



POLICY AND PROCEDURE RECOMMENDATION

Standard Numbering Convention

for Methods in the *Official Methods of Analysis of AOAC INTERNATIONAL*

Supporting Recommendation 17: Standardize Numbering Convention for Methods

Quick Reference

- **Base number** = year + sequence of adoption (permanent).
- **“:YYYY”** = year of the most recent approved change.
- Do not use “:YYYY” at initial approval (First Action).
- Update “:YYYY” whenever a change is approved.
- Use the base number for general reference; include “:YYYY” for a version-specific reference.

1. Purpose

To establish a single, standard numbering convention for methods published in the *Official Methods of Analysis of AOAC INTERNATIONAL* (OMA) so that each method has one permanent identifier. This convention ensures that any change made after initial approval is captured in the method number and remains traceable. It also aligns AOAC with international standards development practices.

2. Policy

1. **One permanent identifier.** Each method in the OMA is assigned a permanent method number based on the year and sequence of adoption (e.g., AOAC 2016.05). This number is never altered, reused, or reassigned.
2. **Year-of-change designation (“:YYYY”).** A four-digit year, preceded by a colon, is appended to the base number to indicate the most recent approved change to the method.
3. **Initial approval rule.** The “:YYYY” designation is not applied when a method is first approved at First Action status. It is added only after the first approved change following initial approval.

3. Format

The numbering convention is expressed as follows:

AOAC Official Method 2016.05:2024

- **Base number (2016.05):** year and sequence of adoption (permanent).
- **Suffix (:2024):** year of the most recent approved change.

Usage guidance:

- A general reference to a method (not version-specific) may use the base number alone.
- A version-specific reference must include the “:YYYY” designation.

This format is consistent with internationally recognized number–year conventions.

4. Procedure — Application and Updating of “:YYYY”

Event	Action	Resulting Number
Initial approval — First Action	Assign the permanent base method number only. Do not append “:YYYY.”	2016.05
Advancement to Final Action	When the method advances to Final Action or its Action status changes, append or update the “:YYYY” to the year of approval.	2016.05: 2018
Modification to scope, applicability, or method steps	Upon approval of a change or extension, append or update the “:YYYY” to reflect the year of approval.	2016.05: 2024
Change during Periodic review or other modification with changes	For any approved modification, update the “:YYYY” to the year the change is approved.	2016.05:YYYY (Year of change)
Record and display	Record the change and its year in the official system of record (eOMA). Display the full designation when referring to a specific version.	History updated

Notes:

- Assigning the “:YYYY” is an administrative action. It follows — but does not replace — the required scientific review and approval (ERP and/or OMB).
- A periodic review that results in no changes does not update the “:YYYY.”

5. Implementation and Responsibilities

Owner: Official Methods Board (OMB), in coordination with AOAC staff.

- The OMB oversees implementation of this policy.
- OMA Editors ensure consistent application of the numbering convention.
- AOAC staff maintain records and systems by applying the appropriate “:YYYY” designation following the effective date.

Approval and Effective Date

Approved by the AOAC Official Methods Board: 2026-06-11

Approved by the AOAC Board of Directors: 2026-06-25

Effective date: 2026-07-01