



APA 101

A GUIDE TO
WRITING AN
APA STYLE
PAPER



WHAT IS APA FORMAT?

APA format is the official style of the American Psychological Association (APA) and is commonly used to cite sources in psychology, education, and the social sciences.

So why is APA format so important in psychology and other social sciences? By using APA style, researchers and students are able to communicate information about their ideas and experiments in a consistent format. Sticking to a consistent style allows readers to know what to look for as they read journal articles and other forms of social sciences writing.

APA VS MLA

- Social studies
 - Psychology
 - Linguistics
 - Sociology
 - Economics
 - Criminology
- Business
- Nursing

- English Studies
 - Language
 - Literature
- Foreign Languages and Literatures
- Literary Criticism
- Comparative Literature
- Cultural Studies



THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Problem Identification

Problem Statement

Hypothesis Formulation

Data Collection

Data Analysis

Conclusion



- Problem identification and statement formulation form the foundation via a focused and clear expression of the area of concern, setting the scope for future steps
- Hypotheses formulation is an educated prediction that provides an explanation for observations
- Data validation involves gathering and evaluating information on variables of interest used in explanation
- Conclusions and recommendations are based on interpretations of results

INTEGRATING SOURCES IN APA STYLE

- Set the margins of your manuscript to one inch on all sides
- Include four major sections: Title Page, Abstract, Main Body and References
- Set headers and footers within the pages' margins, For students' papers, only page numbers should be included at the top of every page
- Double-space the text throughout your entire manuscript
- Leave only one space after periods or other punctuation marks
- Indent the first line of paragraphs one-half inch from the left margin
- Include endnotes on a separate page after the References page



TITLE PAGE

1

Title of Your Paper in Bold
Subtitle if any (D-Space all)

Name of Student
Department or School
Course number & Name
Name of Professor with title: Dr.
Dude date of assignment

The title page should contain the:

- Page number on the right-hand-side in the header
- Title of the paper centered and bold - this should be in the middle of the first half of the page
- Author's name
- Institutional affiliation
- Course number and name
- Instructor name
- Assignment due date

A professional paper should also include the author note and a running head: Title in caps.



ABSTRACT

2

Abstract

Do not indent half an inch when starting the abstract. Words should be flushed with the right margin. The whole document should be double-spaced. Your abstract should only be one paragraph typically no more than 250 words. At the end of the paragraph, indent half an inch, and write your keywords. The word "Keywords" should be written in italics. Do not add punctuation at the end of the sentence.

Keywords: Abstract, no indentation, double-spaced

The Abstract is a concise summary of the key points of your research. Your abstract should contain at least your:

- Research topic
- Research questions
- Participants
- Methods
- Results
- Data analysis
- Conclusions

You may also include possible implications of your research and future work you see connected with your findings.



PAGES OF RESEARCH PAPER

3

Title of Your Research Paper in Bold

The first page of your research paper should have the title in bold again. The first line of each paragraph should be indented half an inch. The whole document should be double-spaced. Each page should have the page number on the upper right-hand corner.

FORMATTING HEADLINES

APA uses five-level heading to separate paper sections:

Level 1: Centered, boldface, title-case headings.

Level 2: Left-aligned, boldface, title-case headings.

Level 3: Left-aligned, boldface and italicized, using title case. Text starts as a new paragraph after this.

Level 4: Indented, boldface, and using title case ending with a period. Begin body text after the period, and continue on the same line as a regular paragraph.

Level 5: Indented, boldface, italicized, and using title case ending with a period. Begin body text after the period, and continue on the same line as a regular paragraph.



IN-TEXT CITATION: WHY?

Integrate sources into your material ethically and professionally. Avoid intentional and unintentional plagiarism by citing all ideas borrowed from others.

Ethics

Plagiarism is a serious matter. Integrate sources using your own words, thoughts, analyses, and conclusions, but name your sources.

Capture

Quote and paraphrase accurately and use your own words to convey the source's contribution (e.g., says, claims, agrees, challenges, argues, discusses,...).

Reference

Never use others' thoughts without giving them credit. Summarize or paraphrase, but give the original author credit by citing your references.



GENERAL FORMATTING RULES

- Follow the author-date method of in-text citation.
- When paraphrasing or making reference to an entire book, article or other work, only make reference to the author and year of publication and not the page number in your in-text reference.
- Add a complete reference in the Reference list at the end of the paper.
- When capitalizing titles, capitalize both words in a hyphenated compound word, e.g., Non-Print Sources.
- Use the past tense or present perfect tense for signal phrases that occur in the literature review and procedure descriptions (for example, Jones (1998) found, or Jones (1998) has found...).
- Contexts other than traditionally-structured research writing may permit the simple present tense (for example, Jones (1998) finds).
- Italicize titles of longer works, e.g., books, edited collections, documentaries, but use quotation marks for articles mentioned in-text.



FORMATTING REFERENCES

- Begin your references' list on a separate page at the end of your paper.
- Label the page References (centered, bold) at the top.
- Double-space all citations; do not skip spaces between entries.
- Indent the second and subsequent lines of citations one-half inch from the left margin so that you create a hanging indent.
- Reference list entries must correspond to the references in your main text and are alphabetized by the last name of the first author of each work.

FORMATTING TITLES

- Italicize titles of longer works (e.g., books or journals).
- Maintain the punctuation and capitalization that is used by the source in its title.
- Do not italicize titles of shorter works, and do not use quotation marks (e.g., journal articles).
- In titles of books, chapters, articles, reports, webpages, or other sources, capitalize only the first letter of the first word of the title, subtitle, after a colon, after a dash, and all proper nouns.



FORMATTING AUTHORS' NAME

- All authors' names should be inverted (i.e., last names should be provided first).
- Authors' first and middle names should be written as initials. Write author's first name if two authors have the same last name and the same first initial.
- Give the last name and first/middle initials for all authors of a particular work up to and including 20 authors. Use an ampersand (&) before the last author's name.
- For 21 or more authors, use an ellipsis (but no ampersand) after the 19th author, and then add the final author's name.
- Date of publication appears after author(s) name(s) in parenthesis.

Watch the full video "Fundamentals of Writing an APA Style Paper" on our YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/acontinuouscharity

