APA Formatting and Style Guide

Purdue OWL staff
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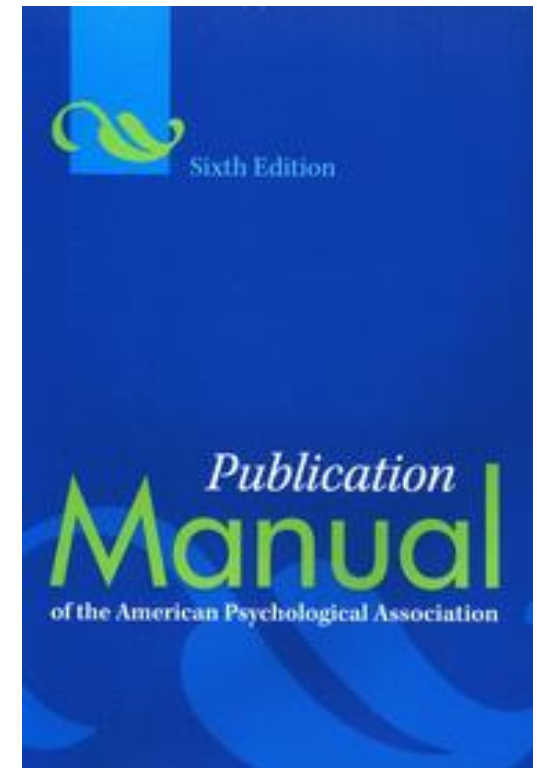
What is APA Style?

The American Psychological Association (APA) citation style is the most commonly used format for manuscripts in the social sciences.

APA regulates:

- Stylistics

- In-text citations

- References

Sixth Edition

Publication Manual

of the American Psychological Association

Personal pronouns where appropriate

- ✓ : "**We** conducted an experiment…"
- ✗ : "**The authors** conducted an experiment…."

Active voice rather than passive voice

- ✓ : "We **asked** participants questions."
- ✗ : "The participants **have been asked** questions by the researchers."

Language

Language in an APA paper should be:

• **Clear**: be specific in descriptions and explanations

• **Concise**: condense information when you can

• **Plain**: use simple, descriptive adjectives and minimize figurative language

The Literature Review:

• Summarizes scientific literature on a particular research topic

• Includes:
- Title page
- Introduction
- List of references

The Experimental Report:

- Describes your experimental research

- Includes:
    - Title page
    - Abstract
    - Introduction
    - Methods, Results, and Discussion sections
    - Additional experiments (if you did more than one)
    - List of references
    - Appendices
    - Tables and Figures

If your paper fits neither category:

- Follow the general format

- Consult the instructor

- Consult the APA Publication Manual
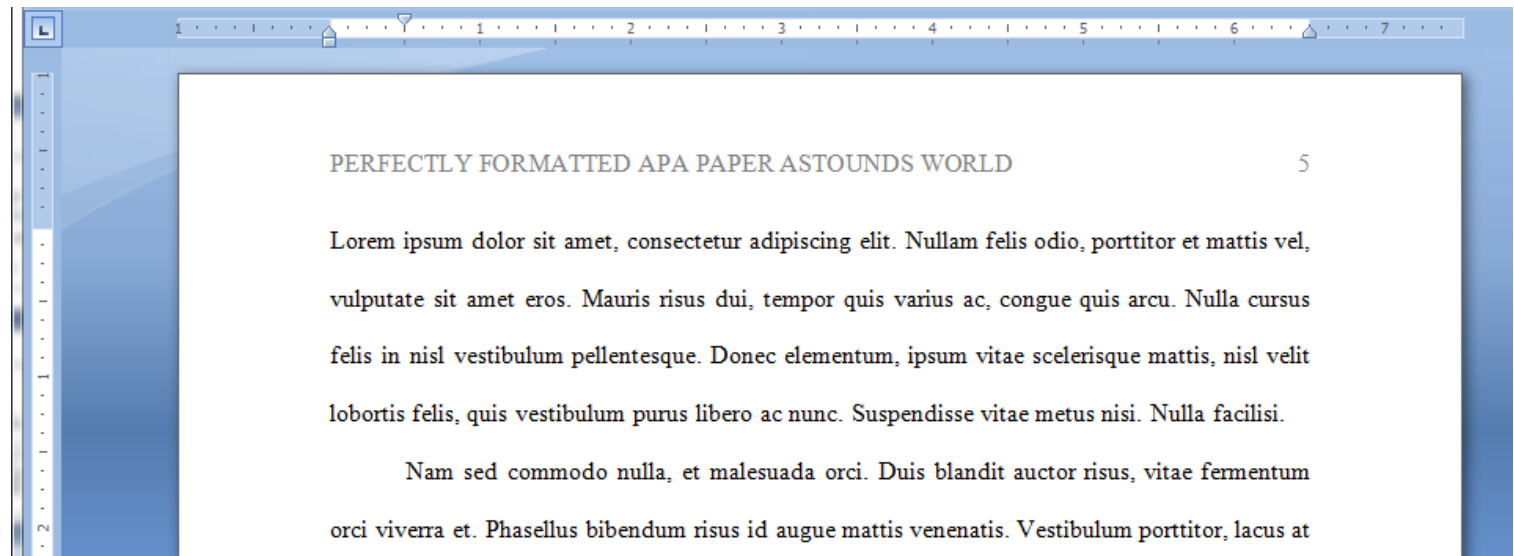
Your essay should:

- Be typed

- Double-spaced

- Have 1" margins

- Use 10-12pt. Standard font (ex. Times New Roman)

- Be printed on standard-sized paper (8.5"x 11")

[Note: If you are writing a manuscript draft, APA suggests using two spaces between sentences to aid readability (see pp.87-88 in the APA manual).]
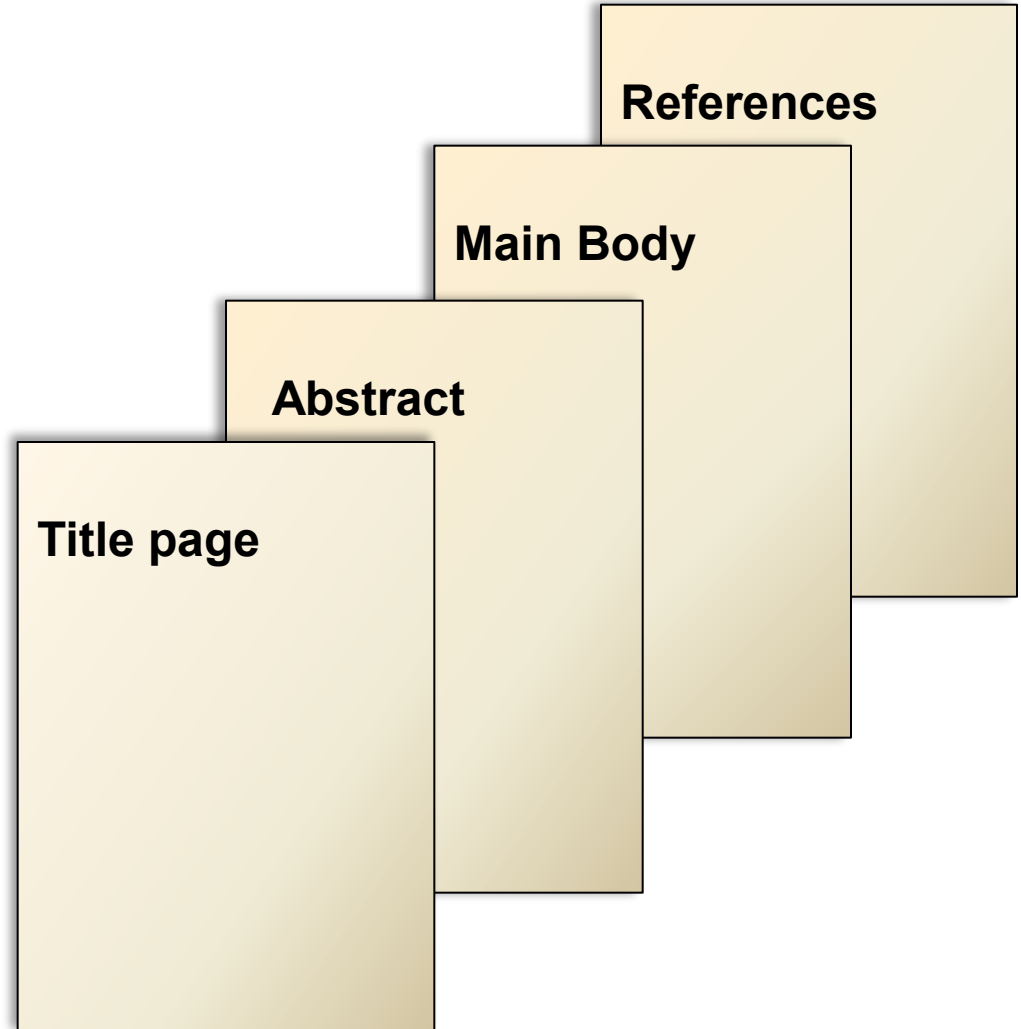
Every page of your essay should include:

