

APA

What is APA Style?

American Psychological Association (APA) Style is used primarily in the social sciences—psychology, sociology, nursing, family studies, etc. It places emphasis on the date of publication, whereas other styles (MLA, for example) emphasize the page number.

APA Style is a parenthetical documentation style. This means it uses in-text citation. Two pieces of information must always be included in the in-text citations:

1. the first author's last name
2. the date of publication.

If quoting directly from a source, however, the page number must also be included. The information contained in parentheses is separated by commas: (Smith, 2000) or (Smith, 2000, p.23).

APA Citation Guidelines

There are several ways to integrate APA citations into your text. In any case, it is important to cite the authors for their ideas. Options for citation include:

1. Place the author(s) and date(s) in parentheses at an appropriate place in or at the end of a sentence: `

Researchers have pointed out that the lack of trained staff is a common barrier to providing adequate health education (Fisher, 1999) and services (Weist & Christodulu, 2000).

2. Include the names of the researcher(s) in the sentence. Place only the date in parentheses:

Fisher (1999) recommended that health education be required for high school graduation in Florida.

3. Integrate the author and the date into your sentence:

In 2001, Weist proposed using the Child and Adolescent Planning Schema to analyze and develop community mental health programs for young people.

4. When citing a direct quotation, include the page numbers as follows:

Lopez (1993) found that “the effect disappeared within minutes” (p. 311).

Notes:

If your text is written by two authors, list both names in every citation. If there are 3-6 authors, list all for the first use, then abbreviate to “first author et. al.” for subsequent citations:

(Smith, Nelson, Jones & Sawyer, 2004) and subsequently (Smith et al., 2004)

When writing about an event that occurred in the past, use the past tense (e.g., Smith showed). For an event that is continuous, the present perfect tense is used (e.g., Smith has shown). When results are given, the present tense is used (e.g., the experiment demonstrates).

“APA Guidelines” developed using the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th edition, the UW-Madison Writing Center Online, and Diana Hacker’s *A Writer’s Reference*, 6th edition.

Formatting the References List

Title: Type the word “References” at the top of the page, centered. Do not bold, italicize or underline.

Spacing: All entries should be double-spaced, unless your assignment instructs you otherwise.

Indentation: If an entry is longer than one line, use a hanging indent on the second line.

Capitalization: Capitalize only the first word of titles of books and articles. If there is a subtitle, capitalize the first word after the colon.

Ex: Family meditation: Facts, myths, and future prospects.

Organization: All entries should be alphabetized by authors’ last names.

Sample Reference Entries

Notes: Unlike MLA, APA Style does not require quotation marks around chapter or article titles in the References list. At a minimum, the reference for an internet source should provide a document title or description, a date (the date of publication or the date of retrieval), and the DOI (digital object identifier) or URL. APA prefers the use of DOI if available.

Book With a Single Author

Author’s last name & first initial. (Year of publication). Title of work: Capital letter for subtitle. Location: Publisher.

Baxter, C. (1997). Race equality in health care and education. Philadelphia: Balliere Tindall.

Books With Two to Six Authors

List all authors by last names and initials; separate the authors names with commas. The last author name should be preceded again by an ampersand (&).

Kernis, M. H., Cornell, D. P., Sun, C. R., Berry, A., Harlow, T., & Bach, J. S. (1993). There's more to self-esteem than whether it is high or low: The importance of stability of self-esteem. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Books With More Than Six Authors

List the first six authors by last names and initials, followed by an ellipsis (...) then the name of the last author in the listing.

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 for the blind and low-vision user. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

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Sample Reference Entries (Continued)

Journal Article

Author of article. (Year of publication). Title of article: Capital letter for subtitle. Title of journal, volume number, issue, pages of article.

Roy, A. (1982). Suicide in chronic schizophrenia. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 141, 171-177.

Article From a Database:

Author (s). (Year). Title. Journal or Source Title, Volume (number), page numbers. DOI [or, Database name.]

Holliday, R.E., & Haynes, B.K. (2001). Dissociating automatic and intentional processes in children's eye witness memory. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 75(1), 1-42.
doi:10.1006/jecp.1999.2521

Internet Source Created by a Private Organization:

Title of website. (Date of last update). Title of page or article. Date you visited the site, DOI or URL.
If the website has a listed author, list the author before the title of the website.

