

# Word for Word

## ***Approximately, About, Around* explained in about 2 paragraphs**

*Approximately, about,* and *around* can all be used to indicate that a quantity is inexact. Which of these words is best depends on the context, according to the style manual of the American Medical Association.<sup>1</sup>

In medical and scientific writing, “*approximately* is nearly always the best choice.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Examples:**

Approximately 35% of the patients in the study had stage I or II disease.  
Our findings indicated that the optimal particle diameter was approximately 3 nm.

In nonscientific contexts, *approximately, about,* and *around* “are all acceptable.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Examples:**

Travelers should keep in mind that at this time of year, the sun sets at approximately 5:30 pm.  
A taxi ride from the airport to the convention center costs about \$45.  
We anticipate that around 500 attendees will visit the MD Anderson booth over the weekend.

### **Reference**

1. Frey T, Young RK. Correct and preferred usage of common words and phrases. In: Christiansen S, Iverson C, Flanagan A, et al. *AMA Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors*. 11th ed. Oxford University Press; 2020. Accessed January 9, 2024.  
<https://academic.oup.com/book/27941/chapter/207567296#427103112>