

****This is an overview. ALWAYS check the full MLA Handbook (The Modern Language Association Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th Edition.) for complete information****

Titles of Works

Capitalization:

Capitalize all words in a title except articles, prepositions, coordinating conjunctions, “to” in infinitives

Formatting:

Italicize “stand alone” works, such as books, periodicals, films, paintings, etc.

Use plain typeface for titles within italicized titles.

Approaches to Teaching Murasaki Shikibu's The Tale of Genji

Place titles in quotation marks if the work is

- 1) unpublished (such as lectures and speeches)
- 2) or part of a larger collection (such as poems, articles, book chapters, songs)

Use single quotation marks for

- 1) a title within another title
“Language and Literary Allusions in ‘The Heights of Macchu Picchu’”
- 2) a quotation within a title
“Creativity Employed to Prevent ‘Foolish Consistency’”

Exceptions (that should remain in plain typeface):

- Sacred writings >Bible, Koran, King James Version, Genesis, Gospels
- Laws and acts >Magna Carta, Bill of Rights
- Series >Masterpiece Theater
- Societies >American Medical Association, Daughters of the American Revolution
- Buildings >Washington Monument, Smithsonian, Empire State Building
- Conferences and courses >Survey of British Literature ENL204, Urbana Conference
- Music identified by key >Beethoven’s Symphony no. 7 in A, op. 92

Numbers in Writing

Spell out numbers:

- 1) When they can be written in one or two words
- 2) centuries (lowercase letters)
- 3) hours in conjunction with o’clock (eight o’clock)
- 4) time with quarter and half (half past three)

Use Arabic numerals for:

- 1) measurements (15 milliliters, 72 pounds)
- 2) numbers presented together or reporting data (...from 12 to 17. ...halved, dropping to 4 units per household.)

- 3) addresses and dates
- 4) percentages
- 5) references to money

Use Roman numerals for:

- 1) divisions of an outline
- 2) names of individuals in a series (John Paul II)
- 3) citing pages numbered in roman numerals

Abbreviations in Writing

Generally, abbreviations are avoided within the text of a paper. Though, abbreviations are common in tables and lists of Works Cited. Make sure the audience would understand the abbreviation, explaining it if necessary.

Acceptable abbreviations in text of a paper:

- 1) peoples' preferred names (M. G. Smith)
- 2) inc. and etc.
- 3) a.m., e.g., and i.e.
- 4) mph and rpm
- 5) states and provinces
- 6) months