

Campus Academic Resource Program

Guide to APA Style

This handout will:

- Define the purpose of APA formatting
- Distinguish the four sections of an APA paper
- List general guidelines for APA formatting
- Describe the use of running heads
- Show how to properly format the title page
- Demonstrate how to construct the abstract section on an APA paper
- Describe the format and content of the main body of an APA paper
- Supply information on section headings
- Explain how and when to use footnotes
- Provide information on in-text citations
- Give examples of different citations in a reference list
- Illustrate the correct way to format a reference page
- Provide an exercise to test knowledge of reference list citations

The Purpose of APA formatting

APA (American Psychological Association) style is required for most academic and professional work in the social sciences (OWL Purdue). APA style allows for the clear and concise presentation of research, while protecting the author from plagiarism. This handout discusses APA style guidelines from the 6th edition of the APA manual. Additional information can be found in the *Sixth Edition Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* or on the OWL Purdue APA Style website.

The Four Sections of an APA Paper

An APA paper consists of the **title page, abstract, main body, and references.**

The **title page** is the first page of an APA paper. It includes the title of the paper, the author's name, and the institution the author is affiliated with.

An **abstract** is included with a paper to provide a summation of the paper's key findings and focus. An abstract is generally between 150-250 words. It should include the research topic and research questions, as well as the research methods and the conclusions drawn. An abstract should always include your thesis. Despite being only one paragraph, the abstract has its own page following the title page.

Note: At the end of the abstract you may list key words in order to make the paper easy to find in databases.

The **main body** of the paper includes different sections depending on the assignment and field of study. However, all APA papers will include an intro and a conclusion. The rest of the main body may include a section on methods, data, analysis, and/or a literature review.

The **references** section includes all the sources cited in the main body of the paper. A detailed list of example citations is included on page 9 of this handout.

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General Guidelines

A paper written in proper APA style will have a clear 12pt font. Times New Roman is recommended. The paper should have 1” margins on each side.

Running Heads

The **running head** includes the title of your paper, or an abbreviated title, as well as a page number. The title in your running head *may not exceed 50 characters including spacing and punctuation*. The title should be written in *all capital letters* and *flushed left*. The page number should be flushed right (OWL Purdue).

On your title page, the running head will include the shortened title of your paper and will be preceded by the phrase “running head” (see example below). On subsequent pages, the running head will only include the shortened title of your paper.

<p>Running head: APA STYLE 1</p> <p>APA Style: A Brief Guide to Citations and Format Jane Shakira Doe San Francisco State University</p>	<p>APA STYLE 2</p>
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Formatting the Title Page

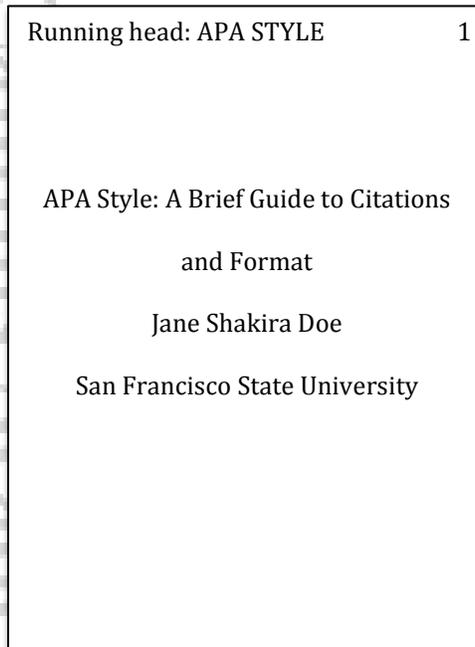
As discussed above, the heading of the title page includes the running head and the page number. The running head is flushed left, and the page number is flushed right. The title page of the paper must contain the **title**, **author’s name**, and **institution**. They are listed in that order.

The title of your paper should be *no more than 12 words and no more than 1-2 lines in length*. It should be centered and in the upper half of the page. Beneath the title, include the author’s name (first name, middle initial, and last name) *without any titles or degrees*, such as Dr. or PhD. Place the institution affiliation (where the research was conducted) under the author’s name (OWL Purdue). Your title page, along with the rest of your paper, should be *double-spaced*.