- A page header (Title, all caps) in the upper left-hand corner
- The page number in the upper right

PERFECTLY FORMATTED APA PAPER ASTOUNDS WORLD   5

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General APA Format

Your essay should include four major sections:

- Title page
- Abstract
- Main Body
- References

Page header:
(use Insert Page Header)
title flush left + page
number flush right.

Title:
(in the upper half of the
page, centered)
name (no title or degree)
+ affiliation (university,
etc.)

Running head: THE PURDUE OWL'S AWESOME EXAMPLE OF AN APA PAPER   1

The Purdue OWL's Awesome Example

Of an APA Paper

Jack Dawkins

Purdue University

Page header: do NOT include "Running head:"

Abstract: centered, at the top of the page

THE PURDUE OWL'S AWESOME EXAMPLE OF AN APA PAPER   2

Abstract

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Mauris auctor ullamcorper erat, vel commodo diam vestibulum vel. Aliquam rutrum leo quis felis dignissim non lobortis risus eleifend. Morbi eget felis tortor, vitae vestibulum elit. Proin in nisl sapien. Fusce aliquet, libero quis scelerisque lobortis, lectus leo iaculis nisl, nec facilisis magna urna eu ligula. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Nunc velit orci, consequat a varius in, aliquet ac massa. Aenean suscipit velit ac nisi suscipit id porttitor lacus ullamcorper. Pellentesque ut justo non mauris condimentum vehicula. Fusce commodo dolor a ipsum laoreet laoreet. Nulla facilisi. Cras pellentesque bibendum tellus, et eleifend lectus facilisis eget. Curabitur sodales, sem eleifend auctor bibendum, turpis felis dignissim magna, eu laoreet quam nunc et dui.

Keywords: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.

Write a 150- to 250-word summary of your paper in an accurate, concise, and specific manner.

- Number the first text page as page number 3

- Type and center the title of the paper at the top of the page

- Type the text double-spaced with all sections following each other without a break

- Identify the sources you use in the paper in parenthetical, in-text citations

- Format tables and figures

- Center the title (References) at the top of the page. Do not bold it.

- Double-space reference entries

- Flush left the first line of the entry and indent subsequent lines

- Order entries alphabetically by the surname of the first author of each work

THE PURDUE OWL'S AWESOME EXAMPLE OF AN APA PAPER   1

References

Cummings, J. N., Butler, B., & Kraut, R. (2002). The quality of online social relationships. *Communications of the ACM, 45*(7), 103-108.

