

Use of Italics

APA has specific guidelines for the use of italics. You can find them in section 4.21 of the sixth edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. As a general rule, use italics sparingly.

According to the manual, italics are **appropriate** for:

- Titles of books, journals and periodicals, films, and videos
The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* is
In the show *Friends*, Rachel and Ross
The *American Journal of Psychology*
- Introduction of new key technical term or label
The term *zone of proximal development*
Adolescents labeled *high risk*
- Anchors of scale
Scores ranged from 0 (*never*) to 5 (*continuously*)
- Words, phrases, or letters presented as linguistic examples
Kids learn words such as *play* and *game*
Many exotic words begin with the letter *x*
- Genera/scientific names, species, and varieties
Equus caballus
- Letters in statistical symbols or algebraic variables
 $n=5$
LL, *MSE* (see list on p. 120 of APA manual)

Italics are **inappropriate** for:

- Emphasis
This conclusion is *not* supported by evidence
(APA does, however, allow exceptions in cases in which a reader might miss the intended emphasis.)

- Foreign phrases common in English
et al. a posteriori ex post facto
(If the word or phrase is found as a main entry in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* it need not be italicized.)
- Greek letters
 α
- Nonstatistical subscripts to statistical symbols
 F_{crit}
- Chemical terms
OH, LSD