	zzlz]
	zznj
	zznz

Geopolitical Concerns

Part of the cultural adaptation of the US-product to a specific market is the resolving of geopolitical issues. While the US-product should have been designed and developed with neutrality and a global audience in mind, the localized product should respond to the particular situation that applies within the target country/region.

Sensitive issues or issues that might potentially be offensive to the users in the target country/region may occur in any of the following:

- Maps
- Flags
- Country/region, city and language names
- Art and graphics
- Cultural content, such as encyclopedia content and other text where historical or political references may occur

Some of these issues are relatively easy to verify and resolve: the objective should be for the localizer to always have the most current information available. Maps and other graphic representations of countries/regions and regions should be checked for accuracy and existing political restrictions. Country/region, city and language names change on a regular basis and need to be checked, even if previously approved.

A thorough understanding of the culture of the target market is required for checking the appropriateness of cultural content, clip art and other visual representations of religious symbols, body and hand gestures.

Guideline

As country/region and city names can change, please use the most up-to-date Maltese list for every release of your product.

Grammar, Syntax & Orthographic Conventions

This section includes information on how to apply the general rules of the Maltese language to Microsoft products and documentation.

Adjectives

In Maltese, adjectives should be handled in the following manner.

Maltese Adjectives are words that describe or modify another person or thing in the sentence. Here are some examples:

English Adjectives	Maltese Adjectives
adjectives	(+) aġġettivi
a green tree	(+) siġra ħadra

English Adjectives	Maltese Adjectives
a tall building	(+) bini għoli
a very old man	(+) raġel xiħ ħafna
the old red house	(+) id-dar ħamra qadima
a very nice friend	(+) ħabib twajjeb (masc.) / ħabiba twajba (fem.) ħafna

Possessive adjectives

The frequent use of possessives is a feature of English language. However in Maltese, possessive adjectives are handled as follows:

Omit possessive adjectives in your translations (i.e. your keyboard, your software), unless they are needed. The use of the possessive pronoun equivalent to "your", "*tiegħek"* or the equivalent suffix, is at times recommended, as can be seen in example (a) below, since it provides a courteous personal interface. It may sometimes be elided, as can be seen in example (b) below. Where "try rephrasing your query" is rendered in a Maltese style and syntax, the mention of "your query" becomes redundant by the use of the verb "staqsi". The literal translation of the suggested Maltese phrase would be "try asking in a different way". Note the laborious rendering in the **(-)** version. The verb "tixtieq" in the **(+)** version of (b) is considered more courteous yet more informal than "teħtieġ".

Remember that, in Maltese, one way of indicating the plural of an acronym is with the use of nouns before the acronym and/or adjectives after it, as in "netwerks LAN ikkonfigurati".

Adjectives deriving from topographic names	The first letter of such adjectives is capitalized.	ir-reġjun Bask; iċ-ċentru Mosti

Be consistent when translating option names and try to use the same part of speech for all of them, when possible. If you detect that verbs, nouns and adjectives are being used at the same time to translate option names or related strings, contact your language coordinator to check whether it is possible to standardize this by using the same part of speech for all of them.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, localizers should consider how they would say the particular word in the relevant context, and avoid being unduly influenced by the English text in this respect. In Maltese, the vast majority of definite nouns and adjectives take the article. Omitting the Article makes Maltese sound unnatural and may result in different meanings. The native speaker finds no problem in deciding whether to use the article or not. It is only when translating from English that the problem seems to arise. Localizers should consider how they would say the particular word in the relevant context, and avoid being unduly influenced by the English text in this respect.

In English headings, all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and subordinate conjunctions (such as "that," "until," and "which") are capitalized. Please do not apply the same principle to Maltese headings. Instead, follow the normal Maltese capitalization rules. The same rule applies to software strings.

English example	Maltese translation
Sorting and Grouping	(+) Ordinar u Gruppar

Nouns and adjectives can also have negative meaning through the use of a derivative marker. The following examples show how to do this in Maltese. In Maltese this is not as common as in English.

English example	Maltese translation
antivirus	(+) antivirus
invisible	(+) inviżibbli
unchecked	(+) diżattivat
unlocked	(+) żblukkat
noncontiguous	(+) mhux kontigwu
unavailable	(+) mhux disponibbli
undefined	(+) mhux definit

Note: The use in the singular of "they" and "their", as well as the Maltese counterparts "huma" (often omitted) and "tagħhom", is common in informal speech, but is still considered ungrammatical and should be avoided in formal speech and writing, including that for localization.

Articles

Maltese articles are words that combine with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun. Generally articles specify the grammatical definiteness of the noun. Examples are "the, a, and an". Here are some examples:

English Articles	Maltese Articles
articles	artikli
the	l-
a	/
one	wieħed (masc.) / waħda (fem.)
some	xi

English Articles	Maltese Articles
few	ftit
the book	il-ktieb
the books	il-kotba
a book	ktieb
one book	ktieb wieħed
some books	xi kotba
few books	ftit kotba

General considerations

The article	The article is only capitalized at the start of a sentence, phrase, heading or subheading; or if it is an integral part of a proper Noun.	It-tfal kibru; Il-Poeżija Maltija; It-Torċa u Il-Mument
The article at the beginning of proper names	The first letter of the article at the beginning of a proper name is capitalized when the name is used on its own. This is the case, e.g.: in an address, in a table, on a map.	Il-Gudja, L-Italja

Note: The major product groups use the following unlocalized product portfolio names; these are considered product names and are always used without a hyphen or article in any language:

- Microsoft Office System
- Microsoft Windows Server System
- Windows Mobile

Take into account that many strings contain placeholders to be replaced with product names afterwards, so keep it simple and do not use the article.

The preposition *minn* + article When followed by nouns starting with "sun" letters (xemxin), the assimilated ending letter of this,	A common mistake is writing "minn-" instead of "min-". "Minn-" does not exist in Maltese orthography.	(+) Min-naħa għall-oħra (-) Minn-naħa għall-oħra (+) mid-dehra kurrenti

and the other prepositions + article, is never doubled.		

Of the Prepositions already mentioned, "lil" requires further consideration. It has three functions which are treated separately. In many instances it is written abbreviated as standard. In other cases, it is completely elided, while in others it is written in full on its own or attached to the Article. It is very important that localizers get this, very often wrongly spelt, preposition right.

(a) "Lil" used as a Preposition to show direction: it is usually abbreviated to 'l or 'il, depending on the last letter of the previous word or the first letter of the following word.

English example	Maltese example
Face up; face down	(+) Wiċċhom 'il fuq; wiċċhom 'l isfel
Advance	(+) Imxi 'l quddiem

This form of "lil" is never attached to the Article, and though "'l" and "'il" are visually similar to the Article "l-" and "il-", they are abbreviations of "lil" and never take the hyphen.

(b) "lil" used to indicate the direct object: it is best not to abbreviate it in the case of proper Nouns which do not take the Article; it is attached to the Article when used in its full form. It may be completely elided and replaced by the Article in all other cases.

English example	Maltese translation	Comment
France beats Sweden	(+) Franza tirbaħ lil**l**-Isvezja	Full form + article.
Contact the systems administrator	(+) Ikkuntattja l-amministratur tas-sistema	"lil" is elided and only the Article is written.

(c) "Lil" used to indicate the indirect object: it should not be elided and should be written in its full form or abbreviated as indicated earlier in function (a) above.

English example	Maltese translation	Comment
Address your complaint to the systems administrator	(+) Indirizza l-ilment tiegħek lill-amministratur tas-sistema (+) Indirizza l-ilment tiegħek 'il-amministratur tas-sistema	Note the full "lill-", which includes the article.

Note: When using the apostrophe to abbreviate "lil", the closing inverted coma should be used. Using the opening inverted coma or the apostrophe is orthographically incorrect:

(+) 'l/'il

(-) 'l/ 'il

The hyphen "-" in definite articles

The hyphen "-" in definite articles is another important characteristic. It is easily distinguished from the hyphen of compound words, which is sparingly used in Maltese for compounding nouns, adjectives, etc.

The hyphen of the definite article in Maltese is easily recognizable: the most common forms being **l-** and **il-**, examples: **l-**art, **il-**Ħamis, **il-**programm, **l-**investigazzjoni, etc. Instead of "l" one may find one of the "sun" letters (*xemxin*) before the hyphen, corresponding to the initial "sun" letter of the noun following the article. The "sun" letters are: *ċ, d, n, r, s, t, x, ż, z*, giving the following examples of written forms, with and without the euphonic vowel "**i**": (**i**)**ċ-**ċitazzjoni, (**i**)**d-**dominju,(**i**)**n-**netwerk, (**i**)**r-**reviżjoni, (**i**)**s-**sistema, (**i**)**t-**tagħrif, (**i**)**x-**xogħol, (**i**)**ż-**żieda, (**i**)**z-**zokkor.

Unlocalized Feature Names

Microsoft product names and non-translated feature names are used without definite or indefinite articles in the English language. We treat them in this way:

Many abbreviations and acronyms are standardized and remain untranslated. They are only followed by their full spelling in English if the acronym needs to be explained to the speakers of a different language. In other cases, where the acronym is rather common, adding the fully spelled-out form will only confuse users. In these cases, the acronym can be used on its own.

The following list contains examples of acronyms and abbreviations that are considered commonly understood; these acronyms and abbreviations should not be localized or spelled out in full in English:
- ANSI (American National Standards Institute)
- ISO (International Standards Organization)
- ISDN
- DOS
- DSL
- CD
- DVD

If you are unsure what an acronym or abbreviation stands for or refers to, please contact the Moderator responsible for this Style Guide.

Localized Feature Names

Translated feature names are handled in this way:

The general rule is that product names are not translated if they include the word Microsoft and/or are trademarked (for example, Microsoft Draw or Microsoft Graph). The Microsoft PM and/or Subsidiary should always be contacted for final approval before you translate a product or component name.

The terms "Microsoft," "Windows," and "Office" must always remain unlocalized; however, these terms may be transliterated if you receive approval for the appropriate Microsoft PM and Subsidiary. Refer to the section of this Style Guide that discusses trademarks for the complete list of product and component names that must remain in English. Ensure that you apply the chosen product terminology consistently throughout your translation of a set of content or an interface.

Microsoft product names are usually trademarked and remain unlocalized. Product names and non-translated feature names are considered proper nouns and are used without definite or indefinite articles in English. For instance, attaching a genitive "s" to trademarked product names is not feasible as it could be interpreted as a modification of such names. Additions to a product or component name are either added with a hyphen or a periphrastic construction needs to be used. For example, instead of expressing a possessive relationship by using the genitive marker "s" in English, a periphrastic construction should be used:

- (-) Microsoft's products
- (+) Microsoft products
- (+) Products by Microsoft

Product names and non-translated feature names should also be treated as proper nouns in Maltese. Do not use the article with them.

English example	Maltese example
Windows Mail shares your Internet Connection settings with Internet Explorer	(+) Windows Mail jaqsam is-setting tat-Tqabbid mal-Internet ma' Internet Explorer.
Website addresses will be sent to Microsoft	(+) L-indirizzi tas-siti elettroniċi jintbagħtu lil Microsoft

By contrast, translated feature names are used with a definite or indefinite article as they are not treated as proper names. Check with your language coordinator whether these names need to be capitalized.

English example	Maltese example
Hide the Task Manager when it is minimized	(+) Aħbi l-Ġestjoni tal-Attivitajiet meta tiċċekken

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The following translations must be used:

English text	Maltese translation
Copyright	(+) Drittijiet tal-Awtur
All rights reserved	(+) Id-drittijiet kollha riservati
Microsoft Corporation	(+) Microsoft Corporation

Articles for English Borrowed Terms

When faced with an English loan word previously used in Microsoft products, consider the following options:

- Motivation: Does the English word have any formally motivated features that would allow a straightforward integration into the noun class system of Maltese language? Analogy: Is there an equivalent Maltese term whose article could be used?
- Frequency: Is the term used in other technical documentation? If so, what article is used most often?

The internet may be a helpful reference here.

The influx of English into other languages has significantly increased in recent years. Some speaker communities welcome this trend, while others resist it. Microsoft must guard against taking a stance in this debate and, therefore, use the terminology that is most widely used in the computer press and among users. This terminology usage naturally depends on the target market of each product (technical products are bound to contain more specialized language, which usually means more English terminology).

