

Although some rules around capitalisation are obvious, others are not as clear-cut. Just because something is important, or the subject of your assessment, doesn't mean it needs a capital letter.

'The efficacy of treatments can be established using the ~~Scientific Method~~ scientific method.'

Use the following guidance to check your use of capitalisation.

Always Capitalise:

The first word of a sentence

When you begin a new paragraph, or start a sentence following a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark.

*It is the job of a counsellor to...
Other considerations include...*

Names of people and places

Proper nouns include the specific names of people, places, and things

*John Smith
Australian College of Applied Psychology*

If you are referring to places and things generally, however, do not capitalise.

Several colleges offer courses in counselling

Cities, Countries, Nationalities, and Languages

The names of cities, countries, nationalities, and languages are proper nouns, so you should capitalise them.

*PACFA's Australian headquarters are in Victoria.
Students whose first language is not English may face additional barriers to study.*

Names of racial and ethnic groups

These are treated as proper nouns, which means they are capitalised

*Asian, Black, European, Aboriginal Australians,
Indigenous Australians, Aboriginal people, First
Australians.
She is a specialist in Indigenous rights.*

Do not capitalise when you are referring generically to the original inhabitants of other continents

The indigenous people of the central United States

Brand/Trade Names

Capitalise company/organisation and product names.

*A member of the Psychotherapy and Counselling
Federation of Australia
The doctor prescribed Prozac.*

However, do not capitalise generic products.

The doctor prescribed fluoxetine.

Job titles or positions before a name

*Professor Margaret Carter
The Discipline of Psychology*

Do not capitalise, however, when the title is used alone or after a name.

*John Smith is a criminology lecturer
She was a psychologist for six years
He is training to be a social worker*

Days, Months, and Holidays

Census date is usually on a Friday.

The names of seasons, however, are not capitalised

...reported an exacerbation of symptoms in winter.

Sometimes capitalise

Diseases, disorders, therapies, treatments, theories, concepts, hypotheses, principles, models, and statistical procedures in general are NOT capitalised:

autism spectrum disorder, anorexia nervosa, major depressive disorder, cognitive behaviour therapy,

However, do capitalise personal names that appear within these kinds of terms, as demonstrated in the following examples.

*Alzheimer's disease, Maslow's hierarchy of needs,
Freudian theory, Pavlovian conditioning*

The first word of a quote is capitalised when the quote is a complete sentence.

*Freud argued, "Unexpressed emotions will never die.
They are buried alive and will come forth later in uglier ways."*

Don't capitalise the first word of partial quotes.

Mr. Smith described the approach as "extremely difficult to understand if you don't have a psychology degree."

Title Case

In APA 7, use title case for the following:

- titles of articles, books, reports, and other works appearing in text
- titles of tests or measures
- all headings within a work (<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format/headings>)
- the title of your own paper and of named sections and subsections within it
- the Results section
- titles of periodicals (these are also italicized) table titles (these are also italicized)
- figure titles (these are also italicized), axis labels, and legends

*In the book Train Your Mind for Peak Performance: A Science-Based Approach for Achieving Your Goals, ...
Journal of Latinx Psychology
Beck Depression Inventory-II*

In title case, major words are capitalised, and most minor words are lowercase.

Major words: Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, and all words of four letters or more
Minor words: Short (i.e., three letters or fewer) conjunctions, short prepositions, and all articles are considered minor words.

In title case, capitalise the following words in a title or heading:

- the first word of the title or heading, even if it is a minor word such as “The” or “A”
- the first word of a subtitle
- the first word after a colon, em dash, or end punctuation in a heading
- major words, including the second part of hyphenated major words (e.g., “Self-Report,” not “Self-report”)
- words of four letters or more (e.g., “With,” “Between,” “From”)

Lowercase minor words that are three letters or fewer in a title or heading (except the first word in a title/subtitle or the first word after a colon, em dash, or end punctuation in a heading):

- short conjunctions (e.g., and, as, but, for, if, nor, or, so, yet)
- articles (a, an, the)
- short prepositions (e.g., as, at, by, for, in, of, off, on, per, to, up, via)

Sentence Case

In APA 7, use sentence case for the following:

- titles of articles, books, reports, webpages, and other works in reference list entries, even if title case was used in the original work:

Knapp, S. J. (2019). Suicide prevention: An ethically and scientifically informed approach. American Psychological Association.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0000145-000>

- table column headings, entries, and notes
- figure notes

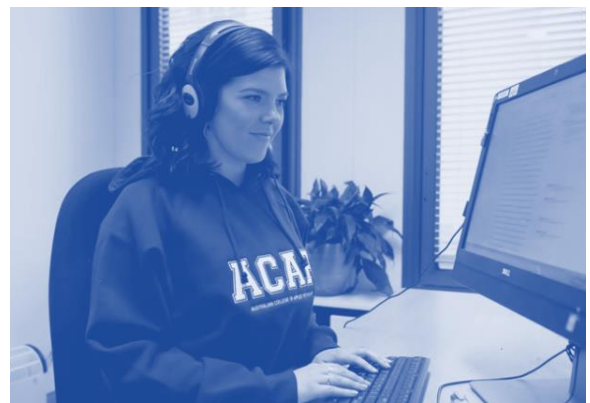
In sentence case, most major and minor words are lowercase (except proper nouns).

Major words: Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, and all words of four letters or more
Minor words: Short (i.e., three letters or fewer) conjunctions, short prepositions, and all articles are considered minor words.

In sentence case, lowercase most words in a title or heading.

Capitalise only the following words:

- the first word of the title or heading
- the first word of a subtitle
- the first word after a colon, em dash, or end punctuation in a heading
- nouns followed by numerals or letters
- proper nouns (such as the names of racial or ethnic groups)



Note. Source: Information Adapted from
<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/capitalization>
<https://www.monash.edu/about/editorialstyle/writing/inclusive-language>
<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/capitalization-rules/>