

International Code of Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants

ICNCP (2004)

(This is an abridged version with non-binding character, for exact details check the original version of the Code.)

The ICNCP indicates the rules for the naming of plants in cultivation.

Definitions :

“Cultivated plants” are “plants whose origin or selection is primarily due to the intentional actions of mankind”. This may be intentional hybridization, hybridization by chance, a selection of a stock of plants in cultivation or of wild plants which retain their characteristics in the course of time (Principle 2)” and when propagated by appropriate means (also) retain those characteristics” (Art. 2.2).

Cultivars differ in their mode of origin and reproduction (Art. 2.4).

In considering whether two or more plants belong to the same or different cultivars, their origins are irrelevant (Art. 2.17) = they may have occurred at different times and in different locations (Ex. 15).

Naming of Cultivated Plants :

1. The name of a cultivar consists of the correct name of the genus together with the cultivar epithet.
2. Each word of a cultivar epithet must start with an initial capital letter unless linguistic custom demands otherwise.

Example: ‘A Grim one’ has to be written > ‘A Grim One’.

Exceptions are words after a hyphen unless they are proper nouns, conjunctions and prepositions (Art. 19.3). Hyphenated epithets may not be changed to single words or separate words unless correcting an error in the original spelling (Art. 32.12).

3. If a species, a subspecies or variety with a Latin name is reclassified as a cultivar, this name is to be retained as the cultivar epithet (Art. 19.6).

Example: *Echeveria glauca* - now synonymous with *E. secunda* – thus becomes *E. secunda* ‘Glaucá’ (Art. 26.4, Ex.4).

Any Latin name published prior to 1. Jan. 1959 – even if not published validly – is to be retained when the respective plant now is considered as a cultivar (Art. 19.7).

4. A cultivar name published after 1. Jan. 1959 has to be a word or words in any language other than Latin (Art. 19.13).

Example: 'Tristan', 'Darley Dale', 'Bride's Bouquet', 'Mauna Loa'. Epithets like 'Variegata', 'Imbricata', 'Carnitricha', 'Lancifolia', 'Metallica' are no longer permitted – see above – but are to be retained if published prior to 1. Jan. 1959.

Exception: Latin words current in a language other than Latin as terms, common phrases, personal names or places names may be used as cultivar names (Art. 19.14).

Example: Museum, Africa, Claudius etc.

5. The correct spelling of an epithet in a language other than Latin is that of its establishment (Art. 32.2), however an unintentional mistake in the original spelling is to be corrected (Art. 32.3).
6. After 1. Jan. 1996 cultivar status is to be indicated by enclosing the cultivar epithet within single quotation marks. Double quotation marks, and the abbreviations cv. and var. are not to be used to distinguish a cultivar epithet: such use is to be corrected (Art. 13.1).

Example: correct is *E. secunda* 'Glauca' not correct is *E. secunda* cv.'Glauca'
Crassula 'Tristan' *Crassula* "Tristan"
xGraptopoveria 'Autumn Evening' *xGraptopoveria* Autumn Evening

7. Cultivars that are thought to be hybrids are not to be indicated by "x" before the cultivar epithet (Art. 13.3).

Example: *Echeveria* 'Pagoda' must not be written *Echeveria* x 'Pagoda'.

8. Epithets in names of cultivars should be distinguished typographically from names of the taxonomic units = they should not be written in italics if italics are used for names of genera and lower taxonomic units (Recommendation 7A).
9. A cultivar epithet established after 1. Jan. 1996 may not consist of more than 30 characters – punctuation marks included, spaces and demarcating marks excluded (Art. 19.15).
10. A cultivar name established after 1. Jan. 2004 is not valid if it consists solely of a single letter or solely of Arabic or Roman numerals (Art. 19.16).

Example: 'K', 'XX' or '20' are not accepted while 'Apollo 13', '14 Juillet' are permitted.

11. The epithet of a cultivar name does not have to consist of an existing word but may be a novel invention (Art. 19.17).

12. A cultivar epithet may not be duplicated within a denomination class, i.e. within a single genus or a hybrid genus (Art. 5).
13. After 1. Jan. 1959 a cultivar name is not allowed to consist of the words "form" or "variety" or their abbreviations or equivalents in other languages.
14. After 1. Jan. 1996 a cultivar name is not valid if it contains one of the following words or their equivalents in any language: "cultivar", "grex", "group", "hybrid", "maintenance", "mixture", "selection", "sport", "series" and "strain" or the plural form of these words, or the words "improved" and "transformed" or their equivalents in any language (Art. 19.20).
15. For a cultivar name established after 1. Jan. 1996 only the following punctuation marks are permitted :

The apostrophe ('), the comma (,), a single exclamation mark (!), the full-stop (.), the hyphen (-), the forward slash (/) or backward slash (\) symbols (Art. 19.21).