While it is acceptable to use English terms if they are indeed the industry standard in your country or region, you should also research current industry standards. For example, stylistic anglicisms are still a major translation mistake (see section on anglicisms below).

When incorporating English terms, you must follow the spelling, grammar, and syntax rules of your language. Sometimes English words get incorporated as a whole into other languages, but most often the English word gets "phonologized" and integrated into the target language. If you are sure that there is no Maltese-specific equivalent for an English loan word and decide to incorporate an English word instead, please check with your translation lead and other team members. In many languages the spelling of incorporated loanwords is not documented and it is important that English loan words are spelled consistently in the target language.

Anglicisms often sneak into sentence structure and word usage. Please edit your documents with this concern in mind.

The following examples from German and Italian illustrate "direct translations" with syntactic and lexical mistakes that you should try to avoid in your own translations. The text marked in red in the target language highlights the wrong choice.

English example	Anglicism in target language	Correct example
For several minutes	(-) für mehrere Minuten	(+) mehrere Minuten lang
Middle East	(-) Mittlerer Osten	(+) Naher Osten
For more information please contact ...	(-) Für weitere Informationen kontaktieren Sie ...	(+) Um weitere Informationen zu erhalten, wenden Sie sich an ...
assume	(-) assumere	(+) supporre
fatal error	(-) errore fatale	(+) errore irreversibile
resolved invalid	(-) risolto invalido	(+) risolto non valido

Please make sure that the Maltese version sounds truly Maltese. Pay careful attention to idiom and to the particular features of the Maltese language.

English example	Anglicism in Maltese	Correct example
Fonts to use:	(-) Tipi biex tuża:	(+) Tipi li tixtieq tuża:
... not supported	(-) Ma jissapportjax …	(+) Ma jiħux ...
At least:	(-) Mill-anqas:	(+) Minimu:
At most:	(-) L-aktar:	(+) Massimu:
Wildlife	(-) Ħajja salvaġġa	(+) Natura
Learn more online	(-) Tgħallem aktar online	(+) Aktar tagħrif online
...powerful protection	(-) ... protezzjoni aktar b'saħħitha	(+) ... protezzjoni aktar effikaċi

Also avoid using words from other languages where there is a formal and standard term in Maltese.

Capitalization

If the first word in the English source string is capitalized, the corresponding first word in the target language should also be capitalized. If the word in the English source string is not capitalized, the corresponding first word in the target language should also not be capitalized, unless language-specific rules specify different capitalization.

Some strings are concatenated "at run-time" and you will occasionally find strings that seem to lack a subject or simply start in the middle. Be careful not to start such strings with an upper-case letter, unless the spelling rules of your language require it.

English example	Maltese example
on day %d of every month	(+) fil-jum %d ta' kull xahar
Enter the password for %1!ws!: %0	(+) Daħħal il-password għal %1!ws!: %0

As a general rule, proper names (applications, wizards, programs) need to be capitalized, as in "Microsoft Office Outlook" or "Excel", but remember that generic terms need to be written in lowercase.

The general rules for capitalization in Maltese phrases and sentences closely follow those for English.

Please follow Maltese rules regarding capitalization, cf. **Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ilsien Malti (2008).** *Deċiżjonijiet 1.* Malta: Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ilsien Malti.

In particular, the following standards should be observed:

Proper names	The first letter of each word that makes up the name, excluding the article and the preposition is capitalized.	Marija Borg; il-Gudja; Malta; Venere; Triq il-Kbira; Bieb il-Belt; in-nies ta' Tas-Sliema; l-Aġenzija Appoġġ; Ħadd il-Palm; Ta' Pinu; ix-xatt ta' Ta' Xbiex; f'Ta' Paris; l-Awtorità tax-Xandir; il-Kamra tal-Avukati; l-Ordni ta' San Ġwann; il-Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ktieb; il-Bank Nazzjonali tad-Demm; l-Università ta' Malta
The article	The article is only capitalized at the start of a sentence, phrase, heading or subheading; or if it is an integral part of a proper Noun.	It-tfal kibru; Il-Poeżija Maltija; It-Torċa u Il-Mument
The article at the beginning of proper	The first letter of the article at the beginning of a proper name is	Il-Gudja, L-Italja

names	capitalized when the name is used on its own. This is the case, e.g.: in an address, in a table, on a map.	
Common names used as proper names	Whenever this happens, the first letter of the name is capitalized.	il-Knisja f'Malta; nidħol sal-Belt; il-Kritika Prattika suġġett interessanti ħafna
Directions	The first letter of each word that makes the names of compass points is capitalized.	riħ Tramuntana; Grieg il-Lvant; il-Punent; il-Lvant; in-Nofsinhar; ix-Xlokk
Publications	The first letter of each word that makes the names of a publication is capitalized.	reklam f'*Il-Ġens*, il-karattru ewlieni fi Ħdejn in-Nixxiegħa
Scientific names	Scientific names of species are normally made up of two words: the genus and the species. In line with the international standard, both words are written in italics (or underlined). The first letter of the first word (i.e.: the genus) is capitalised, while the second word (i.e.: the species) is normally written in lower case.	il-*Pistacia lentiscus*; it-*Tyrannosaurus rex*; il-*Monticola solitarius*
Scientific names and product names taking a euphonic vowel	The first letter of the name itself, rather than the euphonic vowel, is capitalized.	l-i*Sparidae*; l-i*Stegosaurus*; l-i*Stromatopteris*; l-i*Spell*
Popular names of flora, fauna, chemical elements	Such names are written in small case, like other common names.	il-begonja; l-oleandru; il-pitirross; l-awrat; l-aluminju; iċ-ċomb
Topographic names	The first letter of place names with a topographic element is capitalized.	Il-Baħar Mediterran; il-Vulkan Etna; ix-Xmara Nil; il-Muntanja Sinaj; il-Baħar l-Aħmar; l-Oċean Indjan; il-Wied tal-Isperanza; il-Blata tal-Ġeneral; il-Gżejjer ta' San Pawl; il-Bajja ta' San Tumas
Adjectives deriving from topographic names	The first letter of such adjectives is capitalized.	ir-reġjun Bask; iċ-ċentru Mosti
The name of people	The first letter of such names is	Mosti; Għawdxi; Ingliża; Ġermaniżi;

from a particular place	capitalized.	Taljan; Ewropea; Amerikani
Languages and language families	The first letter of such names is capitalized.	il-Malti; l-Ingliż; ir-Rumanz; kliem ta' nisel Semitiku; Ingliżata; Arabiżmu
Organizations and movements	The first letter of such names is capitalized.	l-Akkademja tal-Malti; l-Barokk; ir-Rinaxximent; il-Postmoderniżmu; l-Iżlam
Adjectives deriving from names of movements, organizations and religions	The first letter of such adjectives is capitalized.	l-arti Rinaxximentali, pajjiż Nisrani; stil Sikulo-Normann
The name of members of organizations and movements (cultural, religious etc.)	The first letter of such names is capitalized.	Il-Buddisti; id-Dumnikani; il-Franġiskani Kapuċċini; l-Impressjonisti; il-Kattoliċi; il-Laburisti u n-Nazzjonalisti; ir-Rinaxximentali; ir-Romantiċi
Titles	The first letter of titles immediately preceding names of persons are capitalized.	l-Avukat Pawlu Hili; it-Teżoriera Michelle Borg; l-Isqof Pawlu Cremona
Abbreviated titles	The first letter of such abbrevjations is always capitalized.	ir-Rev. Ġorġ Attard; Dr Josette Grima; Dott. Mario Piscopo; is-Sur Michael Farrugia, il-Prof. Lina Xuereb, l-Onor. Peter Attard; l-Inġ. Justine Zammit
Titles used on their own with reference to a particular person	The first letter of such titles is capitalized.	it-Teżorier qal; l-attendenza tal-Arċisqof
Titles used as common names	Titles used in this way are written in lower case.	laħaq kanonku; kull teżorier
Currency	Currencies are written in lower case.	tliet ewro; seba' ċenteżmi; lira sterlina; disa' dollari
Months and days of the week	The first letter of such names is capitalized.	Jannar; Ġunju; Diċembru; il-Ħadd; l-Erbgħa; il-Ġimgħa; is-Sibt
Seasons and centuries	Such names are written in lower case.	ir-rebbiegħa; il-ħarifa; l-ewwel jum tas-sajf; fi tmiem ix-xitwa; mis-seklu dsatax sas-seklu wieħed u għoxrin

The following table gives some examples of the capitalization of a few strings in Maltese:

English example	Maltese example
Microsoft Corporation Home Page	(+) Paġna Prinċipali tal-Microsoft Corporation
To reply to the sender of the selected message, you can also press CTRL+R.	(+) Biex twieġeb lill-mittent tal-messaġġ magħżul, tista' wkoll tagħfas CTRL+R.
Sort Options	(+) Issortja l-Għażliet
If this is correct, choose Next	(+) Jekk dan korrett, agħżel Li Jmiss
Clock, Language and Region	(+) Arloġġ, Lingwa u Reġjun

Many more nouns and verbs are capitalized in the English source string than would normally be expected. You should not try to mimic the capitalization in the source strings, but use your knowledge of the spelling conventions of Maltese to decide which words in a string to capitalize and which to leave lower-case. Over-capitalization is awkward and leads to inconsistencies in the UI.

Should an English noun be capitalized in the source string and be translated by two words in the target language, be consistent in capitalizing either both words, or neither word, or capitalize one word and not the other. Be consistent in the application of spelling rules.

In English headings, all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and subordinate conjunctions (such as "that," "until," and "which") are capitalized. Please do not apply the same principle to Maltese headings. Instead, follow the normal Maltese capitalization rules. The same rule applies to software strings.

English example	Maltese translation
Sorting and Grouping	(+) Ordinar u Gruppar

Compounds

Generally, compounds should be understandable and clear to the user. Overly long or complex compounds should be avoided. Keep in mind that unintuitive compounds are ultimately an intelligibility and usability issue.

The compounds below contain both, product and component names. The product names are marked in red. Product names are usually trademarked and, therefore, must remain unchanged. Additions to a product or component name are added with a hyphen or, if that is not appropriate, you need to create a periphrastic construction.

Note that in the following examples you may need to use prepositions in order to link the compound with the other words, following Maltese rules:

English example	Maltese example
Windows password	(+) Password ta' Windows
Microsoft Word document	(+) Dokument ta' Microsoft Word
Microsoft SQL Server Database	(+) Database ta' Microsoft SQL Server
ActiveX Control	(+) Kontroll ActiveX
Download signed ActiveX controls	(+) Niżżel kontrolli ActiveX awtentikati

Note: The major product groups use the following unlocalized product portfolio names; these are considered product names and are always used without a hyphen or article in any language:

- Microsoft Office System
- Microsoft Windows Server System
- Windows Mobile

Take into account that many strings contain placeholders to be replaced with product names afterwards, so keep it simple and do not use the article.

Some product or component names may have an agreed translation. Check for them in the reference material and ask the language coordinator for a list of translated and untranslated names. This will improve the overall consistency of the product translation.

Compounds with Acronyms, Abbreviations or Numerals

The compounds below contain either an abbreviation or a numeral followed by a component name. The abbreviation or numeral is marked in red in the English example. The Maltese examples below show how such constructions should be translated.

Many times you would need to use a preposition. Please follow Maltese rules. Remember that there is a blank space between the numerals and the units. Be careful which abbreviations take a final period, unless they occur at the end of a sentence. As established in **MSA DMS 200:2009**, the measurement system is the SI system, **MSA ISO 1000:2002**.

English example	Maltese example
CD-ROM drive	(+) Drajv tas-CD-ROM
24 bit color value	(+) Valur ta' kulur ta' 24 bit

English example	Maltese example
3.5 Floppy	(+) Floppy ta' 3.5
51/4-inch Floppy	(+) Floppy ta' 5¼ pulzieri
35mm slides	(+) Slajds ta' 35 mm

Gender

(1) Nouns and adjectives ending in a consonant or in "u" are masculine.

glekk (coat)   seklu (century)

ktieb (book)   gustuz (cute)

A few exceptions: triq (street), dar (house), ruh (soul), qalb (heart), belt (city), id (hand).

(2) Nouns and adjectives ending in "a" are feminine.

mejda (table   hobza (loaf)

helwa (sweet)   sabiha (beautiful)

A few exceptions: ilma (water), papa (pope), alla (god).