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Example:



Writing the Abstract

As previously stated, an abstract is a brief overview of the information that will be available throughout the paper. Abstracts should be free of opinions and quotations and present your proposed argument in an objective manner. Typically an abstract will be one paragraph and consist of 150-200 words. The abstract page will come immediately after the title page and should include the research topic, any research methods that were used, and the conclusions that have been drawn. Despite only being one paragraph long, an abstract should have its own page. An example of how to format an APA style abstract is included on the next page.

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the importance of the APA format, and the ways in which it can successfully implemented by students. The importance of incorporating sources into a paper, and the proper citation methods are described in the latter stages of this handout. Prominent scholars such as Dr. Z attribute their concise method of data collection and efficient presentation to the APA format.

Unlike MLA format, which is commonly used in the humanities field, APA format requires writers to use an abstract and various types of subheadings. These features contribute to the clear organization and structure of an APA style paper. APA style allows for the clear and concise presentation of research, while protecting the author from plagiarism.

Keywords: APA, Citations, research

The Main Body of the Paper

The main body of your paper begins on the third page. The title of your paper should be centered in times new roman 12 pt font. It should **not** be bold, italicized, or underlined. Like all other pages of your paper, a running head and page number should be included at the top of the page. In the **introduction paragraph** be sure to include the main problem that the rest of the paper will address. The sections that follow the introduction will present your evidence and analysis. The sources that you use to support your conclusions, as well as any statistical data or charts, will be incorporated into this portion of your paper. An example of the introduction paragraph is provided on the next page.

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APA Style: A Brief Guide to Citations and Format

The introduction of your paper, and the body paragraphs that follow it, should begin on the third page of your paper. The font should be 12-point, Times New Roman and should be double spaced. Margins must be 1 inch on all sides unless specified by your instructor or the journal you are submitting your work to. This section should include your introduction (without “Introduction” header), and depending on the paper, you might need to include a section about methods, data, or analysis. The language used in your paper should avoid any offensive language and should be written in an objective manner.

Section Headings

In order to produce an APA style paper that is well organized and easy to read, it is important to use section headers. These headers will divide the main body of the paper into major sections, such as methods or analysis, and into smaller subsections. *Note: There is no section header for the introduction of the paper.*

There are five levels of headings that can be used in an APA style paper:

Level one is centered on the page, boldfaced, uppercase and lowercase headings.

Level two is left aligned, boldfaced, uppercase and lowercase headings.

Level three is indented, boldfaced, lowercase heading with a period. Text continues after the period.

Level four is indented, boldfaced, italicized, lowercase heading with a period. Text continues after the period.

Level five is indented, italicized, lowercase heading with a period. Text continues after the period. (OWL Purdue)

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Example:

Results (Level 1)

Test-taking Skills (Level 2)

Text continues here [...]

Test one. (Level 3) Text continues after the period [...]

Undergraduate students. (Level 4) Text continues after the period [...]

Freshman students. (Level 5) Text continues after the period [...]

Senior students. (Level 5) Text continues after the period [...]

Graduate students. (Level 4) Text continues after the period [...]

Test two. (Level 3) Text continues after the period [...]

Footnotes

Footnotes should be used only when they contribute significantly to your discussion. They should be clear, concise, and relevant. Typically, a footnote should contain no more than one central idea.

Formatting Footnotes:

When using footnotes in an APA paper, make sure they are all numbered sequentially. A superscript number should appear following any punctuation mark *except a dash*, like this¹. If you wish to add a footnote to a sentence with a dash, do so before the dash—like this²—. Footnotes should appear on the same page as the corresponding superscript number.

Note: Some professors and publishers do not recommend the use of footnotes because they are more expensive and difficult to publish. Use them sparingly and only if it is a necessity.

In-Text Citations

Anytime information from research is consulted—a chapter from a book, a journal article, or any other type of publication—a citation must be created to give credit to the original source.

When citing a source in the text of the main body using APA, the **author-date** method is used. The author's last name and publication date should be included alongside the citation in-text, and a full citation should be given in the references section at the end.