Example: Echeveria 'Sibil.la' is permitted, but 'Sibil@la' is not accepted. 'Two + Two' is not accepted, but 'Two and Two' is permitted (Art. 19.22).

" & " is to be translated as "and" and the symbol " # " for a number has to become " No " (Art. 32.8)..

16. Cultivar epithets must not be abbreviated (Art. 32.9).

Example: 'Roger Jones' must not be abbreviated to 'R. Jones'

But an epithet originally established using an abbreviation must not spell it out (Art. 39.10).

Example: 'Dr. Butterfield' must not be written 'Doctor Butterfield'.

17. After 1. Jan. 1996 a cultivar name is not accepted if it contains the Latin or common name of the genus to which it belongs (Art. 19.23).

Example: 'Stonecrop' or 'Orpin' or 'Joubarbe' would not be permitted any longer.

18. A name is not established after 1. Jan. 1996 if its cultivar epithet is so similar to an already existing one that it might cause confusion (Art. 19.25).

19. After 1. Jan. 1959 an epithet is not accepted if it exaggerates the merits of the cultivar (Art. 19.26) and the epithet should not consist of a word or words that are merely descriptive (Recommendations 19D).

Example: 'White,', 'Large White', 'Variegated', 'Double Red' should be avoided.

20. A cultivar epithet should be as short as practical and should not consist of nor contain excessively long words that may be difficult to write or pronounce (Art. 19A.1).
21. A cultivar name whose epithet is or contains the name of a living person should not be published unless that person has given permission for their name to be used (Art. 19B 1).
22. The resurrection of long-forgotten or obsolete names for cultivars that take priority over the established current and well-known name should be avoided (Recommendation 26A).
23. In some countries, plants are marketed using trademarks. Such marks are the intellectual property of a person or some corporate body and are not therefore freely available for any person to use: consequently, they cannot be considered as names (Principle 4).
24. When a cultivar name appears in a publication using a different language from that of its original publication the epithet may not be translated (Art. 29.1).

Example: *Echeveria* 'Perle von Nürnberg' may not be translated into '*Echeveria* 'Perle of Nuremberg' – it may however be written as *Echeveria* 'Perle von Nuernberg'.
Echeveria 'Silvergreen' may not be translated as *E.* 'Vert d'Argent'
xGraptoveria 'Margarete Reppin' may not be translated as *xG.* 'Margaret Reppin'
Graptopetalum 'Blanche Neige' may not be translated as *G.* 'White Snow'.

25. It may however be transliterated character by character or it may be transcribed.

Transliteration to or from different alphabetic scripts one of which is the Roman alphabet are to be made in accordance with the Romanization Tables published by the United States Library of Congress (Art.30).

26. Transcriptions from mandarin Chinese into the Roman alphabet must be by the Pinyin system; for Korean phonetic characters by the McCune-Reischauer system; for Japanese characters by the modified Hepburn system (Art. 31).
27. Accents and other diacritical marks are to be retained in a cultivar epithet (Art. 32.4).

Exceptions : 'Chloë' and 'Zoë' may be written 'Chloe' and 'Zoe', 'Nominoë' and 'Gaëlle-Aline' may be written 'Nominoe' and 'Gaelle-Aline', 'Veilchenkoenigin' may be written 'Veilchenkönigin' (Art. 32.5).

Publication and Establishment

28. Publication is effected only by distribution of printed matter to the general public, accessible to botanists and horticulturists generally. It is not effected by publication via electronic

media (Art. 22.1). Authors should avoid publishing new names of cultivars in ephemeral printed matter (Art. 22A.1).

29. When publishing a new cultivar name, the parentage and history of the cultivar, the derivation or meaning of the cultivar epithet, and the names of the raiser or breeder and introducer should be stated when known (Recommendation 24D).
30. It is strongly recommended to send copies of publications, especially trade catalogues, to International Cultivar Registration Authorities (Recommendation 22B).
31. An illustration should be provided to accompany the description of a new cultivar (Recommendation 24C).
32. It is not necessary to cite the name of the author who has established a cultivar name.
33. The date of the name of a cultivar is that of its establishment (Art. 8.1). Correction of the original spelling does not affect the date of that name (Art. 8.2). The earliest established name is the accepted one (Art. 10.1).
34. A name that is contrary to the rules of this Code yet has become widely used may be designated an accepted name (Art. 10.3).

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