(3) Nouns ending in "i" are feminine.

arti (art)   xorti (luck)

fidi (faith)   vuci (voice)

Gender Bias

You should always recognize your audience's sensitivity to male and female stereotypes. Instead of stressing gender differences or reinforcing stereotypical distinctions between men and women, use language that is as neutral as possible. The neutral approach also applies to the localization of scenarios, comparisons, examples, illustrations, and metaphors.

There is a widespread tendency to replace terms which are unnecessarily marked for gender, example: "-person" for "-man", though this is not a solution that can be applied to avoid gender preference in Maltese localization. Other neutral substitutions are possible in Maltese as outlined below.

Instead of using phrases which mention the two genders separately, use a general term that includes both genders such as "nies," "utenti," or "persuni."

Use the following strategies to avoid the use of overtly gender-biased expressions:

Linguistic method	Example	Context
Use a Neutral noun	(+) persuna; kap	Concept descriptions, explanations
Combine both genders by means of a slash (to be avoided, where possible)	(+) hu/hi; is-Sur/Sinjura	**Only** in exceptional cases such as License Terms, sometimes in tables (headers or column/row titles, for example)

Create a balance when assigning roles and functions to men and women (active vs. passive roles, leading vs. secondary roles, technical vs. non-technical professions, and so on). Scenarios, pictures, metaphors, and comparisons should be based on areas and attributes common to both genders.

Rephrasing Recommendations

Maltese distinguishes gender on nouns and pronouns. Thus, a US-English source text has to be paraphrased or restructured to avoid any overt mentioning of gender on the noun.

Verb forms which take the masculine or feminine affixes should be avoided. The Maltese imperative, and both imperfect and perfect tenses for the second person do not distinguish between the sexes, unlike the participles. Where a gender sensitive form cannot be avoided, some verbs may be substituted to avoid having to address a male or a female or unduly lengthen the text by providing both forms. Where a gender sensitive form can in no way be avoided, both masculine and feminine forms should be included.

- A custom dictionary can only be used by the user who created it.
  (+) Dizzjunarju personalizzat jista' jintuża biss mill-persuna li ħolqitu.
  (-) Dizzjunarju personalizzat jista' jintuża biss mill-utent li ħolqu.

- Even if you are not a statistician, Microsoft Excel offers you...
  (+) Ukoll jekk ftit tifhem fl-istatistika, il-Microsoft Excel joffrilek ...
  (-) Ukoll jekk m'intix espert fl-istatistika, il-Microsoft Excel joffrilek ...

- Some of the best snapshots could be made because the photographer ...

(+)Uħud mill-aqwa ritratti joħorġu għax il-persuna li teħodhom ...

(-) Uħud mill-aqwa ritratti joħorġu għax il-fotografu ...

- You are now connected to Internet.
  (+) Bħalissa tinsab fuq l-Internet
  (-) Bħalissa tinsab f'konnessjoni mal-Internet.
  (-) Bħalissa tinsab imqabbad mal-Internet.
  (-) Bħalissa tinsab imqabbad/imqabbda mal-Internet.

Genitive

Convention 1 (e.g. Attaching a genitive "s" to (trademarked) product names is not feasible, as it could be interpreted as a modification of such names.)

Example:

Microsoft product names are usually trademarked and remain unlocalized. Product names and non-translated feature names are considered proper nouns and are used without definite or indefinite articles in English. For instance, attaching a genitive "s" to trademarked product names is not feasible as it could be interpreted as a modification of such names. Additions to a product or component name are either added with a hyphen or a periphrastic construction needs to be used. For example, instead of expressing a possessive relationship by using the genitive marker "s" in English, a periphrastic construction should be used:

- (-) Microsoft's products
- (+) Microsoft products
- (+) Products by Microsoft

Product names and non-translated feature names should also be treated as proper nouns in Maltese. Do not use the article with them.

English example	Maltese example
Windows Mail shares your Internet Connection settings with Internet Explorer	(+) Windows Mail jaqsam is-setting tat-Tqabbid mal-Internet ma' Internet Explorer.
Website addresses will be sent to Microsoft	(+) L-indirizzi tas-siti elettroniċi jintbagħtu lil Microsoft

Modifiers

Modifiers are words, phrases, or clauses that provide description in sentences. Modifiers allow writers to take the picture that they have in their heads and transfer it accurately to the heads of their readers. Essentially, modifiers breathe life into sentences.

Please see more information in the following sections:

[Adjectives](#)

[Nouns](#)

[Prepositions](#)

Nouns

General considerations

Many languages differentiate between different noun classes based on features such as animacy, shape, gender, and so on. English loan words must be integrated into the noun class system of your language. When faced with an English loan word not previously used in Microsoft products, consider the following options:

- **Motivation**: Does the English word have any formally motivated features that would allow a straightforward integration into the noun class system of your language?
- **Analogy**: Is there an equivalent Maltese term that could be used to justify the noun class the noun gets assigned to?
- **Frequency**: Is the term used in other technical documentation? If so, what noun class is it assigned to most often? The Internet may be a helpful reference here.

If the choice of noun class is left up to you, ensure that you provide consistent translations within the Microsoft product. Please consult with your translation team lead and team members to decide what noun class to assign.

For instance, some English words have an equivalent in common Maltese language, such as "nickname" ("laqam"). Other words are easily adapted following Maltese rules.

However, a number or nouns need to be translated with a periphrastic expression, such as "spyware" ("programm spija"), yet these are easily understood by users. Other nouns are more complex and call for a semantic translation.

Translators are encouraged to do their best, as they are participating in the process of standardization of the Maltese computer language.

English example	Maltese example
Undefined…	(-) … indefinit (+) … mhux definit

The (%s) control was not successfully created	(-) Il-kontroll (%s) ma nħolqitx b'suċċess
	(+) Ma jistax joħloq sew il-kontroll (%s)
Microsoft is committed...	(-) Microsoft impenjata ...
	(+) Microsoft tixtieq ...
If your intention is to...	(-) Jekk trid ...
	(+) Jekk tixtieq ...

However, there are terms that might either not have an equivalent in the Maltese language or might not be normally translated. These might be left untranslated.

English example	Maltese example
Delete it from server.	(+) Ħassru mis-server.
Enter a password to log into the server	(+) Daħħal password biex tilloggja fis-server
server IP address	(+) indirizz tal-IP (Internet Protocol) tas-server
Verify the name of the server's certificate	(+) Ivverifika isem iċ-ċertifikat tas-server

Sometimes you would need to create a noun from a verb. Please use Maltese suffixes according to language rules:

English example	Maltese example
Formatting	(+) Ifformattjar

When you need to create a noun in Maltese, notify your language coordinator so that all members in your team can use the same terminology consistently. Also, when you find a inconsistency of this kind in reference files or in project files, notify your language coordinator in order to standardize this.

Remember to use always the same translation for a source text, avoiding using different terms for the same concept, and to follow the same sentence structure for all of them:

English example	Maltese example
Start Time	(+) Ħin tal-bidu
Stop Time	(+) Ħin tat-tmiem

Inflection

The examples below show how English loanwords inflect for gender and number in Maltese.

English example	Maltese example
Buffer	Buffer (n.m.)
Cache	Cache (adj.)
Codec	Codec (n.m.)
Downloads	Downloads (n.m.pl.)
Interface	Interface (n.m.)
Proxys	Proxys (n.m)
Web	Web (n.f.)

Plural Formation

Maltese nouns have two plural numbers:

    a) the <u>DUAL</u> indicating two items or things in pairs.
    b) the <u>PLURAL</u> expressing more than two items.

The DUAL number is formed by adding the suffix "-ejn" or "-ajn" to the singular form of the noun.

    darba = darbtejn (twice)   gimgha = gimagħtejn (two weeks)
    jum = jumejn (two days)   id = idejn (pair of hands)

The general PLURAL is formed by the suffixes: "-i", "-iet", "-ijiet", and "-ien".

    ajruplan = ajruplani (airplanes)   ahbar = ahbarijiet (news)
    taqsima = taqsimiet (sections)   wied = widien (valleys)

Some nouns have a determinate plural (preceded by a number) and also a collective plural form.

kelma (a word), erba kelmiet (four words), kliem (words)

tuffieħa (an apple), sitt tuffiħiet (six apples), tuffieħ (apples)

Maltese has two categories of formations of the plural for nouns and adjectives;

a) the external plural by suffixes

b) the internal plural formed by breaking the word internally

N.B. The student is encouraged to memorize the plural formations of the more frequently used words. Following is a sampler of the variety of plural patterns encountered in Maltese.

a) EXTERNAL PLURAL

(+) Malti = Maltin (Maltese)

(+) omm = ommijiet (mothers)

(+) bieb = bibien (doors)

(+) xugaman = xugamani (towels)

(+) siġġu = siġġijiet (chairs)

(+) xufier = xufiera (drivers)

(+) ċekk = ċekkijiet (checks)

b) INTERNAL PLURAL

(+) dar = djar (houses)

(+) but = bwiet (pockets)

(+) raġel = rġiel (men)

(+) raħal = rħula (villages)

(+) ktieb = kotba (books)

(+) tarġa = taraġ (stairs)

(+) sodda = sodod (beds)

(+) gżira = gżejjer (islands

Prepositions

Pay attention to the correct use of the preposition in translations. Influenced by the English language, many translators omit them or change the word order.

US Expression	Maltese Expression	Comment
associate with	(+) orbot ma'	Maltese prepositions link nouns, pronouns and phrases to other words in a sentence. The word or phrase that the preposition introduces is called the object of the preposition.

Prepositional phrases in English need to be translated according to their context; anglicisms should be avoided. The table below contains frequently used verbs and the prepositions that follow them. Please use this table as a reference.

US-English expression	Maltese expression
associate with	(+) orbot ma'
change to	(+) aqleb għal
click on	(+) klikkja fuq
connect to	(+) qabbad ma'
export to	(+) esporta lejn
export from	(+) esporta minn
import to	(+) importa fi
import from	(+) importa minn
update to	(+) aġġorna għal
welcome to ...	(+) merħba fi

The examples below contain frequently occurring noun phrases that are preceded by a preposition. Please use this table as a reference.

US-English expression	Maltese expression
in the toolbar	(+) fit-toolbar
on the tab	(+) fit-tab

US-English expression	Maltese expression
on the menu	(+) fil-menù
on the net	(+) fuq in-net
on the Internet	(+) fuq l-Internet
on the Web	(+) fuq il-Web
on a web site	(+) f'sit elettroniku
on a web page	(+) f'paġna web

In the case of **wizard** names, translate as "Assistent ta'" to avoid inconsistencies in the use of prepositions (ta'/għall-).

In Maltese grammar, prepositions form part of a bigger family of so-called "partiċelli" (particles), defined as those words which show the relation between words, phrases and sentences. In Maltese, these are found either on their own, attached to affixes, or joined. For the purpose of this Style Guide, prepositions and particles are treated as one, even because what would strictly be a preposition in English may become a particle in Maltese and vice-versa.

Prepositions *bi, fi, ma', ta', sa, minn, lil, għal,* and *bħal* are joined to the Article to form *bil-, fil-, tal-, sal-, mill-, lill-, għall-*, and *bħall-*. In doing so, special attention is called for. The following examples refer to the most common errors:

Preposition	Note	Examples
The preposition *minn* + article When followed by nouns starting with "sun" letters (xemxin), the assimilated ending letter of this, and the other prepositions + article, is never doubled.	A common mistake is writing "minn-" instead of "min-". "Minn-" does not exist in Maltese orthography.	(+) Min-naħa għall-oħra (-) Minn-naħa għall-oħra (+) mid-dehra kurrenti
bi and *fi*	These prepositions are abbreviated to "b'" and "f'" where appropriate.	(+) b'sistema (+) f'kuntest
	They may not, however, be abbreviated when consequently, they have to be followed by a euphonic vowel (*tal-leħen*)	(+) bi ffilmjar; (-) b'iffilmjar (+) bi ssettjar; (-) b'issettjar

Preposition	Note	Examples
	attached to the Noun.	(+) fi ffajljar; (-) f'iffajljar (+) fi mkien; (-) f'imkien
ta'	"Ta'" is already a standard abbreviated form, though further abbreviating "ta'" to "t'" is orthographically correct. Do not abbreviate if noun would have to take the euphonic vowel as a result.	(+) ta' oħrajn (+) t'oħrajn (+) ta' April (+) t'April (+) ta' informazzjoni (+) t'informazzjoni (+) ta' ffajljar (+) t'iffajljar

Of the Prepositions already mentioned, "lil" requires further consideration. It has three functions which are treated separately. In many instances it is written abbreviated as standard. In other cases, it is completely elided, while in others it is written in full on its own or attached to the Article. It is very important that localizers get this, very often wrongly spelt, preposition right.

