



Bulleted lists

1. Is there one correct way to format a bulleted list?

No. Different writing manuals give different guidance. At CDC, your center's style guide takes precedence, then the [CDC Style Guide](#). The Chicago Manual of Style is the primary backup style guide.

Journals usually state in the author's guidelines which style guide they use:

- [Modern Language Association \(MLA\)](#)
- [Chicago Manual of Style](#)
- [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#)

2. Can I use a colon if the lead-in information is not a complete sentence?

No. A complete sentence must precede a colon.

INCORRECT: Several factors affected the decision, including: budget, staff, and schedule.

INCORRECT: They were exposed by: inhaling the air, eating the food, and drinking the water.

Most guides advise following the same rule with bulleted lists. The Chicago Manual of Style says to introduce a bulleted list with a grammatically complete sentence, followed by a colon. If the sentence is not complete, don't use a colon.

To reduce your risk of getting sick, take the following precautions:

- Avoid unnecessary travel
- Wash your hands often
- Stay at least six feet from others

Poor sleep quality has been linked with the following symptoms:

- higher levels of negative mood
- physical symptoms such as insomnia
- stress
- use of medications

To reduce your risk of getting sick, you can

- avoid unnecessary travel
- wash your hands often
- stay at least six feet from others

A healthy lifestyle includes

- eating right
- avoidance of sweets
- exercise daily
- getting enough rest

3. Do bullets need beginning capitalization/ending punctuation?

If your listed items are incomplete sentences, they don't need end punctuation and can usually begin lowercase.

We can judge an administrative facility by eight measures:

- image
- security
- access
- flexibility
- quality
- functional organization
- design efficiency
- environmental systems

But you can capitalize if you want.

In this section you will learn how to decide on the following:

- Content
- Style
- Tone
- Format

If the items are full sentences, they should be capitalized with end punctuation. Choose one approach and follow it consistently.

Take the following precautions to protect yourself from UV exposure:

- Limit direct sun exposure during midday.
- Cover up.
- Wear a hat.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher