

# When to Use Italics

The Craft of Writing · By Simon Townsend · 2 min read

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## Italics

Italic type slopes to the right, like this. As opposed to these words which are in bold. These words are in "regular". If you pick a typeface or font, say Arial which looks like this, you can choose to have it in four styles: Arial Regular, Arial Italic, Arial Bold or Arial Bold Italic.

## Put Into Italics ?

## Do Not Put Into Italics ?

## Name of a book

## Title of a chapter in a book

## Name of a newspaper

Title of an article, column or section in the paper

**Name of a song or album**

**Name of a band**

**Name of a play**

**Name of a character in a play**

**Name of a movie**

**Name of a movie production company**

**Name of a musical, an opera or a CD**

Name of an individual song, or name of a band

**Name of a poem**

The whole poem, or a part of the poem

**Name of a painting or any work of art**

**Name of artist, sculptor, photographer**

**Name of an exhibition**

Name of an art gallery or an organising company

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**Name of a radio program**

**Name of a television show**

**On-screen person from a TV show**

Yes, I know it makes no sense to differentiate between radio and TV, but while radio stations give names to shows like "Terry Willesee Across Sydney" or "The John Laws Morning Show", these radio shows are only ever referred to as "Terry Willesee" or "John Laws"?maybe that's the reason for the seeming discrimination.

## **Name of a breedline**

## **Name of a pet, name of a breed**

## **Name of an individual ship**

But not the HMAS or MV in front of the name. And don't put in italics the type of ship such as schooner, or a brand name such as CruiseCraft.

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Brand names, company names, product names

## **Name of an individual aeroplane**

Aeroplane's call-sign, type or brand name

Name of an individual vehicle (if it has one)

## **Car's type, model number or brand name**

## **Scientific name of a plant or animal**

## **Common name of a plant or animals**

Words requiring special emphasis to a reader

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## **Foreign words and phrases**

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Complicated?

Yes, it's hard to remember all these rules because they vary from publication to publication.

Often it depends on the sub-editor subbing your article.

If you're wondering whether to put something in italics, err on the side of putting in italics.

The sub-editor can always change it.

But you'll be seen to have been trying.

Whatever you do, don't underline (or underscore) like this.

Or worse, underscore AND make in bold like this.

It looks awful and you don't see underscoring in mainstream publications.

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