APA Style

The American Psychological Association (APA) regulates how academic papers are formatted in many disciplines, including business, engineering, education, and the social sciences. When you learn and use APA style well, you demonstrate credibility to other scholars and direct those scholars to your sources.

The following guidelines are based on the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*. For each topic, the corresponding section in the handbook is listed in parentheses.

**General Format** *(APA Manual section 8.03)*

**Font (8.03):** Clear, standard size (Times New Roman, 12 pt. font is preferred)

**Line Spacing (8.03):** Double-spaced, no extra spaces between headings or body paragraphs

**Margins (8.03):** 1-inch margins on all sides

**Title Page** *(APA Manual sections 2.01–2.03, 8.03)*

Your title page identifies you and announces the topic of the paper and your affiliations.

**Running Head (8.03):** Type “Running head:” then put the title, or a shortened version, in all caps flush left. Your header should not exceed 50 characters including spaces and punctuation. The page number should be flush right. **Note:** Only the cover page will have the words “Running head:” and each subsequent page will only have the heading in all caps. In Microsoft Word, when your cursor is in the header, the option to select “Different First Page” will appear above, allowing you to change the heading of subsequent pages.

**Title (2.01):** Center the title between the margins and place it in the upper half of the title page. **Note:** You will also include your title on the first page of your main paper or body text.

**Author’s Name (2.02):** Place your name beneath the full title. Including your middle initial is preferred.

**Example:** (one author) Holly Hancock  
(two authors) Holly Hancock and Liz Russell  
(three or more authors with the same affiliation) Holly Hancock, Liz Russell, and Susan Fuentes

**Institutional Affiliation (2.02):** Give the full name of your institutional affiliation.
Abstract (APA Manual section 2.04)
The purpose of an abstract is to summarize your paper. Generally, an abstract is between 150 and 250 words and is on its own page following the title page. Your abstract should summarize your major points in the same order they are presented in the paper.

The Body of the Paper (APA Manual sections 2.05, 8.03)
The body of your paper will follow the title page and abstract.

Running Head (8.03): After the title page, each subsequent page will have the running head in all caps. The page numbers begin with the title page. Note: After the cover page, the abbreviated running head should be in all caps and should not have the words “Running head:” preceding it.

Title (2.01): The first few paragraphs of your paper will be an introduction. Rather than begin with a heading identifying the introduction, you should write the title of your paper at the top of the page, centered and not bolded. After the introduction, begin using the five levels of APA headings.

Headings (3.02-3.03): APA uses five levels of heading. Levels one through three are illustrated below. For levels four and five, consult the APA Manual section 3.03.

Level One is Bolded and Centered

Level Two is Bolded and Flush Left

Level three is bolded and indented with sentence punctuation and capitalization.
In-Text Citations (APA Manual chapter 6)

In-text citations indicate to readers where your thoughts end and your research begins. In-text citations also direct readers to the full citations included on your reference page.

In-Text Citations (6.03, 6.11-6.21): Provide the author’s last name and the date the work was published. Also include a page number if using a direct quote. Alternatively, you can use the author’s name and the publication date in the text and include only the page number (if needed) in parentheses. Remember that the period follows the closing parenthesis.

Example:

Students will be required to take the same assessments (Shah, 2012).

or

Davis (2012) identified this issue “reoccurring adaption” (p. 14).

Block Quotes (6.03): Quotes longer than forty words use the block quote format: indent the block quote an additional ½ inch from the left margin and main body text, double-space, omit quotation marks, and place the citation after the period.

In-Text Citations of Duplicate Authors and Titles (APA Manual chapter 6)

Sometimes, you will use multiple sources from the same author or different authors with the same surname. The following are specific APA guidelines on avoiding confusion:

Authors with the Same Surname (6.14):

When citing in text, include the author’s first initials to avoid confusion.


Authors with Multiple Works (6.16):

When you are citing multiple works by the same author or authors and those works have the same publication years, add the suffixes a, b, c, etc. after the year and include those suffixes in the reference list (which will be ordered alphabetically).

Example: Several studies corroborate this finding (Derryberry & Reed, 2005a, 2005b).

Citing Multiple Authors Within One Citation (6.16):

If you have multiple sources that all validate the same fact that you are asserting, include all of those references alphabetically in the same parenthetical in-text citation, separated with a semicolon.

Example: Several studies corroborate this finding (Miller, 1999; Minor, 2001).
Reference List (APA Manual sections 6.22–6.32)
The reference page should follow the same format as the rest of the paper: 1-inch margins, double-spacing, and your header. List sources alphabetically with no extra lines between sources.

Header (8.03): Continue the running header and the pagination.

Title (2.11): Place the title “References” in the center and in the same size and format as the body of your paper.

Hanging Indent (2.11): Set a 0.5-inch indent for citations that extend more than one line. In Microsoft Word, highlight the text, right click, and select Paragraph. Then, under Indentation, select Special Indent, and click Hanging. Set it to 0.5 inch.

Citing Specific Sources (APA Manual sections 6 & 7)
Since there are many types of sources, only some of the most commonly used are included in this handout. For more citation help with sources and for exceptions consult The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition, or the Purdue Online Writing Lab.

Book (7.02):
Include: Author’s last name, First initial. Middle initial. (Year of publication). Title of work. Location: Publisher.

Scholarly Journal Article (7.01):
Include: Author’s last name, First initial. Middle initial. (Year of publication). Title of article. Title of Periodical, volume number(issue number), page range.

Online Scholarly Journal Article (7.01):
Include: Author’s last name, First initial. Middle initial. (Date of publication). Title of article. Title of Periodical, volume number(issue number), page range. doi:xxxxxxx or URL (if no DOI)*

Internet Source (6.32):
Include: Author’s last name, First initial. Middle initial. (Date of publication). Title of document [Format description]. Retrieved from http://Web address*

*Do not include a period after the end of the DOI (Digital Object Identifier, a consistent link provided by the publisher) or web address.