

Australian Standard™

**Basis for design of structures—  
Notations—General symbols**

This Australian Standard was prepared by Committee BD-006, General Design Requirements and Loading on Structures. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 4 March 2005.  
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The following are represented on Committee BD-006:

Association of Consulting Engineers Australia  
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Concrete Masonry Association of Australia  
CSIRO, Building, Construction and Engineering  
Cyclone Testing Station—James Cook University  
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## PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee BD-006, General Design Requirements and Loading on Structures.

This Standard is identical with and has been reproduced from ISO 3898:1997, *Basis for design of structures—Notations—General symbols*.

The objective of this Standard is to provide designers of structures with general guidance on notations for use in structural design.

ISO 3898 has been adopted in order to provide a consistent basis for use of notation in the area of structural design particularly for the drafting of Australian Standards.

As this Standard is reproduced from an International Standard, the following applies:

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References to International Standards should be replaced by references to equivalent Australian Standards as follows:

<i>Reference to International Standard</i>	<i>Australian Standard</i>
ISO	AS
31 Quantities and units	2900 Quantities and units
31-0 Part 0: General principles	2900.0 Part 0: General principles

## AUSTRALIAN STANDARD

**Bases for design of structures — Notations —  
General symbols****1 Scope**

This International Standard defines standard notations for structural design.

It covers general terms which are necessary to this field of application and, in general, excludes terms relevant to a particular material or to a particular technical field.

It indicates only the symbols to be used without prejudice to the exact definition of each term, which is within the scope of other International Standards.

Table 1 gives general indications about the usage of different types of letter. Tables 2, 3 and 4 give letters to be used as a main symbol and their meanings. Table 5 gives a list of special and mathematical symbols. Table 6 gives letters or groups of letters when used as subscripts and their meanings.

**2 Normative reference**

The following standard contains provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this International Standard. At the time of publication, the edition indicated was valid. All standards are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this International Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent edition of the standard indicated below. Members of IEC and ISO maintain registers of currently valid International Standards

ISO 31-0:1992, *Quantities and units — Part 0: General principles*.

**3 Construction of symbols**

The construction of a symbol to represent a given quantity or term shall be carried out as follows.

**3.1** The main letter of the symbol shall be selected from table 2, 3, 4 or 5, based in most cases on considerations of the main usage, as given in table 1.

**3.2** Descriptive subscripts may be selected from table 6. When other subscripts are used, a clear definition of their meaning shall be given.

**3.3** Numerical figures may be used as subscripts.