

Campus Academic Resource Program

A Guide to ASA Style

This handout will:

- Define the purpose of ASA style
- Discuss ASA style page format.
- Give the general guidelines for ASA style papers.
- Provide examples on how to format headings and subheadings.
- Show how to cite information in an ASA style paper.
- Discuss how to generate an ASA style reference page.

The Purpose of ASA Style

ASA stands for the American Sociological Association and is used when generating manuscripts for sociological journals and sociological research papers. Papers that are written in ASA format include a title page, an abstract, body paragraphs, as well as tables and figures. In addition to these features, ASA papers require authors to use subheadings, footnotes and endnotes, and a specific in-text citation format.

Title Page:

The title page has four components: the title of the paper, author's name, university affiliation, and a running head. If you are submitting a term paper, also include the name of the course, your professor's name, and the date. All title pages must include an abbreviated title, called a "running head", which will be present at the top left of all pages and should be no more than 60 characters. A sample title page is provided below:

Note:

The running head, and the page number with the author's last name¹, will continue on the following page.

Running Head: ASA Style	Smith 1	ASA Style	Smith 2
ASA Style: A Brief Guide to Citations and Format			
Bob Smith			
San Francisco State University			
SOC 300: Sociological Analysis			
Professor. X			
March 12, 2014			

¹ Using your last name is up to your professor's or publication's discretion.

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Abstract:

An abstract is a brief overview of the information that will be presented throughout your manuscript or paper. Abstracts should be free of opinions and quotations, and must 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 include the research topic, any research methods that were used, and any conclusions that have been drawn. Despite only being one paragraph long, an abstract must have its own page and is not indented. There should also be a list of 3-5 key words on the bottom of the abstract page that identifies what will be discussed later on in the paper/manuscript. Below is a sample that displays the proper format of an ASA style abstract:

ASA Style	Abstract	Smith 2
<p>This paper focuses on the importance of the ASA format, and the ways in which it can be 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 ASA format. Unlike MLA format, which is commonly used in the humanities field, ASA format requires writers to use an abstract and various types of subheadings. These features contribute to the clear organization and structure of an ASA style paper. Although it is not commonly used outside of the sociological realm, those who have written in ASA format find it extremely helpful.</p>		
<p><i>Keywords:</i> ASA, Citations, research</p>		

Main Body:

The main body of your paper should begin on the third page, after your title page and abstract, and will include 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. The third page, where you begin writing your introduction and body paragraphs, must contain the running

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head in the top left corner, the page number with your last name in the right hand corner, and a title at the top of the page. The format of your introduction and body paragraph page is identified below:

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ASA Style: A Brief Guide to Citations and Format

The introduction of your paper, and the body paragraphs that follow it, should always be located on the third page of your paper. The font should be 12-point, Times New Roman or Ariel, and should be double spaced. Margins must be 1.25 inches 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. Be sure to include scholarly sources that support your claims.

Headings & Subheadings:

Generating concise headings and subheadings is an important component of all ASA style research papers. Headings and subheadings guide your readers and are used to separate the different parts of your paper. Unless stated by your professor, or the sociological journal you are applying for, you should not have an introduction heading. It will generally be assumed that your first paragraph is your introduction. Similar to APA format, ASA style papers contain headings that have multiple levels. The three types of headings and subheadings are explained below:

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FIRST LEVEL HEAD

The first-level heading is left-justified, written in all capital letters, and should not be bolded.

There should not be an “introduction” header in your paper.

Second-Level Head

A second-level heading can be considered a subheading and is also left-justified but should not be capitalized. The heading is written in title case, italicized, and should not be bolded.

Third-level head. A third-level subheading is indented at the beginning of a paragraph, written in italics, and is not written in bolded letters. Only the first letter of the first word is capitalized and each third-level heading must end with a period. Your paragraph should begin after the period in the third-level subheading.

Note. With the exception of the third-level head, ASA style headings do not have periods at the end of them and are never bolded. In ASA format there are generally three subheadings, while APA format uses up to five subheadings. (For more information see Guide to American Psychological Association handout at: carp.sfsu.edu)

In-Text Citations:

Gathering information from reliable sources validates your own material, but you must always cite the information you use in your writing. Proper citations prove that you have not plagiarized any of the presented information and establishes your credibility. Plagiarism, the act of using another’s words or ideas without giving proper credit, is unacceptable and makes your own argument appear invalid. In ASA style papers you will need both in-text citations and a reference page. Examples of ASA style in-text citations are provided below:

- In-text citations for ASA papers require you to use the author and the year of publication.
 - *Example:* When these magnetic fields were examined (Durant 1992).....