(a) "Lil" used as a Preposition to show direction: it is usually abbreviated to 'l or 'il, depending on the last letter of the previous word or the first letter of the following word.

English example	Maltese example
Face up; face down	(+) Wiċċhom 'il fuq; wiċċhom 'l isfel
Advance	(+) Imxi 'l quddiem

This form of "lil" is never attached to the Article, and though "'l" and "'il" are visually similar to the Article "l-" and "il-", they are abbreviations of "lil" and never take the hyphen.

(b) "lil" used to indicate the direct object: it is best not to abbreviate it in the case of proper Nouns which do not take the Article; it is attached to the Article when used in its full form. It may be completely elided and replaced by the Article in all other cases.

English example	Maltese translation	Comment
France beats Sweden	(+) Franza tirbaħ lil**l**-Isvezja	Full form + article.
Contact the systems administrator	(+) Ikkuntattja l-amministratur tas-sistema	"lil" is elided and only the Article is written.

(c) "Lil" used to indicate the indirect object: it should not be elided and should be written in its full form or abbreviated as indicated earlier in function (a) above.

English example	Maltese translation	Comment
Address your complaint to the systems administrator	(+) Indirizza l-ilment tiegħek lill-amministratur tas-sistema (+) Indirizza l-ilment tiegħek 'il-amministratur tas-sistema	Note the full "lill-", which includes the article.

Note: When using the apostrophe to abbreviate "lil", the closing inverted coma should be used. Using the opening inverted coma or the apostrophe is orthographically incorrect:

(+) 'l/'il

(-) 'l/ 'il

Pronouns

Many error messages in English vary with regard to the use of articles, demonstrative and possessive pronouns. Please be consistent in how you deal with such variation in Maltese.

Please use the article with full sentences (ended with period or using conjugated verbs). Articles are not to be used when the sentences are not completed or before proper names.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, localizers should consider how they would say the particular word in the relevant context, and avoid being unduly influenced by the English text in this respect. In Maltese, the vast majority of definite nouns and adjectives take the article. Omitting the Article makes Maltese sound unnatural and may result in different meanings. The native speaker finds no problem in deciding whether to use the article or not. It is only when translating from English that the problem seems to arise. Localizers should consider how they would say the particular word in the relevant context, and avoid being unduly influenced by the English text in this respect.

Personal pronouns are to be avoided when addressing the user. Also avoid using possessive pronouns, unless it is necessary.

English example	Maltese example	Explanation
File already exists The file already exists This file already exists	(+) Il-fajl ġa jeżisti.	In complete sentences, use determiners consistently even if the US string does not.
Not enough memory to complete this operation.	(+) Ma għandekx biżżejjed memorja biex tlesti l-operazzjoni.	No need to use a demonstrative construction, unless it is important in context.
Windows Vista cannot start your system. If the problem persists, contact your network administrator.	(+) Windows Vista ma jistax jistartja s-sistema. Jekk il-problema tissokta, ikkuntattja lil min jamministra n-netwerk.	Avoid using possessive marker "your" unless ownership is important in context.

Punctuation

Comma

Commas and Other Common Punctuation Marks

Please follow the basic rules for the use of punctuation marks in Maltese. As Maltese uses a character set that is based on the Latin alphabet, make sure to include a space after commas, periods, exclamation marks and question marks. Do not leave any space before the said punctuation marks. Use lowercase after a comma, unless where the next word needs to be capitalized. On the other hand, leave a space before and after ellipsis.

The general rules for punctuation in Maltese closely follow those for English. Please follow Maltese standards, cf. **Awtorità Maltija dwar l-Istandards.** Published standards. **DMS 200:2009**. http://www.kunsilltalmalti.gov.mt/filebank/documents/MSA.pdf. Consult also **Truss, L (2003)**. *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation.* Auckland: Profile Books.

Colon

Make sure you include a space after colons. After a colon, do not capitalize the following word, unless this is used in letter salutations or enumerations that consist of full sentences. Use a colon to separate hours,

minutes and seconds (02:30:00).

Colon use:

Use a colon to connect two parts of a sentence, especially if the second part is an amplification of the first. A colon marks a discontinuity in a sentence with more force than a comma or semicolon. For example, "He had always wanted to travel to Italy: When he was six his best friend moved to Venice."

In practice, however, a semicolon is used more often than a colon in the above construction, so use the colon sparingly.

Use a colon after a statement that introduces a list. For example, (+) "We will discuss the following Irish towns: (1) Cork, (2) Galway, and (3) Dublin."

Do not use the colon, however, if the introduction is not a complete sentence and one of the items in the list is needed to complete the thought.

For example, (+) "Meta konna n-Norveġja huma żaru (1) Oslo, (2) Lillehammer, u (3) Trondheim."

Use a colon to introduce a quotation or a formal statement. For example, (+) "Hemm regola waħda meta tiġu f'dari: Dejjew ejjew fil-ħin."

Use a colon after the salutation when writing a formal letter. For example, (+) "Għażiż Sur Muscat:"

Similarly, use the colon after a speaker's introductory remarks, as in (+) "Sur President, Prim Ministru, Sinjuri:"

Use a colon in expressions of time, such as 4:30 p.m.

Dashes and Hyphens

Hyphen

The hyphen is used to divide words between syllables, to link parts of a compound word, and to connect the parts of an inverted or imperative verb form. The Maltese language uses the hyphen and apostrophe both as word-break characters and also as an integral part of the preceding word.

Example: (+) "fil-bidu" is two words, "fil-" and "bidu". Similarly, "f'moħħi"
consists of "f'" and "moħħi".

En Dash

An en dash, roughly the width of an *n*, is a little longer than a hyphen. It is used for periods of time when you might otherwise use *to*. An en dash is also used in place of a hyphen when combining open compounds.

Example: (+) *Is-snin 2001–2003*

Em Dash

The em dash should only be used to emphasize an isolated element or introduce an element that is not essential to the meaning conveyed by the sentence.

Example: (+) *Inti l-ħabib—l-uniku ħabib—li offrejt li tgħinni.*

Ellipses (Suspension Points)

Ellipsis is a mark or series of marks that usually indicate an intentional omission of a word in the original text. An ellipsis can also be used to indicate a pause in speech, an unfinished thought, or, at the end of a sentence, a trailing off into silence (aposiopesis). When placed at the end of a sentence, the ellipsis can also inspire a feeling of melancholy longing. The ellipsis calls for a slight pause in speech.

The most common form of an ellipsis is a row of three periods or full stops (...) or a pre-composed triple-dot glyph (…). The usage of the em dash (—) can overlap the usage of the ellipsis.

The triple-dot punctuation mark is also called a **suspension point**, **points of ellipsis**, **periods of ellipsis**, or colloquially, **dot-dot-dot**.

Example: (+) U kompla jredden, iredden u jredden ...

Keep in mind the following when using ellipses/suspension points:

An ellipsis consists of exactly three dots called ellipsis points - never two dots, never four dots - just three dots.

Most style guides call for a space between the dots. Typesetters and page designers use something called a thin space or a non-breaking space that prevents the ellipsis points from getting spread over two lines in a document. Also, many fonts have an ellipsis symbol that you can insert, but for everyday purposes, it's fine to use regular spaces between the ellipsis points. Type period-space-period-space-period (7). Just make sure your dots don't end up on two different lines.

Also, usually there is a space on each side of an ellipsis. The ellipsis is typically standing in for a word or a sentence, so just imagine that it's a word itself, and then it's easy to remember to put a space on each side.

If you're omitting something that comes after a complete sentence, meaning that your ellipsis has to follow a period, put the period at the end of the sentence just like you normally would, then type a space, and then type or insert your ellipsis. Again, you're treating the ellipsis as if it were a word: the first word of the next sentence. This will result in four dots in a row with spaces between each dot, but this is not a four-dot ellipsis—there's no such thing. It is a period followed by a regular three-dot ellipsis.

Period

In Lists and Tables

Please adhere to the following guidelines when determining whether to include a period at the end of a list or table entry:

- If bulleted items are complete sentences: each ends with a period.
- If bulleted items continue an introductory clause: do not use a period.
- For items in a list (chapters, sections, products, system requirements, etc.) that are neither sentences nor continuations of sentences, do not use a period.
- If your translation is longer than the US text, or if you split your translation into several independent sentences, use common sense and insert a period if it improves the Maltese style.
- Never put a period after just one word.
- The same convention applies to instruction lists, captions, and callouts.

Comma vs. Period in Numerals

US English uses a period as the decimal separator, while many other languages use a comma. In Maltese a period is used. Do not use a space for this purpose as a space separates the numeral from the abbreviation.

In paper sizes (the last example in the table below) the decimal separator and the abbreviation "in" for inches are kept, since the sizes are US norms and should be represented accordingly.

English example	Maltese example
5.25 cm	(+) 5.25 cm
5 x 7.2 inches	(+) 5 x 7.2 in
Letter Landscape 11 x 8.5 in	(+) Letter Orizzontali 11 x 8.5 in

For thousands, English uses a comma while many other languages use a period (at Microsoft we normally do not use a space for this purpose, but we use a period instead to avoid wrapping problems). In Maltese a comma is used.

English example	Maltese example
1,526	(+) 1,526
$ 1,526.75	(+) $ 1,526.75

Quotation Marks

Please adhere to the following basic rules for the use of quotation marks in Maltese.

Use as in US text but double inverted commas are preferred to single, owing to the fact that quite a number of Maltese words end with an apostrophe:

English example	Maltese example
Type 'skip again'	(+) Ittajpja "erġa' aqbeż" (-) Ittajpja 'erġa' aqbeż'

If the word ending with an apostrophe appears at the end, try changing the font of the apostrophe or inverted commas.Please adhere to the following basic rules for the use of quotation marks in Maltese.

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English example	Maltese example
Type 'skip again'	(+) Ittajpja "erġa' aqbeż" (-) Ittajpja 'erġa' aqbeż'

If the word ending with an apostrophe appears at the end, try changing the font of the apostrophe or inverted commas.

In US source strings, you may find software references surrounded by English quotation marks. Always use curly (not straight) quotation marks. See the examples above

Parentheses

In English, there is no space between the parentheses and the text inside them. The same applies for Maltese.
Example: Rużar Briffa (1906-1963)

Names for Punctuation Marks

Various texts give different names to some punctuation marks and, in some cases, the same name is written differently. The following is a list of the most frequently used punctuation mark names, showing the most common usage against other names or spelling mode:

English	Most common usage (MT)	Other names (MT)
Period/Full stop	Fulstop	Punt
Comma	Koma	Virgola
Colon	Kowlin	Colon
Semi-colon	Semikowlin	Semi-colon
Brackets ()	Parentesi	
Double inverted commas	Virgoletti	Virgoletti doppji Virgoletti bi tnejn
Single inverted commas	Virgoletti singli	Virgoletti b'waħda
Capital letters	Ittri kapitali	Ittri kbar

Please consult Glossary Manager for guidance on which version to use. Whichever version is adopted, consistency should be kept throughout.

Singular & Plural

Like the English language, Maltese lacks a third person singular pronoun or possessive adjective applying neutrally to both sexes. The older convention often evidenced in XP was to use "huwa", "lilu" and "tiegħu" for both

sexes. However, such convention is often felt to exclude females. Discriminating in favour of the female sex is not a solution.

Avoid writing sentences that refer to a single person whose gender is unknown. You can often avoid this situation by rewriting the sentence to make the subject plural. In cases where a reference to a single person is impossible to avoid, do not use "hu jew hi," "lilu or lilha," or "tiegħu jew tagħha". Also, generally avoid the use of slashes to combine both genders (although sometimes exceptions are made – see table below). The language in Microsoft products should sound natural, as if part of a spoken conversation.

Note: The use in the singular of "they" and "their", as well as the Maltese counterparts "huma" (often omitted) and "tagħhom", is common in informal speech, but is still considered ungrammatical and should be avoided in formal speech and writing, including that for localization.

