## How to build your acknowledgements section

### **Step 1: Brainstorm who you'd like to thank, and split into categories**

**"Major thanks":** people who your project would be impossible without. These are often predominantly professional, e.g. your advisor, chair, and committee, as well as any funders.

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**"Big thanks":** people who helped you along the way or helped you grow intellectually, such as classmates, peers, librarians, etc.

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**"Minor thanks":** a catch-all for everyone else, especially those who offered moral support or encouragement. This can include personal acknowledgements, such as parents, partners, children, friends, or even pets.

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### **Step 2: Match a sentence starter to a person and fill in what you'd like to thank them for**

**Major thanks:**

| * I am deeply indebted to * I would like to express my deepest appreciation to * I would like to express my deepest gratitude to * I'm extremely grateful to * This endeavor would not have been possible without * I could not have undertaken this journey without * Words cannot express my gratitude to | * Advisor/Chair * Committee * Funders * Professors | * Tangible support (e.g. funding) * Intangible support (e.g. constructive criticism/feedback) * Patience and guidance * Knowledge or expertise shared with you |
| --- | --- | --- |

**Big thanks:**

| * Many thanks to * Special thanks to * I am also thankful to/for * I am also grateful to/for * Thanks should also go to * I would like to extend my sincere thanks to * I'd like to acknowledge | * Classmates * Cohort members * Librarians * Research assistants * Laboratory assistants * Study participants | * Editing or proofreading help * Advice and suggestions * Moral support * Inspiration |
| --- | --- | --- |

**Minor thanks:**

| * Lastly, I'd like to mention * I'd like to recognize * I had the pleasure of working with/collaborating with * I would be remiss in not mentioning | * Parents * Partners * Children * Friends * Pets | * Emotional support * Practical support * Belief in you |
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### **Step 3: Write your acknowledgements section**

Here's an example of how you can combine the different sentences to write your acknowledgements.

Words cannot express my gratitude to my professor and chair of my committee for her invaluable patience and feedback. I also could not have undertaken this journey without my defense committee, who generously provided knowledge and expertise. Additionally, this endeavor would not have been possible without the generous support from the MacArthur Foundation.

I am also grateful to my classmates and cohort members, especially my office mates, for their editing help, late-night feedback sessions, and moral support. Thanks should also go to the librarians, research assistants, and study participants from the university, who impacted and inspired me.

Lastly, I would be remiss in not mentioning my family, especially my parents, spouse, and children. Their belief in me has kept my spirits and motivation high during this process. I would also like to thank my cat for all the entertainment and emotional support.

Now you can try!

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