

## Use of Italics

APA has specific guidelines for the use of italics.

You can find them in the 7th 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*
- Scientific names of species (genus and species) are italicized.  
Examples: *Homo sapiens*, *Canis lupus*

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.)

- Chemical terms

OH, LSD

- Greek letters

$\alpha$

- Nonstatistical subscripts to statistical symbols

$F_{\text{crit}}$