

# Academic degrees

When academic degrees are mentioned in a generic way, often in combination with a field of study, lowercase both the degree and field and use the possessive form (except for the doctorate degree).

*associate's degree in communications*

*bachelor's degree in chemistry*

*doctorate [or doctoral] degree in linguistics*

*master's degree in creative writing*

When academic degrees take the form of a spelled-out version of the official name of the degree (e.g., BA, MFA, BS, PhD, etc.), capitalize and don't use the possessive form. However, lowercase the field unless it is a proper noun.

*Bachelor of Science in mathematics*

*Doctor of Philosophy in ethnomusicology*

*Master of Arts in English*

*Master of Fine Arts in painting*

The abbreviations of degrees take no periods. (See related rules about [abbreviation](#).) Here is a short list of common degrees at Cornell:

*BA (Bachelor of Arts)*

*BS (Bachelor of Science)*

*JD (Juris Doctor)*

*MA (Master of Arts)*

*MArch (Master of Architecture)*

*MBA (Master of Business Administration)*

*MD (Doctor of Medicine)*

*MEng (Master of Engineering)*

*MPA (Master of Public Administration)*

*MPS (Master of Professional Studies)*

*MS (Master of Science)*

*PhD (Doctor of Philosophy)*