



American Psychological Association (APA) Style Guidelines Overview



Introduction

This poster provides basic rules for using APA style. To supplement this material, consult the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th edition). The APA manual is available in most writing centers, libraries, and bookstores. You may also reference the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) for information on APA: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>.

Poster by Kate Bouwens and Allen Bizbee. © 2009 The Writing Lab & OWL at Purdue University.

Formatting

Type APA papers on white 8.5 x 11 inch paper. Margins should be 1 inch on all sides. Text should be double-spaced with two spaces after punctuation in between sentences. Use a legible font in 10 to 12 pt. size. Include a page header at the top of every page. To create a page header, type: "THE TITLE OF YOUR PAPER" flush with the left margin. Abbreviate your title to 50 or fewer characters. Then insert page numbers flush right.

Title Page

Title pages should include the "Running header: TITLE OF YOUR PAPER" in the header. In the upper half of the title page, type your name, the byline, and affiliation centered on separate lines.

Abstract

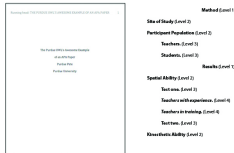
On a new page, center and type the word "Abstract." Beginning with the next line, type a double-spaced paragraph of 120 or fewer words containing your topic, research questions, participants, methods, results, data analysis, and conclusions.

Main Body

The top area of the body pages should contain the header and the page numbers. Page margins should be 1 inch. Indent first lines of paragraphs one-half inch from left margins.

Headings

APA uses a five heading system to separate papers: Level 1: Centered, boldface and lowercase heading; Level 2: Left-aligned, boldface, uppercase heading with heading; Level 3: Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with period; Level 4: Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with period; Level 5: Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with period.



In-Text Citation

Basics

Use the past tense or present perfect tense when using signal phrases to describe earlier research, e.g., "Jones (1998) found" or "Jones (1998) has found." Follow the author-date method of in-text citation: (Jones, 1998).

Place direct quotations longer than 40 words in a free-standing block of typewritten lines and omit quotation marks. Start the quotation on a new line, indented five spaces from the left margin. Type the entire block quotation on the new margin and indent the first line of any subsequent paragraph within the quotation five spaces from the new margin. Place the parenthetical citation after the closing punctuation mark.

A Work with One or Two Authors

Name the author(s) in the signal phrase or in the parentheses. Spell out "and" in signal phrases but use the ampersand in parentheses.

Wegener and Petty (1994) found that... (Wegener & Petty, 1994).

A Work by Three to Five Authors

List all the authors in the signal phrase or in parentheses the first time you cite the source.

(Kennis, Cornell, Sun, Beery, & Harlow, 1993)

In subsequent citations, only use the first author's last name and "et al."

A Work by Six or More Authors

Use the first author's name then "et al." in signal phrases or in parentheses.

Harris et al. (2001) argued... (Harris et al., 2001)

Unknown Author

If the work does not have an author, cite the source by its title in the signal phrase or use the first word or two in the parentheses. Italicize titles of books and reports; titles of articles and chapters go in quotation marks.

A similar study was conducted with students learning to format research papers ("Using APA," 2001).

Organization as Author

For organization or government agency authors, mention organizations in the signal phrase or the parenthetical citation the first time you cite it.

According to the American Psychological Association (2000),...

Two or More Works in the Same Parentheses

When your parenthetical citation includes two or more works, order them the same way they appear in the reference list, separated by a semi-colon.

(Berndt, 2002; Harlow, 1983)

Internet Sources

If possible, cite an electronic document the same as any other document.

In his online journal article, Kenneth (2000) explained...

References

Basics

References lists appear at the end of papers on a separate page. Center and type the word "References" at the top of your list. All lines after the first line of each entry in the list should be indented one-half inch from the left margin. Author's names are inverted; give last names and initials for all authors of a work unless the work has more than six authors.

Single Author

Smith, T. J. (2002). Friendship and social development. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11*, 7-10.

Two Authors

List by author last names and initials. Use the ampersand, not "and."

Herroud, D. T., & Petty, R. E. (1994). Mood management. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 66*, 1034-1048.

Three to Six Authors

Jones, M., Yang, E., Ellis, G., Mills, D., Casper, R., & Sax, P. (2001). Writing labs. *NPA Journal, 44*(3), 213-245.

More than Seven Authors

Miller, F. H., Choi, M. J., Angeli, L. L., Harland, A. A., Stamos, J. A., Thomas, S. T., . . . Rubin, L. H. (2009). Web site usability. *Technical Communication, 57*, 323-335.

Organization as Author

American Psychological Association. (2003). *New directions...*

Unknown Author

Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary (10th ed.). (1993). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.

Articles in Periodicals

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical, volume number*(issue number), pages.

Internet Sources with and without DOI

APA now recommends using a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) if available.

Brown, D. Toward effective presentations. *Journal of Marketing, 41*(11/12), 1245-1283. doi:10.1108/03090560710821161

Kenneth, I. A. (2000). A Buddhist response to human rights. *Journal of Buddhist Ethics, 8*. Retrieved from <http://www.cac.psu.edu/jbe/twoont.html>