Hu, Y., Wood, J.F., Smith, V., & Westbrook, N. (2004). Friendships through IM: Examining the relationship between instant messaging and intimacy. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 10*(1), 38-48.

Tidwell, L.C., & Walther, J.B. (2002). Computer-mediated communication effects on disclosure, impressions, and interpersonal evaluations: Getting to know one another a bit at a time. *Human Communication Research, 28*(3), 317-348.

Underwood, H., & Findlay, B. (2004). Internet relationships and their impact on primary relationships. *Behaviour Change, 21*(2), 127-140.

- Invert authors' names (last name first followed by initials)

  - EX: "Smith, J.Q."

- Capitalize only the first letter of the first word of a title and subtitle, the first word after a colon or a dash in the title, and proper nouns. Do not capitalize the first letter of the second word in a hyphenated compound word.

  - EX: The perfectly formatted paper: How the Purdue OWL saved my essay.

- Capitalize all major words in journal titles

- Italicize titles of longer works such as books and journals

- Do not italicize, underline, or put quotes around the titles of shorter works such as journal articles or essays in edited collections

Hu, Y., Wood, J.F., Smith, V., & Westbrook, N. (2004). Friendships through IM: Examining the relationship between instant messaging and intimacy. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 10*(1), 38-48.

APA is a complex system of citation. When compiling the reference list, the strategy below might be useful:

1. Identify the type of source:
   Is it a book? A journal article? A webpage?

2. Find a sample citation for this type of source
   Check a textbook or the OWL APA Guide:
   http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

3. "Mirror" the sample

4. Make sure that the entries are listed in alphabetical order and that the subsequent lines are indented (Recall References: Basics)

In-text citations help readers locate the cited source in the References section of the paper.

Whenever you use a source, provide in parenthesis:
- the author's name and the date of publication

- for quotations and close paraphrases, provide the author's name, date of publication, and a page number

orci viverra et. Phasellus bibendum risus id augue mattis venenatis (Lahiri, 2002). Vestibulum porttitor, "lacus at malesuada pulvinar, sem libero placerat lacus, malesuada gravida dui sem id leo" (Lahiri, 2002, p. 501). Duis volutpat risus est, vitae pulvinar quam iaculis eu. Maecenas sit

When quoting:
- Introduce the quotation with a signal phrase

- Include the author's name, year of publication, and page number

- Keep the citation brief—do not repeat the information

Caruth (1996) has stated that a traumatic response frequently entails a "delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (p.11).

A traumatic response frequently entails a "delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (Caruth, 1996, p.11).

Provide the author's last name and the year of publication in parenthesis after a summary or a paraphrase.

Though feminist studies focus solely on women's experiences, they err by collectively perpetuating the masculine-centered impressions (Fussell, 1975).

Include the author's name in the signal phrase, followed by the year of publication in parenthesis.

Recently, the history of warfare has been significantly revised by Higonnet et al. (1987), Marcus (1989), and Raitt and Tate (1997) to include women's personal and cultural responses to battle and its resultant traumatic effects.

When including the quotation in a summary/paraphrase, also provide a page number in parenthesis after the quotation:

According to feminist researchers Raitt and Tate

(1997), "It is no longer true to claim that women's

responses to the war have been ignored" (p. 2).

If the source does not have page numbers, use paragraph numbers instead.

Introduce quotations with signal phrases, e.g.:

According to Xavier (2008), "…." (p. 3).

Xavier (2008) argued that "……" (p. 3).

Use signal verbs such as:

acknowledged, contended, maintained,
responded, reported, argued, concluded, etc.

Use the past tense or the present perfect tense of verbs in signal phrases when
they discuss past events.

When the parenthetical citation includes two or
more works, order them in the same way they appear in the reference list—the
author's name, the year of publication—separated by a semi-colon.

lobortis felis, quis vestibulum purus libero ac nunc. Suspendisse vitae metus

(Kachru, 2005; Smith, 2008).