If the citation is only citing an idea or an entire work or book, the page number does not need to be given along with the author and date.

Example: (Jones, 2001).

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However, if the citation is to a specific page, you can include the page number in order to better assist readers to find that information.

Example: (Jones, 2001, p. 199).

When citing in the body of an essay, a **signal phrase** can be used instead of a full parenthetical citation. When using a signal phrase, the author(s) is mentioned in the sentence, and only the date and page number (if relevant) is needed in parentheses.

Example with signal phrase: **Doe (2013) found that** "tutors should be well-versed in APA style in order to better assist students" (p. 29), as citing and formatting is something many students experience difficulty with.

Example without signal phrase: She stated, "Students are often unfamiliar with the difference between paraphrasing and directly quoting" (Doe, 2013, p. 65).

Long Quotations:

The following format should be used for quotes that contain more than 40 words.

Example:

Doe's (2013) research found the following:

"Students are often experiencing difficulty using APA style, especially if the format is new to them. To better assist students during sessions, tutors should have a basic knowledge of APA in order to address those difficulties and answer questions." (p. 86)

In-Text Citations for Multiple Authors:

Sometimes, an article or book will have more than one author. The following examples show how to provide a citation for such cases. Below are examples of how to cite in text when there are multiple authors.

Example: Two Authors

Research by Doe and Slevin (2013) show that 85% of students are familiar with APA format. One study shows that 85% of students are familiar with APA format (Doe & Slevin, 2013).

Example: Three to Five Authors

First-time reference:

In one study, researchers showed how many students from science backgrounds are familiar with

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APA format (Doe, Murphy, Slevin, & Vader, 2012).

All subsequent references:

This study used a questionnaire to survey students on their familiarity with APA style (Doe et al., 2012).

Example: Six or More Authors

With signal phrase:

Alson et al. (2013) argue that depending on their major, not all students need to be familiar with APA format.

Without signal phrase:

Some researchers argue that students in the humanities may be more familiar with MLA format and may never be introduced to APA format (Alson et al., 2013).

Note: For electronic sources, it can be cited using the standard author-date format. However, in the case of no author or date being provided, use the title as a signal phrase with which to reference the source followed by n.d. for "no date." ("Tutoring APA," n.d.)

Reference List

Even though in-text citations are used when referring to research in the body of the paper, a full **reference list** must be provided at the end of the paper. A reference list gives credit to the original source, and also provides pertinent information to the reader should they wish to read the book/article in full. References should be *double spaced and listed in alphabetical order with a hanging indent*. The title should be centered.

Basic Rules for your Reference List (Provided by OWL Purdue)

- Authors' names are listed by last name, First initial. Middle initial.
Example: Bing, C.M.
- Reference list entries should be alphabetized by the last name of the first author of each work.
- For multiple articles by the same author, or authors listed in the same order, list the entries in chronological order, from earliest to most recent.
- For multiple articles by the same author that were published during the same year, assign letter suffixes to the year. For example: (1999a), (1999b), (1999c) and so on.
- Present the journal title in full.
- Maintain the punctuation and capitalization that is used by the journal in its title.
- Capitalize all major words in journal titles.
- When referring to books, chapters, articles, or Web pages, 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.

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- 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.

Reference List Citation Examples

Book:

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Subtitle*. Location: Publisher.

Doe, J. (2013). *CARP summer projects: A guide to APA format*. San Francisco: CARP Publishing House.

Book with two authors:

Author, A. A., & Author, B.B. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Subtitle*. Location: Publisher.

Doe, J.J., & Smith, K.C. (2013). *CARP summer projects: A guide to APA format*. San Francisco: CARP Publishing House.

Note: Use an ampersand instead of “and”

Book with three to seven authors:

Author, A. A., Johnson, B.L., & Author, B.B. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Subtitle*. Location: Publisher.

Doe, J.J., Johnson, B.L., & Smith, K.C. (2013). *CARP summer projects: A guide to APA format*. San Francisco: CARP Publishing House.

Book with more than seven authors:

If there are more than seven authors, list six of them, insert an ellipses, and then include the final author name. There is no ampersand required.

