

Usage Quotation Marks vs. Italics

Titles in text should be set apart by italics, underlining, or quotation marks. Marking titles correctly is important because it promotes clarity and lets the reader recognize titles as separate from the text.

ITALICS/UNDERLINING

Titles of books, newspapers, and other major published works are either italicized or underlined in text. Although italics and underlining are generally interchangeable, italics are more widely used. Generally, underlining is used when the document is handwritten, while italics are used when typing. Just choose one and be consistent throughout the entire text.

The titles of the following should be either italicized or underlined:

Books	<i>Jane Eyre</i>
Plays/ Musicals	<i>The Music Man</i>
Long poems	<i>I am Joaquin</i>
Magazines	<i>National Geographic</i>
Scholarly journals	<i>American Psychologist</i>
Newspapers	<i>The New York Times</i>
Works of art	<i>The Mona Lisa</i>
Films/ Screenplays	<i>Star Wars</i>
Television series	<i>Law and Order</i>
Record albums/ Tapes/ CDs	<i>Let it Be</i>
Long musical compositions	<i>Symphony no. 9</i>
Operas	<i>Don Giovanni</i>
Websites	<i>Google</i>

Do not italicize or underline sacred texts such as the Bible or the Koran, or books within sacred texts, or legal documents. However, do italicize or underline the names of specific ships, spacecraft, trains, and aircraft.

QUOTATION MARKS

Quotation marks are used for shorter works and individual sections of larger works such as short stories, chapters in a book, and songs.

Use quotation marks for the following:

Short stories	“The Lottery”
Poems	“Jabberwocky”
Short plays (one-act)	“Maggie”
Essays	“A Child’s Christmas in Wales”
Articles	“How to Choose a Career”
Songs	“The Entertainer”
Television episodes	“Jan Gets Braces”
Short musical compositions	“Sonatina 12”
Chapters	“Biology: The Study of Life”