



The Writing Center at Bristol Community College

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Titles (MLA and APA)

Capitalizing:

Capitalize the first word, the last word, and all principal words.

Do not capitalize the following parts of speech when they fall in the middle of a title:

- Articles (*a, an, the*, as in *Under the Bamboo Tree*)
- Prepositions (e.g. *against, between, in, of, to*, as in *The Merchant of Venice*)
- Coordinating Conjunctions (*and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet*, as in *Romeo and Juliet*)
- The *to* in infinitives (as in *How to Play Chess*)

APA Exception: Please note that, according to the American Psychological Association, in titles of books and articles intended for reference lists, capitalize only the first word, the first word after a colon or dash, and proper nouns:

- Hanson, R. K. Steffy, R. A., & Gauthier, R. (1993). Long-term recidivism of child molesters.
- Kelichman, S. C., Kelly, J. A., Hunter, T. O., Murphy, D. A., & Tyler, R. (1993). Culturally tailored NIV-AIDS risk-reduction messages targeted to African-American urban women: Impact on risk sensitization and risk reduction.

Underlining:

In general, underline the titles of works published independently. Titles to be underlined include the names of books, plays, long poems published as books, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, journals, films, radio and television programs, compact disks, paintings, and works of sculpture. The underline is not broken between words:

- The Awakening (book)
- The Importance of Being Earnest (play)
- The Waste Land (long poem published as a book)
- Wall Street Journal (newspaper)
- Time (magazine)

APA Exception: In APA style, use italics for the titles of books and periodicals:

- *Elements of Style*
- *American Psychologist*

Using Quotation Marks:

Use quotation marks for the titles of works published within larger works. Such titles include the names of articles, essays, short stories, short poems, and chapters of books:

- “Rise in Aid to Education is Proposed” (newspaper article)
- “Sources of Energy in the Next Decade” (magazine article)
- “Kubla Khan” (poem)
- “The American Economy before the Civil War” (chapter in a book)

APA Exception: Under APA guidelines, titles of articles or chapters appear in the reference list without quotation marks:

- Deutsch, F. M. Lussier, J. B., & Serfis, L. J. (1993). Husbands at home: Predictors of paternal participation in childcare and housework. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65, 1154-1166.

(Material drawn from Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Sixth Ed. New York: The Modern Language Association, 2003. 103-109; Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Fifth ed. American Psychological Association: Washington, DC, 1994. 95-96, 226-230.)