Doe, J.J., Johnson, B.L., Miller, W.A., Garcia, G.R., Jackson, R.H., Moore, M.T., . . . Smith, K.C. (2013). *CARP summer projects: A guide to APA format*. San Francisco: CARP Publishing House.

Chapter in an edited book:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year of publication). Title of chapter. In A. A. Editor & B. B. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pages of chapter). Location: Publisher.

Holley, P. D., & Wright, D.E. (2006). A sociology of rib joints. In G. Ritzer (Ed.), *McDonaldization: The Reader* (pp. 46-53). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

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Note: You do not need to cite individual chapters from an unedited work. Instead, you cite the entire book, as shown above, and indicate the page number you are citing within your in-text citation.

General Website:

Author, A.A.. (Year, Month Date of Publication). Article title. Retrieved from URL

Cthulhu, H.P., (2012, Aug 16). The crazy old lady who secretly lives in your home. Retrieved from <http://www.nightvaleradio.com/believe>

Article from a database:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). Title of article. *Title of Journal, volume number* (issue), page range. Retrieved from <http://www.someaddress.com/full/url/>

Slevin, J & Doe, J. (2000). A study of effective tutoring strategies. *Tutoring Quarterly, 8* (2), 127-140. Retrieved from <http://www.librarywebsite.com/database/url>

Note: Because URLs can change or potentially be made unavailable, if a DOI (Digital Object Identifier) is provided for an online resource, use that in place of a URL.

Article from online periodical with doi:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). Title of article. *Title of Journal, volume number*, page range. doi:0000000/000000000000 or <http://dx.doi.org/10.0000/0000>

Vader, T. Chicago style: An alternate format. *Journal of format and style, 37*. 25-43. doi: 08497208/8937391830

Article from an online periodical without a doi:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). Title of article. *Title of Journal, volume number*. Retrieved from <http://www.onlinejournal.org/full/url/>

Smith, H.W., & Nomi. T. (2000). Is amae the key to understanding japanese culture?. *Electronic Journal of Sociology, 5*:1, Retrieved from <http://www.sociology.org/content/vol005.001/smith-nomi.html>

Newspaper/Magazine Article:

Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Title of article. *Title of Newspaper or Title of Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://xxx>

Yoon, J. (2016, July 26). This is what democracy looks like. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/27/opinion/this-is-what-democracy-looks-like.html>

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Dissertation (Published)

Author, A.A. (Year). Title of dissertation (Doctoral dissertation). Retrived from Name of database. (Accession or Order Number)

Valencia, A. (1995). An Examination of Selected Characteristics of Mexican-American Battered Women and Implications for Service Providers (Doctoral dissertation) Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Database. (741159811)

Dissertation (Unpublished)

Author, A.A. (Year). *Title of dissertation* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Name of Institution, Location.

Medina, H.K. (1991). *Analysis of Early Modern Era Medical Texts Regarding Melancholia* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). San Francisco State University, San Francisco, California.

Government Document

Name of institution. (Year). *Title of Document*. Location: Publisher.

U.S. Department of Justice: Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2009). *“Offenders” Hate Crime Statistics, 2008*. Washington, DC: Criminal Justice Information Services Division.

Blog Post or Video Blog Post:

Author, A.A. (Year, Month Day). Title [Web log comment]. Retrieved from <http://webaddress.com/>

Adalid, A. (2016, May 7). Heleats: eating my way through Helsinki, finland!. [Web log comment]. Retrieved from <http://iamaileen.com/heleats-helsinki-finland-finnish-cuisine-food/>

Note: For a video blog post, simply replace [Web log comment] with [Video file]

Blog that is constantly updated

Although the 6th edition of the APA Handbook no longer requires the retrieval date when citing online sources, you must include it if the source you are using is constantly updated.

Author, A. (Year, Month Day). Title [Web log comment]. Retrieved Month Day, Year, from <http://webaddress.com/blog>

Adalid, A. (2016, May 7). Heleats: eating my way through Helsinki, finland!. [Web log comment]. Retrieved July 27, 2016 from <http://iamaileen.com/heleats-helsinki-finland-finnish-cuisine-food/>

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Note: You do not need a retrieval date if you are citing the DOI.

