Title in an APA Reference
We know that an APA formatted reference contains the following parts in this order:

**Author.** (Publication date).  **Title.**  **Publication information.**

Let’s take a closer look at the **title** part, focusing on capitalization and italics.
Capitalization

Only the first word of the title and subtitle and proper nouns are capitalized. All others words are lower case.

Proper nouns are names of:

• Specific persons (e.g. Abraham Lincoln)
• Organizations (e.g. Greenpeace)
• Places (e.g. Detroit)
Let’s take a look at some specific examples.

**Reasons for Capitalization:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instant</th>
<th>First word of the title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The</td>
<td>First word of the subtitle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polaroid</td>
<td>Proper noun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Journal Article:


Reasons for Capitalization:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The</th>
<th>First word of the title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unreliable</td>
<td>First word of the subtitle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Proper noun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Web page:


Reasons for Capitalization:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>First word of the title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your</td>
<td>First word of the subtitle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Proper noun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Italics

The titles of *web pages* and *books* are italicized.

The titles of *chapters* and *articles* are not italicized.
You can think of it this way:

If you are citing a source as a whole, then the title is italicized.

If you are citing a part of a whole, then the title of the part is not italicized, but the title of the whole is.
Let’s take a look at some specific examples.
Chapter (not italicized):


Notice that the chapter title is not italicized, but the book title is.
Article (not italicized):


Notice that the title of the article is not italicized, but the journal title is.
Explanatory Notes:

Explanatory notes help the reader understand the type of content being referenced. They are placed in brackets after the title and are used to explain unusual content.
Here are a few examples. **Titles are in purple**, and explanatory notes are in **red**.

For more information on formatting your references using APA style, check out the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 
Thank you for watching!

If you have questions, please contact us:

http://libanswers.davenport.edu  Text: 616-504-1696