# Overview of Emphasis Options

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| **Element** | **Purpose** | **When to Use** | **Examples** |
| <em> | Vocal emphasis; italic appearance | Use <em> when a certain word needs to be stressed for the text to make sense | * I *never* said she stole the money. * *Now* do you believe me? |
| <i> | Semantic/idiomatic emphasis; italic appearance | Use <i> when text needs to stand out – when the purpose of the emphasis is semantic (similar to <b>) | * Technical terms: The *calathea musaica* has a mosaic-like pattern on the leaf. * Books/magazines/newspapers/movies: It was in the *New York Times*. * Ships/vessels: The *Titanic* sank in 1912. * Words in another language: This was his *pièce de resistance.* * Dream sequences, thoughts, memories. |
| <strong> | Vocal emphasis; bold appearance | Use <strong> to indicate importance/urgency | * Imperative statements, warnings:   + The sign on the door said **Do not enter**. |
| <b> | Semantic/idiomatic emphasis; bold appearance | Use <b> when text needs to stand out – when the purpose of the emphasis is semantic (similar to <i>) | * Keywords:   + The Roman **centurions** carried a **gladius** and a **pugio.** |
| <cite> | Semantic/idiomatic emphasis; italic appearance | This is similar to <i>, but used in the specific context of citations like in bibliographies and footnotes | * **Direct citations**, like: “Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus’ son Achilleus... Book1, Line 1, of Richmond Lattimore’s *Iliad of Homer.* * **Bibliography/note citations**, like: “Doe, J. (1997). This is the title of the article. *Journal of Articles, (84)*3, 100-120.” |
| font-style: italic font-weight: bold | No semantic or vocal emphasis; affects appearance alone | Use CSS properties for bolding and italicization when it is simply visual. CSS does not have any semantic meaning, so assistive technologies won’t pick up on it | * Headings:   + **Chapter One**   + ***Impact of the First Mithridatic War*** * Chapter/sentence beginnings:   + *Once upon a time****,*** there was a … * Markers:   + **Figure 1**. A graph… |