Online interviews (retrievable):

Last name, First Initial. (Interviewer) & Last name, First Initial. (Interviewee). (Year). *How to write in APA format* [format of the online interview]. Retrieved from Campus Academic Resource Program Web site: <http://carp.sfsu.edu>

Note: the three most common formats for online emails are [Interview audio file], [Internet video file], or [Interview transcript]

Online interviews (irretrievable):

If you conduct an interview as part of your research process, you do not need to cite it in the reference page since it is not recoverable data. However, you need to cite it in-text if you refer to it.

Examples: (J. Doe, personal communication, June 3, 2011).
J. Doe stated that... (personal communication, June 3, 2011).

E-mail

E-mails are not listed in the list of references. You must parenthetically cite them in the body of the paper.

Examples: (J. Doe, personal communication, June 3, 2011).
J. Doe stated that... (personal communication, June 3, 2011).

Citations with Missing Information:

Missing Author: Begin with the title, followed by the date and source.

Example: Title. (Date). Retrieved from <http://webaddress.com>

Missing Title: Provide the author and date first. Then describe the document in brackets.

Example: Author. (Date). [Document description.]. doi :xxx

Missing Date: Substitute the date with “n.d.”

Example: Author. (n.d.). Title. Location: Publisher.

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Reference list example:

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References

- Adalid, A. (2016, May 7). Heleats: eating my way through Helsinki, finland!. [Web log comment]. Retrieved July 27, 2016 from <http://iamaileen.com/heleats-helsinki-finland-finnish-cuisine-food>
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- Holley, P. D., & Wright, D.E. (2006). A sociology of rib joints. In G. Ritzer (Ed.), *McDonaldization: The Reader* (pp. 46-53). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
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- Vader, T. Chicago style: An alternate format. *Journal of format and style*, 37. 25-43. doi: 08497208/8937391830
- Yoon, J. (2016, July 26). This is what democracy looks like. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/27/opinion/this-is-what-democracy-looks-like.html>

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Exercise 1:

Using the APA citation style, create a citation for each of the following sources:

1. Article in an Online Database

Title: Smelly Cat, What Are They Feeding You? Existentialism and Feline Dietetics

Author: Phoebe Buffay

Date of Publication: 1994

Journal title and volume: Central Perk Musical Prodigies volume: 3 issue: 1

Pages: 124-129

Website URL: <http://www.cmpjournal.org/>

2. A Book

Title: Always the Hostess: A Memoir

Author: Monica Elaine Geller

Chapter In Book: Monica's Drunk Again p.50-69

Date of Publication: 2002

Publisher: Awkward Fountain Dance Press. New York, New York

3. A Blog Post

Title: Three Time Divorcee Seeking Dinosaur Friends

Author: Ross Eustace Geller

Date of post: July 27th 2001

Website URL: <http://www.obviouslytheworstcharacter.wordpress.com/>

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Answer Key

1) Buffay, P. (1994). Smelly cat, what are they feeding you? existentialism and feline dietetics. *Central Park Musical Prodigies*, 3(1), 124-129. Retrieved from <http://www.cmpjournal.org/>

2) Geller, M.E. (2002). *Always the Hostess: A Memoir*. New York: Awkward Fountain Dance Press

Remember: If the book is by one author, you do not need to include the chapter in the reference list citation.

3) Geller, R.E. (2001, July 27). Three Time Divorcee Seeking Dinosaur Friends [Web log comment]. Retrieved from <http://www.obviouslytheworstcharacter.wordpress.com/>

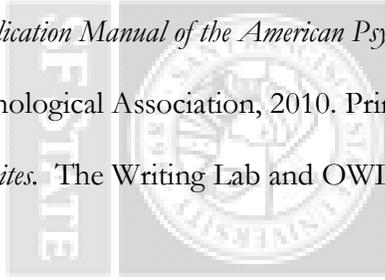
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Works Cited

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

Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010. Print.

“APA Style”. *The OWL Purdue Family of Sites*. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2008. Web. 28 July 2016.



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