An acceptable alternative includes rephrasing in the plural, example:

(?) … the employees know their computers are actually connected to their organization's VPN server.
(+) … l-impjegati jkunu jafu li l-kompjuter tagħhom ikun fil-fatt imqabbad mas-server tal-VPN tal-organizzazzjoni.
(-) … kull impjegat ikun jaf li l-kompjuter tiegħu jkun fil-fatt imqabbad mas-server tal-VPN tal-organizzazzjoni.
(-) … kull impjegata tkun taf li l-kompjuter tagħha jkun fil-fatt imqabbad mas-server tal-VPN tal-organizzazzjoni.
(-) … l-impjegat ikun jaf li l-kompjuter tiegħu jkun fil-fatt imqabbad mas-server tal-VPN tal-organizzazzjoni.
(-) "… kull waħda mill-impjegati tkunu taf li l-kompjuter tagħha jkun fil-fatt imqabbad mas-server tal-VPN tal-organizzazzjoni."
(?) "… kull wieħed mill-impjegati jkunu jafu li l-kompjuter tagħhom ikun fil-fatt imqabbad mas-server tal-VPN tal-organizzazzjoni."

Addressing the user

The user is best addressed in the second person singular, preferably through the verb, omitting the pronoun. Shorter, more concise instructions/prompts make for a more polite, and effective interface:

- You can try ...
  (+) Ipprova ...
  (?) Tista' tipprova ...
  (+) Int tista'/Inti tista tipprova ...

- Do you want to save changes?
  (+) Tixtieq tissejvja l-bidliet?
  (-) Trid tissejvja l-bidliet?

For items that have an automatic action (one that requires no user manipulation) upon opening, use the third person singular imperfect form.

English example	Maltese example
Opens the calendar	(+) Jiftaħ il-kalendarju

Split Infinitive

This section does not apply to Maltese.

Subjunctive

This section does not apply to Maltese.

Symbols & Non-Breaking Spaces

The letters and symbols used in placeholder text convey a specific meaning. Please refer to the following table for examples of placeholder text and corresponding error message text that users will see.

Placeholder text	Error message text that users will see
%d, %ld, %u, and %lu	Number (such as 3 or 512)
%c	Letter (such as "f" or "s")
%s	String (such as "Click here to continue.")
"Checking Web %1!d! of %2!d!"	"Checking Web <number> of <number>"
"INI file "%1!-.200s!" section"	"INI file "<string>" section"

If your language has agreement between adjectives and nouns, and the noun is a placeholder, it can be important to know what exact string will be in the placeholder, so that a preceding adjective can be inflected accordingly. The wording of most source strings has already been adjusted to avoid such localization issues and a syntactic construction has been chosen in which a placeholder is not modified by an adjective. However, be mindful of such issues when localizing software. In some languages there is also agreement between a noun subject and the verb. If your language has syntactic agreement, try to reword the translation to avoid a potentially ungrammatical sentence.

English example	Message User will see	Maltese translation
Replace invalid %s?	Replace invalid data? Replace invalid file?	(+) Tissostitwixxi %s mhux valida?
%s already exists	File already exists Name already exists	(+) %s ġa jeżisti

English example	Message User will see	Maltese translation
%s is now set as your personal contact.	Regina is now set as your personal contact Mr. Kim is now set as your personal contact	(+) %s bħalissa kkonfigurata bħala l-kuntatt personali tiegħek
%s stopped working and was closed	The application stopped working and was closed The program stopped working and was closed	(+) %s waqfet taħdem u ngħalqet

Additional guidelines:

- Use a non-breaking space (CTRL+SHIFT+SPACEBAR) in any abbreviation.
- If non-breaking spaces cannot be used (in Help files, for example) it is also acceptable to write these abbreviations without a space to avoid having one letter move to the beginning of the next line.

Remember to use a space before and after the numerals (i.e. 110 x 230; 5 mm).Use non-breaking spaces (Ctrl+Shift+Spacebar) between the numeral and the unit of measure or currency that goes with it. Measurements units do not take a period, unless they are shown at the end of a sentence.

Years are not written with a thousand separator (i.e. 2007, 2005).

Example: (+) 100 mg

Syntax

This Style Guide is not intended as a universal grammatical and syntax guide for translations into Maltese. It aims to provide a collection of guidelines and indications for the realization of localized products that satisfy the user's expectations, and to stimulate localizers to strive towards specific solutions as required.

Consistency and the adaptation of the product to the local language (idiomaticity) play an equally important role for localization. The language in Microsoft products should have the look and feel of a product originally written in Maltese, using idiomatic syntax and terminology. At the same time, the language must maintain a high level of terminological consistency, so as to guarantee the maximum user experience and usability for our customers.

Omit possessive adjectives in your translations (i.e. your keyboard, your software), unless they are needed. The use of the possessive pronoun equivalent to "your", "*tiegħek*" or the equivalent suffix, is at times recommended, as can be seen in example (a) below, since it provides a courteous personal interface. It may sometimes be elided, as can be seen in example (b) below. Where "try rephrasing your query" is rendered in a Maltese style and syntax, the mention of "your query" becomes redundant by the use of the verb "staqsi". The literal translation of

the suggested Maltese phrase would be "try asking in a different way". Note the laborious rendering in the **(-)** version. The verb "tixtieq" in the **(+)** version of (b) is considered more courteous yet more informal than "teħtieġ".

(a) Type your question here and then click search
(+) Ittajpja l-mistoqsija tiegħek hawn u klikkja fuq Fittex

(b) If this list doesn't provide you with the help you need, try rephrasing your query.
(+) Jekk din il-lista ma tinkludix l-għajnuna li tixtieq, ipprova staqsi b'mod differenti.
(-) Jekk din il-lista ma tinkludix l-għajnuna li teħtieġ, ipprova biddel il-kliem tal-mistoqsija tiegħek.

When incorporating English terms, you must follow the spelling, grammar, and syntax rules of your language. Sometimes English words get incorporated as a whole into other languages, but most often the English word gets "phonologized" and integrated into the target language. If you are sure that there is no Maltese-specific equivalent for an English loan word and decide to incorporate an English word instead, please check with your translation lead and other team members. In many languages the spelling of incorporated loanwords is not documented and it is important that English loan words are spelled consistently in the target language.

Verbs

Sometimes an English verb can be used as loan word in the target language. Such loan words usually follow the syntactic and morphological rules of the target language. The verbs in red below are not translated in Maltese.

English example	Maltese example	Maltese example	Maltese example
chat	jiċċettja	ċċettja	ċċettjar
crawl	jikkrolja	krolja	kroljar
debug	jiddibaggja	ddibaggja	dibaggjar

Be consistent when translating option names and try to use the same part of speech for all of them, when possible. If you detect that verbs, nouns and adjectives are being used at the same time to translate option names or related strings, contact your language coordinator to check whether it is possible to standardize this by using the same part of speech for all of them.

Remember that you need to use conjugated verbs in full sentences (ended with period), and to use the 2nd polite person to address the user.

Also, keep the same sentence structure for similar strings, such as error messages (see next section).

Be consistent in how you translate verbs in error messages. If it is grammatical to omit the predicate "be" in your language, you can omit it in error messages, but you should be consistent in your usage across all error messages. Be concise without changing the meaning of the source string.

English example	Maltese translation	Explanation
The document is too large. Document too large.	(+) Id-dokument kbir wisq.	Be consistent in your usage of the verb "to be".
Access was denied. Access denied.	(+) Aċċess miċħud.	In complete sentences, use verbs and the same tense as in the source string.
The file '%s' is an unknown graphics format.	(+) Il-fajl '%s' għandu format ta' grafika skonoxxut.	Rephrase "is" with "have" if necessary to produce an appropriate translation.
The application may attempt to convert the graphic.	(+) L-applikazzjoni tista' tittanta tikkonverti l-grafika.	"may + Verb" can be rephrased as "Verb + possibly"
A problem occurred while trying to connect to ...	(+) Kien hemm problema fit-tqabbid ma' ...	Shorten and rephrase if necessary to "A problem occurred while connecting to the network share '%1!s!'
The following error occurred: '%1!s!' (error #%2!lx!)	(+) Żball '%1!s!' (żball #%2!lx!)	Shorten this construction where possible, e.g. Error: '%1!s!' (error #%2!lx!).
An unknown error has occurred./ No error occurred.	(+) Żball skonoxxut.	Shorten this construction where possible, e.g. Unknown error. / No error

Word Order

Fluency, readability and intelligibility are essential to the success of any localized product. In practice, this means that if there is a more idiomatic way of structuring a given sentence, use the Maltese word order instead of translating word by word, as long as the key message is conveyed.

Attention should be concentrated on the essence of the message and not the exact wording of the message in English:

English example	Acceptable translation
If You Are Switching to Office	(+) Tagħrif għall-utenti ġodda tal-Office
Superlatives are better toned down. A special welcome! Thank you for giving Office a try.	(+) Merħba. Napprezzaw l-għażla tiegħek. (Note elimination of the exclamation mark.)
Paternalistic approaches should be eliminated: Look before you leap: Planning your booklet. *Before you dive headfirst into unknown waters, it's good safety sense to take a look and see what might wait before the surface.* Before you start adding words and pictures to a booklet, it's a good idea to think about the materials you'll use.	(+) Attenzjoni meħtieġa fl-ippjanar tal-ktejjeb. Qabel tibda żżid il-kliem u l-istampi fi ktejjeb, ikun tajjeb li tippjana l-materjali li biħsiebek tuża.
In the above example, the opening sentence in italics should be omitted altogether. It does not provide any details, and sounds paternalistic. It just calls for attention already called for in the title.	
Rhetoric questions should be normalized: Which Office Applications Should You Use?	(+) Għażla ta' applikazzjonijiet tal-Office li tista' tuża (?) Liema applikazzjonijiet tal-Office għandek tuża?

Style and Tone Considerations

This section focuses on higher-level considerations for audience, style, tone, and voice.

Audience

Because you are not translating only words, many times you will have to adapt the sentence structure or to rephrase the English source text in order to express the same idea in your translation. It is preferably to provide an idiomatic or semantic translation that can be easily understood by your target audience than to provide a literal translation hard to understand.

Example: Microsoft Windows is the best operating system software on the market.

Literal translation: Microsoft Windows hu l-aqwa softwer tas-sistema tal-operat fis-suq.

Better translation: Microsoft Windows toffri l-aħjar softwer fis-suq biex tħaddem il-kompjuter tiegħek.

Style

Tone and voice are at the core of the localization style. Together with other style aspects, they dress up the message in a way that effectively delivers the purpose of the message itself to the targeted audience. A handful of key considerations should be constantly kept in mind during localization.

(a) Our audience is the user. Users come from all walks of life, and their level of education and degree of proficiency vary across the whole spectrum. It should be assumed that basic features of an operating system and popular applications will be used by one and all while more advanced features will be used by the more proficient. This implies that a common style has to be adopted for the basic level of interface. The style may be carefully adjusted to cater for the various subsequent levels. However, the centrality of the user should always be the main consideration.

(b) The purpose of the message is another essential consideration. Is the message intended to be instructional or corrective? Is it a help, a success, or an error message? Each of these may require a particular style.

(c) For the right emotion to be transmitted to the user, messages should be courteous, helpful, and positively encouraging. They should nonetheless deliver their purpose effectively and keep the user's interest alive.

(d) Through the products, localizers will be interacting actively with the users long after they finish their job, projecting an imaginary persona to the user. In addressing the user, special attention should be made not to sound too paternalistic, and to treat users as an intelligent audience in need of instructions and prompts, help and correction. Localizers are encouraged to think and render as if they were in a face-to-face dialogue with the user.

(e) The choice of language best suited to achieve the purpose of the message should be pursued. The style should be direct, semi-formal and friendly.

The tone of the Maltese translation should mimic the tone of the source product, and should also be respectful. Any word forms that are specific to a particular dialect should be avoided.

Example: Microsoft Word has all the word processing functions you will ever need, and then some.

Literal translation: Microsoft Word għandha l-funzjonijiet kollha tal-ipproċessar tal-kliem li qatt jista' jkollok bżonn, u aktar.

Better translation: Microsoft Word fiha dawk l-affarijiet kollha li tista' tiġi bżonn biex tipproduċi dokumenti bil-kliem.

Tone

The tone of the Maltese translation should mimic the tone of the source product, and should also be respectful. Any word forms that are specific to a particular dialect should be avoided.

Voice

To be gender neutral, it is suggested to use 'inti' in instaces where 'you' is translated.

Example: You must log on to continue

 Inti għandek tilloggja biex tkompli.

English	Translation
You are now connected to the Internet.	(+) Inti issa mqabbad mal-Internet

Localization Guidelines

This section contains guidelines for localization into Maltese.

General Considerations

This section of the Style Guide describes all of the general localization guidelines that apply to Maltese.

Abbreviations

Common Abbreviations

You might need to abbreviate some words in the UI (mainly buttons or options names) due to lack of space. This can be done in the following ways:

List of common abbreviations:

The following table lists common Maltese expressions and their associated, acceptable abbreviations.

Maltese example	Acceptable abbreviation
ante meridiem	(+) a.m.
eċċetra	(+) Eċċ.
eżempju	(+) eż.
paġna/paġni	(+) p./pp.
paragrafu	(+) para.
post meridiem	(+) p.m.
referenza	(+) ref.
telefown	(+) Tel.

Additional guidelines:
- Use a non-breaking space (CTRL+SHIFT+SPACEBAR) in any abbreviation.
- If non-breaking spaces cannot be used (in Help files, for example) it is also acceptable to write these abbreviations without a space to avoid having one letter move to the beginning of the next line.

Do not abbreviate words that users might not recognize. If you have any doubt, spell out the word rather than using an abbreviation.

Accessibility

Accessibility enables people of all abilities to use their full potential. Microsoft provides people with disabilities with more accessible products and services. These may not be available in Maltese speaking market. During localization of accessibility features such as speech recognition software etc, please double-check with the appropriate subsidiary or through your Microsoft Program Manager.

Acronyms

Acronyms are words made up of the initial letters of major parts of a compound term. Some well-known examples are WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get), OLE (Object Linking and Embedding), or RAM (Random Access Memory).

The term acronym refers to words that are made up of the initial letters of the major parts of a compound term if they are pronounced as a new word. Some well-known examples of acronyms are WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get), OLE (Object Linking and Embedding), or RAM (Random Access Memory).

Caution: It is generally not correct to include a generic term after an acronym or abbreviation if one of the letters in the acronym stands for that term. Even though this might occur in the US-English version, it should be "corrected" in the localized version.

In the Maltese version this is not considered to be incorrect when acronyms are not well known or stand for English words, as using this generic term can help the user to understand its meaning or when the terms would help to indicate a plural. It is up to you to judge to the best of your knowledge whether the acronym or abbreviation can take this generic term.

- (+) numru personali (PIN)
- (-) lingwa HTML

Gender of acronyms

The gender of an acronym is generally that of the main word, as in "(memorja) RAM," "(netwerk) LAN," or "(numru) PIN". Depending on the context, you may find an acronym used with different gender, as in "(lingwa) HTML" u "(format) HTML", but note that in these cases the generic term has different meanings.

Number of acronyms

Remember that, in Maltese, one way of indicating the plural of an acronym is with the use of nouns before the acronym and/or adjectives after it, as in "netwerks LAN ikkonfigurati".

Localized Acronyms

In online help or documentation, spell out the words that comprise an acronym or abbreviation the first time that acronym is used in the text. You should include the language-specific translation, the US term, and the acronym as in the following example:

- Organizzazzjoni Internazzjonali għall-Istandardizzazzjoni (International Organization for Standardization, ISO)

In the user interface, there is usually not enough space for all three terms (US term, language-specific translation, and the acronym); only in wizards, the acronym can easily be spelled out and localized on first mention. If there are space constraints or there is no 'first' occurrence, it is up to you to judge to the best of your knowledge whether the acronym or abbreviation can be left as is or should be spelled out and localized.

You should also consider that different users will have different levels of knowledge about a product. For example, an Exchange user will understand "DL," but the average Windows user might not understand "DL" and would need to see "lista tad-distribuzzjoni" (distribution list) instead. Try to be consistent within a product with your use of acronyms and initializations.

Note: Although the English acronym cannot generally be derived from the language-specific translation, creating a new acronym derived from the language-specific translated term is not an option. For example, do not replace an English acronym with a language-specific acronym; instead, leave the English acronym or abbreviation intact, as in the following examples:

English example	Acceptable translation
Internet Information Services (IIS)	(+) Servizzi ta' Informazzjoni fuq l-Internet (IIS)
DDE/OLE Links	(+) Links DDE/OLE

Unlocalized Acronyms

Many abbreviations and acronyms are standardized and remain untranslated. They are only followed by their full spelling in English if the acronym needs to be explained to the speakers of a different language. In other cases, where the acronym is rather common, adding the fully spelled-out form will only confuse users. In these cases, the acronym can be used on its own.

The following list contains examples of acronyms and abbreviations that are considered commonly understood; these acronyms and abbreviations should not be localized or spelled out in full in English:

- ANSI (American National Standards Institute)
- ISO (International Standards Organization)
- ISDN
- DOS

- DSL
- CD
- DVD

If you are unsure what an acronym or abbreviation stands for or refers to, please contact the Moderator responsible for this Style Guide.

Applications, Products, and Features

Application/product names are often trademarked or may be trademarked in the future and are therefore rarely translated. Occasionally, feature names are trademarked, too (e.g. IntelliSense™). Before translating any application, product, or feature name, please verify that it is in fact translatable and not protected in any way.

Frequent Errors

Prepositions *bi, fi, ma', ta', sa, minn, lil, għal,* and *bħal* are joined to the Article to form *bil-, fil-, tal-, sal-, mill-, lill-, għall-*, and *bħall-*. In doing so, special attention is called for. The following examples refer to the most common errors:

Preposition	Note	Examples
The preposition *minn* + article When followed by nouns starting with "sun" letters (xemxin), the assimilated ending letter of this, and the other prepositions + article, is never doubled.	A common mistake is writing "minn-" instead of "min-". "Minn-" does not exist in Maltese orthography.	(+) Min-naħa għall-oħra (-) Minn-naħa għall-oħra (+) mid-deħra kurrenti
bi and *fi*	These prepositions are abbreviated to "b'" and "f'" where appropriate.	(+) b'sistema (+) f'kuntest
	They may not, however, be abbreviated when consequently, they have to be followed by a euphonic vowel (*tal-leħen*) attached to the Noun.	(+) bi ffilmjar; (-) b'iffilmjar (+) bi ssettjar; (-) b'issettjar (+) fi ffajljar; (-) f'iffajljar (+) fi mkien; (-) f'imkien

Preposition	Note	Examples
ta'	"Ta'" is already a standard abbreviated form, though further abbreviating "ta'" to "t'" is orthographically correct. Do not abbreviate if noun would have to take the euphonic vowel as a result.	(+) ta' oħrajn (+) t'oħrajn (+) ta' April (+) t'April (+) ta' informazzjoni (+) t'informazzjoni (+) ta' ffajljar (+) t'iffajljar

Glossaries

You can find the translations of terms and UI elements of Microsoft products at Microsoft Language Portal (http://www.microsoft.com/Language/en-US/Default.aspx).

Fictitious Information

Fictitious content is legally sensitive material and as such cannot be handled as a pure terminology or localization issue. Below is some basic information and contact points when dealing with fictitious content:

Vendors and Localizers are not allowed to create their own fictitious names. You must either use the source names or use the list of legally approved names.

Please contact your product team representative for further information on how to deal with fictitious companies, names, addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, etc. in your product. For technical products, you may also check with the product team representative whether localized fictitious content is required or not (e.g. Visual Studio).

Recurring Patterns

This section does not apply to Maltese.

Standardized Translations

There are a number of standardized translations mentioned in all sections of this Style Guide. In order to find them more easily, the most relevant topics and sections are compiled here for you reference.

Months

Days

Acronyms

Abbreviations

Unlocalized Items

Trademarked names and the name Microsoft Corporation shouldn't be localized. A list of Microsoft trademarks is available for your reference at the following location: http://www.microsoft.com/trademarks/t-mark/names.htm.

The terms "Microsoft," "Windows," and "Office" must always remain unlocalized; however, these terms may be transliterated if you receive approval for the appropriate Microsoft PM and Subsidiary. Refer to the section of this Style Guide that discusses trademarks for the complete list of product and component names that must remain in English. Ensure that you apply the chosen product terminology consistently throughout your translation of a set of content or an interface.

The major product groups use the following unlocalized product portfolio names; these are considered product names and are always used without a hyphen or article in any language:

- Microsoft Office System
- Microsoft Windows Server System
- Windows Mobile

Using the Word Microsoft

In English, it is prohibited to use MS as an abbreviation for Microsoft.

The general rule is that product names are not translated if they include the word Microsoft and/or are trademarked (for example, Microsoft Draw or Microsoft Graph). The Microsoft PM and/or Subsidiary should always be contacted for final approval before you translate a product or component name.

The terms "Microsoft," "Windows," and "Office" must always remain unlocalized; however, these terms may be transliterated if you receive approval for the appropriate Microsoft PM and Subsidiary. Refer to the section of this Style Guide that discusses trademarks for the complete list of product and component names that must remain in English. Ensure that you apply the chosen product terminology consistently throughout your translation of a set of content or an interface.

Example: Microsoft Corporation ġiet imwaqqfa fl-1975.

Software Considerations

This section refers to all menus, menu items, commands, buttons, check boxes, etc., which should be consistently translated in the localized product.

Refer to http://msdn.microsoft.com/library/aa511258.aspx for a detailed explanation of the Windows user interface guidelines (English).

User Interface

Translating UI items can be a challenge at times, in part because you do not always know the context or the exact function of a particular UI item. This topic is intended to give some general guidelines about UI references.

Always use all available resources to establish the context for UI items. When working with LocStudio EDBs, these resources are the following columns: Instructions, Resource ID, String ID, and sometimes Previous Source and Term Note. If you need more context for a string, contact your Engineering Partner.

Checkboxes and Radio Buttons

In the texts for checkboxes and radio buttons, it is not typical to address the user directly. Using a personal pronoun such as "you," "vous," or "Sie," in languages that use this form of address in checkbox or radio button texts should, therefore, be a relatively rare choice.

Within an interface, a checkbox can be selected or deselected.
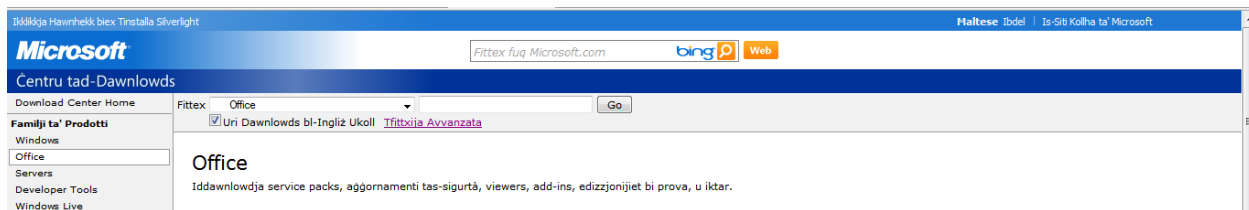
In addition, a radio button can be selected or deselected; within a list, if one radio button is selected, none of the other radio buttons can be selected.

Punctuation in the source text often indicates whether a string is to be interpreted as a full sentence, but unfortunately this is not always the case. As a general rule, text in checkboxes and radio buttons receive no period at the end. If the period is there in the source text and if the string is a complete sentence, the localized string should also end with a period. A period is also advised if the target string is a complete and complex or long sentence (full sentence with sub-clauses or stretching over several lines).

English example	Maltese example
I accept the license terms.	(+) Naċċetta t-termini tal-liċenzja.
I accept this agreement.	(+) Naċċetta dan il-ftehim.
Confirm file format conversion on open	(+) Ikkonferma l-konverżjoni tal-format mal-ftuħ

Dialog Box Contents

When translating dialog box contents, you are expected to use consistent terminology and language style in all dialog boxes and ensure that your translations are consistent with translations in other localized applications. Also, applications that are not currently localized may be localized in the future, and the same translations will be used in those applications.

Dialog box titles should be consistent with the menus items or menu commands that call them. Typically, menus are either nouns or verbs; therefore, dialog titles should be nouns or verbs. This pattern is usually observed in the source text, and the source text format is decisive here. If the source text does use a headline format ("Doing xyz"), the Maltese equivalent to this format should be used.

English example	Maltese example
Insert Table	(+) Inserixxi Tabella

Use parallel language for dialog box elements that are parallel in function, such as the contents of lists and tables. Ensure that all items are similar in form, and use the same part of speech. For example, translate all items in a list within a dialog box using an infinitive verb, or translate them all as noun/gerund, or translate them all as imperative verbs. Rely on the rules for Maltese to determine how best to translate the contents of dialog box elements such as lists and tables.

Menus, Commands, Buttons, and Other Interface Text

When translating menus, commands, and buttons, you should translate a verb as a verb (infinitive or citation form), unless there is a good reason not to do so. Always try to establish whether a word is a noun or a verb, using all available context and material. Some words can be both nouns and verbs (such as "View" in English interfaces), so be sure you know the context in which the word is being used in the interface. If the part of speech is ambiguous, there are often instructions that clarify whether you are dealing with a noun, verb, or adjective in a given context.

English example	Maltese example
Archive [noun]	(+) Arkivju
Set [verb] Query [noun]	(+) Iddefinixxi l-Mistoqsija
View [verb]	(+) Ara

Below please see examples of drop-down menus:

Below please see examples of buttons:
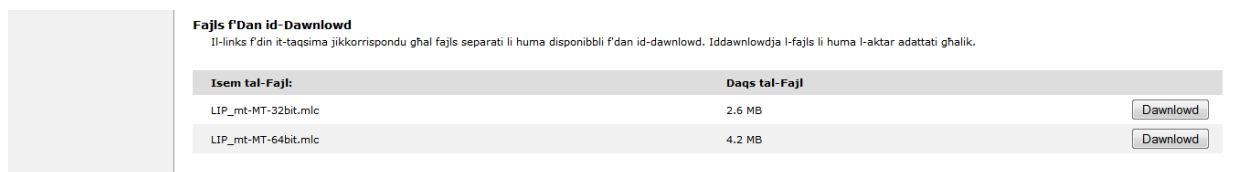
Messages

Status Messages

What is a Status Bar Message?

A status bar message is an informational message about the active document or a selected command as well as about any active or selected interface item. Messages are shown in the status bar at the bottom of the window when the user has chosen a menu, a command or any other item, or has started a function. The status bar messages refer to actions being performed or already complete (for example in Outlook below).
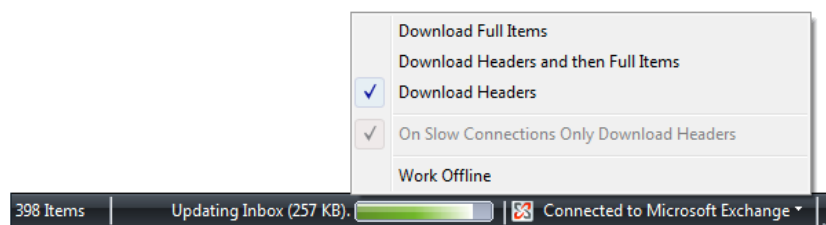
Maltese Style in Status bar Messages

In English, the status bar messages have different forms dependent on the information they must convey. In *Maltese,* menu and commands status bar messages should follow the format below.

Name	Maltese Name	Category	English Status Bar message	Maltese Status Bar message
Edit	(+) Editja	menu	Contains editing commands	(+) Fih kmandi biex teditja
Copy to Folder...	(+) Ikkopja fil-fowlder	menu	Copies the selected items to a new location	(+) Jikkopja l-oġġetti magħżula f'post ġdid
New	(+) Ġdid	command	Creates a new document	(+) Joħloq dokument ġdid
			Make object visible?	(+) Trid tagħmel l-oġġett jidher?

Name	Maltese Name	Category	English Status Bar message	Maltese Status Bar message
			Word is converting the document. Press Esc to stop.	(+) Word qed taqleb id-dokument. Agħfas Esc biex tieqaf
			Datasheet View	(+) Dehra tad-Datasheet
			Done	(+) Lest

The importance of standardization

In the US product you can often find messages that are phrased differently even though they have the same meaning. Try to avoid this in the localized Maltese version. Use one standard translation as in the examples below:

English term	Correct Maltese translation
Press F1 to get Help	(+) Agħfas F1 għall-Għajnuna
If you want Help press F1	
To get Help press F1	
Not enough memory	(+) Memorja insuffiċjenti
Insufficient memory	
There is not enough memory	
Save changes to %1?	(+) Tissejvjahom il-bidliet f'%1?
Do you want to save changes to %1?	

Remember to use verb phrases in complete sentences, example: "M'għandekx biżżejjed memorja biex ..." When possible, use one standard translation for similar strings.

Translators are encouraged to do their best, as they are participating in the process of standardization of the Maltese computer language.

English example	Maltese example
Undefined…	(-) … indefinit (+) … mhux definit
The (%s) control was not successfully created	(-) Il-kontroll (%s) ma nħolqitx b'suċċess (+) Ma jistax joħloq sew il-kontroll (%s)

70

Microsoft is committed...	(-) Microsoft impenjata ...
	(+) Microsoft tixtieq ...
If your intention is to...	(-) Jekk trid ...
	(+) Jekk tixtieq ...

However, there are terms that might either not have an equivalent in the Maltese language or might not be normally translated. These might be left untranslated.

English example	Maltese example
Delete it from server.	(+) Ħassru mis-server.
Enter a password to log into the server	(+) Daħħal password biex tilloggja fis-server
server IP address	(+) indirizz tal-IP (Internet Protocol) tas-server
Verify the name of the server's certificate	(+) Ivverifika isem iċ-ċertifikat tas-server

The examples below show how English loanwords inflect for gender and number in Maltese.

English example	Maltese example
Buffer	Buffer (n.m.)
Cache	Cache (adj.)
Codec	Codec (n.m.)
Downloads	Downloads (n.m.pl.)
Interface	Interface (n.m.)
Proxys	Proxys (n.m)
Web	Web (n.f.)

Sometimes you would need to create a noun from a verb. Please use Maltese suffixes according to language rules:

English example	Maltese example
Formatting	(+) Ifformattjar

When you need to create a noun in Maltese, notify your language coordinator so that all members in your team can use the same terminology consistently. Also, when you find a inconsistency of this kind in reference files or in project files, notify your language coordinator in order to standardize this.
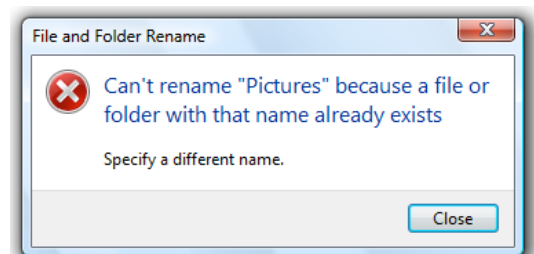
Remember to use always the same translation for a source text, avoiding using different terms for the same concept, and to follow the same sentence structure for all of them:

English example	Maltese example
Start Time	(+) Ħin tal-bidu
Stop Time	(+) Ħin tat-tmiem

Error Messages

What Is An Error Message?

Here is an example:

Error messages are messages sent by the system or a program, informing the user that there is an error that must be corrected in order for the program to keep running. For example, the messages can prompt the user to take an action or inform the user of an error that requires rebooting the computer.

Maltese Style in Error Messages

It is important to use consistent terminology and language style in the localized error messages, and not just translate as they appear in the US product.

Many error messages alert the user to the fact that an action could not be completed or that an item could not be found. Be consistent in how you convey such messages in Maltese.

English example	Maltese example	Explanation
File not found. File was not found. The file was not found.	(+) Il-fajl ma jistax jinstab.	Use one basic syntax for all negative sentences.

English example	Maltese example	Explanation
Not enough memory.	(+) Memorja insuffiċjenti. (+) Ma għandekx biżżejjed memorja biex …	Use "memorja insuffiċjenti" with general messages. Use a verb phrase to translate full sentences.
Wrong file type.	(+) Tip ta' fajl inkorrett.	wrong = incorrect
Incorrect MS-DOS version.	(+) Verżjoni inkorretta ta' MS-DOS.	
Invalid file type.	(+) Tip ta' fajl mhux validu.	Invalid =illegal. Do not use "invalidu" or "illegali".
An illegal name has been entered.	(+) Ktibt isem inkorrett.	Do not use "invalidu" or "illegali".
%1 has a bad format.	(+) għandha format mhux validu.	Use "mhux validu" instead of "ħażin", unless the meaning is physically broken.
Object doesn't support current locale setting.	(+) L-oġġett ma jiħux il-konfigurazzjoni reġjonali kurrenti.	Use standard word order (i.e., be aware where the negative maker is placed in sentence)

Standard Phrases in Error Messages

When translating standard phrases, standardize. Note that sometimes the US uses different forms to express the same thing.

Error messages written in US-English are occasionally inconsistent. As you localize the software into Maltese, you should ensure that you use a standard phrase for error messages that have the same meaning and purpose in the US-English version.

The following table provides US-English examples of inconsistent error messages and their corresponding, standardized Maltese:

Examples:

English	Translation	Example	Comment
Cannot … Could not …	Ma jistax	(+) Ma jistax isib il-fajl	
Failed to … Failure of …	Ma rnexxilux	(+) Ma rnexxilux isib il-fajl	
Cannot find … Could not find …	Ma jistax	(+) Ma jistax isib il-fajl	

English	Translation	Example	Comment
Unable to find … Unable to locate …			
Not enough memory Insufficient memory There is not enough memory There is not enough memory available	M'hemmx biżżejjed memorja	(+) M'hemmx biżżejjed memorja fil-kompjuter	
... is not available ... is unavailable	Mhux disponibbli	(+) Il-fajl mhux disponibbli	

Error messages are often made up of two items: a phrase explaining the problem, and a sentence that states the consequences of the problem or how to solve it. In the US-English version, a coma, colon, or a semicolon to separate both items. In Maltese we shall try to unify and simplify punctuation between both items and use a full stop to separate them. The first item in the error message will be translated following the general rules for error messages. The second part will be translated as a full sentence ending with a full stop.

Error Messages Containing Placeholders

When localizing error messages containing placeholders, try to find out what will replace the placeholder. This is necessary for the sentence to be grammatically correct when the placeholder is replaced with a word or phrase. Note that the letters used in placeholders convey a specific meaning, see examples below:

%d, %ld, %u, and %lu means <number>

%c means <letter>

%s means <string>

Examples of error messages containing placeholders:

"Checking Web %1!d! of %2!d!" means "Checking Web <number> of <number>".

"INI file "%1!-.200s!" section" means "INI file "<string>" section".

Error messages contain placeholder text that will be filled in by the operating system when the message is shown to users. The following table provides examples of error messages with placeholder text, and the final error messages that users will see:

Placeholders in English error messages	Final error message text that users will see
%d minute(s) remaining	3 minute(s) remaining
Dialing %s...	Dialing business phone

Placeholders in English error messages	Final error message text that users will see
The disk in drive %c: cannot be formatted.	The disk in drive C: cannot be formatted.

When localizing error messages containing placeholders, find out what text will replace the placeholder when the user sees the error message. This process is necessary because you must ensure the resulting sentence will be grammatically correct when the placeholder is replaced with a word or phrase. Most source strings have instructions that detail what text will replace the placeholder.

Examples of error messages:

- "Checking Web %1!d! of %2!d!" means
  "Checking Web <number> of <number>".

- "INI file "%1!-.200s!" section" means
  "INI file "<string>" section".

In the English source string, placeholders are found in the position where they would naturally occur in that language. Since in English numerals typically precede the noun, the numeral placeholders typically precede the noun in the source strings. This order is also followed in Maltese, but check whether you need to change the position of any word in the phrase.

English example	Maltese translation
%u hours ago	(+) %u sigħat ilu
%d hour(s) remaining	(+) Baqa' %d minuta/minuti

The letters and symbols used in placeholder text convey a specific meaning. Please refer to the following table for examples of placeholder text and corresponding error message text that users will see.

Placeholder text	Error message text that users will see
%d, %ld, %u, and %lu	Number (such as 3 or 512)
%c	Letter (such as "f" or "s")
%s	String (such as "Click here to continue.")
"Checking Web %1!d! of %2!d!"	"Checking Web <number> of <number>"
"INI file "%1!-.200s!" section"	"INI file "<string>" section"

If your language has agreement between adjectives and nouns, and the noun is a placeholder, it can be important to know what exact string will be in the placeholder, so that a preceding adjective can be inflected accordingly. The wording of most source strings has already been adjusted to avoid such localization issues and a syntactic construction has been chosen in which a placeholder is not modified by an adjective. However, be mindful of such issues when localizing software. In some languages there is also agreement between a noun subject and the verb. If your language has syntactic agreement, try to reword the translation to avoid a potentially ungrammatical sentence.

