

Formatting Titles of Texts in MLA Style

General Rules

These rules apply to titles in the text, in parenthetical citations, and in Works Cited page entries. A title appears the same way no matter where in a document it appears. No titles are underlined. Titles never get both quotation marks and italics. Every time you mention the title of a work, even in the title of your own abstract, you must apply the proper formatting.

Capitalizing Titles

In a title or a subtitle, capitalize the first word, the last word and all principal words, including those that follow hyphens in compound terms.

Articles ("a," "an," and "the"), coordinating conjunctions ("for," "and," "nor," "but," "or," "yet," and "so"), and prepositions (words such as "on," "above," "below," "to," "throughout," etc.) are NOT capitalized.

Examples:

- The Determination of Sunflower Growth in Different Genetic Lines and under Various Nutrient Conditions
- Diet-Induced Obesity is Associated with a Change in Intestinal Innervation and Disruption of Gut-Brain Communication

Formatting Titles

In general, a title is placed in quotation marks if the source is part of a larger work. A title is italicized if the source is self-contained and independent.

- Use quotation marks for a short story/essay/poem from an anthology/collection; episodes of television series; song titles; articles from journals; and a posting/article from a Web site.
- Use italics for book/anthology titles; periodicals (journals, magazines, newspapers); and Web sites. When a work that is normally independent (such as a novel or play) appears in a collection, the work's title remains in italics.
- Italics should be used for foreign words and common Latin terms and abbreviations such as *in vivo*, *in vitro*, *in utero*, *in situ*, *ad libitum*, *a priori*, and *a posteriori*.
- Italics should also be used when referring to genus, species, subspecies, and genotypes. The term *Streptococcus pneumoniae* should be italicized because it is a name of the organism that is a member of the genus *Streptococcus* and not because the word is derived from Latin.
- Use a colon and a space to separate a title from a subtitle, unless the title ends in a question mark, an exclamation point, or a dash. Include other punctuation only if it is part of the title.

Examples:

- *In Vitro* and *In Vivo* Assessment of a Yeast By-Product on the Inhibition of *Histomonas meleagridis*
- Has *Laïcité* Transformed into a Law of Islamophobia?
- Wild Bearded Capuchins (*Sapajus libidinosus*) Use Tools in Fazenda Boa Vista, Brazil: Positioning the Nut Predicts Success