When citing a work with two authors:

In the signal phrase, use "and" in between the authors' names

According to feminist researchers Raitt and Tate (1997), "It is no longer true to claim that women's responses to the war have been ignored" (p. 2).

In parenthesis, use "&" between names

Some feminists researchers question that "women's responses to the war have been ignored" (Raitt & Tate, 1997, p. 2).

When citing a work with three to five authors, identify all authors in the signal phrase or in parenthesis.

(Harklau, Siegal, & Losey, 1999)

In subsequent citations, only use the first author's last name followed by "et al." in the signal phrase or in parentheses.

(Harklau et al., 1993)

When citing a work with six and more authors, identify the first author's name followed by "et al."

Smith et al. (2006) maintained that….

(Smith et al., 2006)

When citing a work with an unknown author:
•Use the source's full title in the signal phrase
•Cite the first word of the title followed by the year of publication in parenthesis.

According to "Indiana Joins Federal Accountability System" (2008)

OR

("Indiana," 2008)

Titles:
Articles and Chapters = " "
Books and Reports = *italicize*

When citing an organization:

•Mention the organization the first time you cite the source in the signal phrase or the parenthetical citation.

The data collected by the Food and Drug

Administration (2008) confirmed that…

•If the organization has a well-known abbreviation, include the abbreviation in parentheses the first time the source is cited and then use only the abbreviation in later citations.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) confimed …

FDA's experts tested…

When citing authors with the same last names, use first initials with the last names.

(B. Kachru, 2005; Y. Kachru, 2008)

When citing two or more works by the same author and published in the same year, use lower-case letters (a, b, c) after the year of publication to order the references.

Smith's (1998a) study of adolescent immigrants…

When citing interviews, letters, e-mails, etc., include the communicator's name, the fact that it was personal communication, and the date of the communication.

A. P. Smith also claimed that many of her students had

difficulties with APA style (personal communication,

November 3, 2002).

OR

(E. Robbins, personal communication, January 4, 2001).

Do not include personal communication in the reference list.

When citing an electronic document, whenever possible, cite it in the author-date style. If an electronic source lacks page numbers, locate and identify the paragraph number/paragraph heading.

According to Smith (1997), ... (Mind over Matter section, para. 6).

APA uses a system of five heading levels.

APA Headings	
Level	Format
1	**Centered, Boldfaced, Upper & Lowercase Headings**
2	**Left-aligned, Boldface, Upper & Lowercase Headings**
3	**Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with a period.**
4	***Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with period.***
5	*Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.*

Here is an example of the five-level heading system:

<div align="center">Methods (Level 1)</div>

Site of Study (Level 2)

Participant Population (Level 2)

  Teachers. (Level 3)

  Students. (Level 3)

<div align="center">Results (Level 1)</div>

Spatial Ability (Level 2)

  Test One. (Level 3)

    Teachers with experience. (Level 4)

    Teachers with training. (Level 4)

  Test Two. (Level 3)

Kinesthetic Ability (Level 2)

Label tables with an Arabic numeral and provide a title. The label and title appear on separate lines above the table, flush-left and single-spaced.

Cite a source in a note below the table.

Table 1

Internet users in Europe

Country	Regular Users
France	9 ml

Note: The data are adapted from "The European Union and Russia" (2007). Retrieved from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu

Label figures with an Arabic numeral and provide a title. The label and the title appear on the same line below the figure, flush-left .

You might provide an additional title centered above the figure.

Cite the source below the label and the title.

Figure 1. Internet users in Europe. Adapted from *The European Union and Russia: Statistical comparison* by Eurostat Statistical Books, 2007,   Retrieved from http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu

The Purdue OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu

The Purdue Writing Lab @ HEAV 226

Composition textbooks

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th ed.

APA's website: http://www.apastyle.org

The End

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