Greater New Milford (Ct) Area Healthy Community 2000, Task Force of Teen and Adolescent Issues. Who has time for a family meal? You do! Retrieved October 5, 2000, from <http://www.familymealtime.org>.

Online Newspaper Article:

Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Title of article. Title of Newspaper. Retrieved from <http://www.someaddress.com/full/url/>

Parker-Pope, T. (2008, May 6). Psychiatry handbook linked to drug industry. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com>

APA Formatting Guidelines

Many instructors in the social sciences require students to follow APA guidelines for formatting a paper, as well as citations.

Materials and Font

Materials and font Use good-quality 8½" × 11" white paper. Avoid a font that is unusual or hard to read.

Title Page

Begin at the top left with the words "Running head," followed by a colon and a short form of the title of your paper. The short form should be no more than fifty characters and should be typed in all capital letters. Flush with the right margin, put the page number 1.

About halfway down the page, center the full title of your paper (capitalizing all words of four letters or more), your name, and your school's name. At the bottom of the page, you may add the heading "Author Note," centered, followed by a brief paragraph that lists specific information about the course or department or provides acknowledgments or contact information.

Keep in mind that these are simply guidelines; for specific requirements, check with your instructor.

Page Numbers and Running Head

Number all pages of the main paper with arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, and so on) in the upper right corner about one inch from the top of the page. The title page and abstract should be paginated in lowercase Roman numerals, beginning with i.

On every page, in the upper left corner on the same line as the page number, place a running head. The running head consists of a short form of the title of the paper (no more than fifty characters) in all capital letters. (On the title page only, include the words "Running head" followed by a colon before the shortened title.)

Margins, Line Spacing, and Paragraph Indents

Use margins of one inch (1") on all sides of the page. Left-align the text.

Double-space throughout the paper. Indent the first line of each paragraph one-half inch.

Capitalization, Italics, and Quotation Marks

Capitalize all words of four letters or more in titles of works and in headings that appear in the text of the paper. Capitalize the first word after a colon if the word begins a complete sentence.

Italicize the titles of books and other long works, such as Web sites. Use quotation marks around the titles of periodical articles, short stories, poems, and other short works.

NOTE: APA has different requirements for titles in the reference list.

APA Formatting Guidelines (Continued)

Long Quotations and Footnotes

When a quotation is longer than forty words, set it off from the text by indenting it one-half inch from the left margin. Double-space the quotation. Do not use quotation marks around a quotation that has been set off from the text.

Place each footnote, if any, at the bottom of the page on which the text reference occurs. Double-space between the last line of text on the page and the footnote. Double-space the footnote and indent the first line one-half inch. Begin the note with the superscript arabic numeral that corresponds to the number in the text.

Abstract

An abstract is a 100-to-150-word paragraph that provides readers with a quick overview of your essay. It should express your main idea and your key points; it might also briefly suggest any implications or applications of the research you discuss in the paper.

If your instructor requires an abstract, include it immediately after the title page. Center the word Abstract one inch from the top of the page; double-space the abstract as you do the body of your paper. Number abstract following the lowercase Roman numeral pagination of the Title Page.

Headings

Although headings are not always necessary, their use is encouraged in the social sciences. For most undergraduate papers, one level of heading will usually be sufficient.

In APA style, major headings are centered and boldface. Capitalize the first word of the heading, along with all words except articles, short prepositions, and coordinating conjunctions.

Visuals

APA classifies visuals as tables and figures (figures include graphs, charts, drawings, and photographs). Keep visuals as simple as possible. Label each table with an arabic numeral (Table 1, Table 2, and so on) and provide a clear title. The label and title should appear on separate lines above the table, flush left and double-spaced. Below the table, give its source in a note. If any data in the table require an explanatory footnote, use a superscript lowercase letter in the body of the table and in a footnote following the source note. Double-space source notes and footnotes and do not indent the first line of each note.

For each figure, place a label and a caption below the figure, flush left and double-spaced. The label and caption need not appear on separate lines.

In the text of your paper, discuss the most significant features of each visual. Place the visual as close as possible to the sentences that relate to it unless your instructor prefers it in an appendix.