English example	Message User will see	Maltese translation
Replace invalid %s?	Replace invalid data? Replace invalid file?	(+) Tissostitwixxi %s mhux valida?
%s already exists	File already exists Name already exists	(+) %s ġa jeżisti
%s is now set as your personal contact.	Regina is now set as your personal contact Mr. Kim is now set as your personal contact	(+) %s bħalissa kkonfigurata bħala l-kuntatt personali tiegħek
%s stopped working and was closed	The application stopped working and was closed The program stopped working and was closed	(+) %s waqfet taħdem u ngħalqet

Keys

The *keyboard* is the primary input device used for text input in Microsoft Windows. For accessibility and efficiency, most actions can be performed using the keyboard as well. While working with Microsoft software, you use keys, key combinations and key sequences.

In English, References to key names, like arrow keys, function keys and numeric keys, appear in normal text (not in small caps).

Access Keys/Hot keys
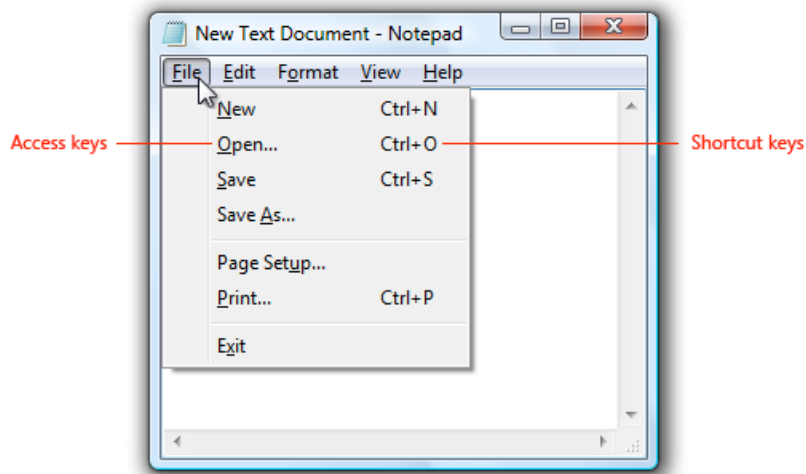
Sometimes, there are underlined or highlighted letters in menu options, commands or dialog boxes. These letters refer to access keys (also known as hot keys) that allow you to run commands, perform tasks, etc. more quickly.

Hot Key Special Options	Usage: Is It Allowed?	Notes
"Slim characters", such as I, l, t, r, f can be used as hot key	Allowed	
Characters with downstrokes, such as g, j, y, p and q can be used as hotkeys	Allowed	
Extended characters can be used as hotkeys		Diacritical characters: ċ, Ċ, ġ, Ġ, ħ, Ħ, ż, Ż are allowed as hotkeys. Vowels with the accent À, à, È, è, Ì, ì, Ò, ò, Ù, ù are not allowed.
An additional letter, appearing between brackets after item name, can be used as hotkeys	Allowed	
A number, appearing between brackets after item name, can be used as hotkey	Allowed	
A punctuation sign, appearing between brackets after item name, can be used as hotkey		On the Maltese keyboard, the diacritical Maltese characters: ċ, Ċ, ġ, Ġ, ħ, Ħ, ż and Ż replace `, ~,

Hot Key Special Options	Usage: Is It Allowed?	Notes
		[, {,], }, \\, and */* respectively. The latter signs become available by pressing ALT GR; or ALT GR + SHIFT; + the Maltese character. Example: ALT GR + ġ = [
Duplicate hotkeys are allowed when no other character is available	Allowed	
No hotkey is assigned when no more characters are available (minor options only)	Allowed	

Additional notes: The following table lists the hot keys that are permissible in Maltese. Please note that only single stroke characters can be used. If there are no single stroke characters in your language, or not enough of them, please indicate whether US characters can be used instead.

Hot key character	Preferred or allowed?	Case-sensitive?
Ġ	Preferred	True
G	Preferred	True
Y	Preferred	True
P	Preferred	True
J	Preferred	True
a	Preferred	False
à	Not allowed	False
b	Preferred	False
ċ	Preferred	False
c	Preferred	False
d	Preferred	False
e	Preferred	False
è	Not allowed	False
f	Preferred	False
ġ	Allowed	True
g	Allowed	True
h	Preferred	False
ħ	Preferred	False
i	Preferred	False

Hot key character	Preferred or allowed?	Case-sensitive?
ì	Not allowed	False
j	Allowed	True
k	Preferred	False
l	Preferred	False
m	Preferred	False
n	Preferred	False
o	Preferred	False
ò	Not allowed	False
p	Allowed	True
q	Allowed	True
r	Preferred	False
s	Preferred	False
t	Preferred	False
u	Preferred	False
ù	Not allowed	False
v	Preferred	False
w	Preferred	False
x	Preferred	False
y	Allowed	True
ż	Not allowed	False
z	Preferred	False
0	Numeric	Not applicable
1	Numeric	Not applicable
2	Numeric	Not applicable
3	Numeric	Not applicable
4	Numeric	Not applicable
5	Numeric	Not applicable
6	Numeric	Not applicable
7	Numeric	Not applicable
8	Numeric	Not applicable
9	Numeric	Not applicable

Arrow Keys

The arrow keys move input focus among the controls within a group. Pressing the right arrow key moves input focus to the next control in tab order, whereas pressing the left arrow moves input focus to the previous control. Home, End, Up, and Down also have their expected behavior within a group. Users can't navigate out of a control group using arrow keys.

Numeric Keypad

It is recommended that you avoid distinguishing numeric keypad keys from the other keys, unless it is required by a given application. In case which keys to be pressed is not obvious, provide necessary explanations.

Shortcut Keys

Shortcut keys are keystrokes or combinations of keystrokes used to perform defined functions in a software application. Shortcut keys replace menu commands and they are sometimes given next to the command they represent. In opposition to the access keys, which can be used only when available on the screen, shortcut keys can be used even when they are not accessible on the screen.

Standard Shortcut Keys

US Command	US English Shortcut Key	Maltese Command	Maltese Shortcut key
General Windows Shortcut keys			
Help window	F1	Window tal-għajnuna	F1
Context-sensitive Help	Shift+F1	Għajnuna sensittiva għall-kuntest	Shift+F1
Display pop-up menu	Shift+F10	Uri l-pop-up menu	Shift+F10
Cancel	Esc	Ikkanċella	Esc
Activate\Deactivate menu bar mode	F10	Attiva/Iddiżattiva l-mod tal-menu bar	F10
Switch to the next primary application	Alt+Tab	Aqleb għall-applikazzjoni primarja li jmiss	Alt+Tab
Display next window	Alt+Esc	Uri l-window li jmiss	Alt+Esc
Display pop-up menu for the window	Alt+Spacebar	Uri l-pop-up menu għall-window	Alt+Spacebar
Display pop-up menu for the active child window	Alt+-	Uri l-pop-up menu għaċ-child window attiva	Alt+-

US Command	US English Shortcut Key	Maltese Command	Maltese Shortcut key
Display property sheet for current selection	Alt+Enter	Uri l-folja tal-propjetà għall-għażla kurrenti	Alt+Enter
Close active application window	Alt+F4	Agħlaq il-window tal-applikazzjoni attiva	Alt+F4
Switch to next window within (modeless-compliant) application	Alt+F6	Aqleb għall-window li jmiss fl-applikazzjoni (modeless-compliant)	Alt+F6
Capture active window image to the Clipboard	Alt+Prnt Scrn	Ħu ritratt tal-window attiva u poġġih fuq il-Clipboard	Alt+Prnt Scrn
Capture desktop image to the Clipboard	Prnt Scrn	Ħu ritratt tad-desktop u poġġih fuq il-Clipboard	Prnt Scrn
Access Start button in taskbar	Ctrl+Esc	Ikseb aċċess għall-buttuna Ibda fit-taskbar	Ctrl+Esc
Display next child window	Ctrl+F6	Uri ċ-child window li jmiss	Ctrl+F6
Display next tabbed pane	Ctrl+Tab	Display t-tabbed pane li jmiss	Ctrl+Tab
Launch Task Manager and system initialization	Ctrl+Shift+Esc	Startja Task Manager u l-inizjalizzjazzjoni tas-sistema	Ctrl+Shift+Esc
File Menu			
File New	Ctrl+N	Fajl Ġdid	Ctrl+N
File Open	Ctrl+O	Iftaħ il-Fajl	Ctrl+O
File Close	Ctrl+F4	Agħlaq il-Fajl	Ctrl+F4
File Save	Ctrl+S	Issejvja l-Fajl	Ctrl+S
File Save as	F12	Issejvja l-Fajl Bħala	F12
File Print Preview	Ctrl+F2	Ara l-Fajl li se Jiġi Pprintjat minn Qabel	Ctrl+F2
File Print	Ctrl+P	Ipprintja l-Fajl	Ctrl+P
File Exit	Alt+F4	Oħroġ mill-Fajl	Alt+F4
Edit Menu			

US Command	US English Shortcut Key	Maltese Command	Maltese Shortcut key
Edit Undo	Ctrl+Z	Editja Undo	Ctrl+Z
Edit Repeat	Ctrl+Y	Editja Irrepeti	Ctrl+Y
Edit Cut	Ctrl+X	Edit Aqta'	Ctrl+X
Edit Copy	Ctrl+C	Edit Ikkopja	Ctrl+C
Edit Paste	Ctrl+V	Edit Waħħal	Ctrl+V
Edit Delete	Ctrl+Backspace	Edit Ħassar	Ctrl+Backspace
Edit Select All	Ctrl+A	Edit Agħżel Kollox	Ctrl+A
Edit Find	Ctrl+F	Edit Sib	Ctrl+F
Edit Replace	Ctrl+H	Edit Ibdel	Ctrl+H
Edit Go To	Ctrl+B	Edit Mur Fi	Ctrl+B
Help Menu			
Help	F1	Għajnuna	F1
Font Format			
Italic	Ctrl+I	Korsiv	Ctrl+I
Bold	Ctrl+G	Tipa Grassa	Ctrl+G
Underlined\Word underline	Ctrl+U	Sinjal Taħt il-Kliem	Ctrl+U
Large caps	Ctrl+Shift+A	Ittri kbar	Ctrl+Shift+A
Small caps	Ctrl+Shift+K	Ittri żgħar	Ctrl+Shift+K
Paragraph Format			
Centered	Ctrl+E	Iċċentra	Ctrl+E
Left aligned	Ctrl+L	Allinja lejn ix-xellug	Ctrl+L
Right aligned	Ctrl+R	Allinja lejn il-lemin	Ctrl+R
Justified	Ctrl+J	Justified	Ctrl+J

Document Translation Considerations

Document localization may require some specific considerations that are different from software localization. This section covers a few of these areas.

Titles

In English the titles for chapters usually begin with "How to …" or with phrases such as "Working with …" or "Using …".

Titles should convey as much information as possible about the ensuing text to help readers locate information quickly. If in English the heading begins with a gerund, try to use a nominalized form in Maltese. Avoid using constructions such as "How to...", "To...", etc. Also avoid using articles, as headings are not full sentences.

English example	Maltese translation
Sending a file	(+) Bgħit ta' fajl
Using Styles	(+) Użu ta' Stili

Copyright

Copyright protection is granted to any original work of authorship fixed in any tangible medium of expression from which it can be perceived, reproduced, or communicated.

The general rule is that product names are not translated if they include the word Microsoft and/or are trademarked (for example, Microsoft Draw or Microsoft Graph). The Microsoft PM and/or Subsidiary should always be contacted for final approval before you translate a product or component name.

The terms "Microsoft," "Windows," and "Office" must always remain unlocalized; however, these terms may be transliterated if you receive approval for the appropriate Microsoft PM and Subsidiary. Refer to the section of this Style Guide that discusses trademarks for the complete list of product and component names that must remain in English. Ensure that you apply the chosen product terminology consistently throughout your translation of a set of content or an interface.

By contrast, translated feature names are used with a definite or indefinite article as they are not treated as proper names. Check with your language coordinator whether these names need to be capitalized.

English example	Maltese example
Hide the Task Manager when it is minimized	(+) Aħbi l-Ġestjoni tal-Attivitajiet meta tiċċekken

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The following translations must be used:

English text	Maltese translation
Copyright	(+) Drittijiet tal-Awtur
All rights reserved	(+) Id-drittijiet kollha riservati
Microsoft Corporation	(+) Microsoft Corporation