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- If the author's name is mentioned in the text, then only the date is needed.
 - *Example:* When Durant (1992) analyzed.....
- When using quotes, always include quotation marks before and after the material referenced. If you have quoted material then your citation must include the publication year followed by a colon and the page number. Block quotes, which are direct quotations that consist of over 40 words, should not be put in quotations.
 - *Example:* Durant, who is the lead scientist in the field, states "the data that was found was inconclusive but set a strong precedence for future studies" (1992:51).
- If you are citing material that comes from multiple authors then you must mention each author's last name, as well as the publication date of the source.
 - *Example:* (Durant and Smith 1992) or (Durant, Smith, Johnson 1992)
- When four or more authors contribute to a specific source then you must use the first author's last name followed by et al.
 - *Example:* (Durant et al. 1992)
- If the name of the author is unknown then use the institution the article is from and the publication date, as well as any page number if necessary.
 - *Example:* (U.K. Department of Health 1992)
 - *Example: with page number:* (U.K. Department of Health 1992:75)
- When citing work that has been published and re-released at a later period, always list the earliest publication date followed by the most recent publication date.
 - *Example:* (Durant 1992/2014)
- If unpublished work is being referenced mention the name of the author and indicate that there is no current publication date.
 - *Example:* (Durant n.d.)

Reference Page:

The last page of your paper is the reference section which provides a full description of the sources that have been cited. The sources used in a reference page must be arranged alphabetically by authors' last names. List the author's last name then their first name. If there is more than one author, invert only the first author's last name. In addition to alphabetizing sources, a reference page should be formatted in the following manner:

- Multiple items from the same author should be arranged based on the year of publication. The earliest publication date should be listed first.
- If works by same author are published in the same year, then add letters to each publication date (e.g. 1993a, 1993b, 1993c).
- Use italics for book and periodical titles.
- If no publication date is available use "N.d." in place of the date.
- Include the state abbreviation only if the city of publication is not well known (i.e. New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles do not need a state abbreviation).
- Provide the name of the country for foreign cities.
- Reference pages should always be double spaced and have 1.25 inch margins.
- Below is an example of what of a reference page should look like:

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References

For a book:

Goodwin, Jeff and James Jasper. 2008. *The Contexts Reader*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Chapter in a book:

Holley, Phillip D. and David E. Wright, Jr. 2006. "A Sociology of Rib Joints." P. 46- 53
McDonaldization: The Reader, edited by G. Ritzer. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

For Article:

One Author: Chaves, Mark. 1994. "Secularization as Declining Religious Authority." *Social Forces* 72:749-74.

Two Authors:

Exum, William H., Robert J. Menges, Bari Watkins, and Patricia Berglund. 1984. "Making It at the Top: Women and Minority Faculty in the Academic Labor Market." *American Behavioral Scientist* 27(3):301-324.

For journal articles found online, including from a commercial database:

- If the article has a DOI (Digital Object Identifier), add it at the end of the citation:
doi:10.0011/0000000X0001100101.
- If the article does not have a DOI, add the date of retrieval and the URL of the site at which you located the article in parentheses, followed by a period: Retrieved [date of retrieval] (www.databasename.com).
- *Example with DOI:*
Sweeten, Gary, Shawn D. Bushway, and Raymond Paternoster. 2009. "Does Dropping Out of School Mean Dropping Into Delinquency?" *Criminology* 47(1):47-91. doi:10.1111/j. 1745-9125.2009.00139.x.
- *Example Without DOI:*
Smith, Herman W. and Takako Nomi. 2000. "Is Amae the Key to Understanding Japanese Culture?" *Electronic Journal of Sociology* 5:1. Retrieved May 5, 2009
(<http://www.sociology.org/content/vol005.001/smith-nomi.html>).

From a website:

Spalter-Roth, Roberta and William Erskine. 2007. "Race and Ethnicity in the Sociology Pipeline." Washington, DC: American Sociological Association. Retrieved January 9, 2008 (http://www.asanet.org/galleries/defaultfile/Minorities_Career_Pipeline.pdf).

From a print magazine or newspaper:

Jana, Reena. 2000. "Preventing Culture Clashes - As the IT Workforce Grows More Diverse, Managers Must Improve Awareness Without Creating Inconsistency." *InfoWorld*, April 24, pp. 95.

- Government Documents
U.S. Department of Justice. Federal Bureau of Investigation. 2009. "Offenders" Hate Crime Statistics, 2008. Washington, DC: Criminal Justice Information Services Division Retrieved September 14, 2010 (<http://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/hc2008/offenders.html>).
- Dissertations & Theses
Valencia, Albert. 1995. "An Examination of Selected Characteristics of Mexican-American Battered Women and Implications for Service Providers." Ph.D. dissertation

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Exercise 1:

Directions: Using the ASA citation style for citing books in a reference page, create a citation for the following book in the space provided below.

Title: 20th Century Coffee: America's Addiction to Caffeine

Author: Alex Jackson

Chapter In Book: The Vanilla Latte p.50-6900

Date of Publication: 2013

Publisher: Red Apple Publishing Co. New York, New York

Exercise 2:

Directions: Using the ASA citation style for citing websites in a reference page, create a proper citation for the following fictional website in the space provided below.

Website Title: Coffee Consumption In The United States

Author: Patrick Cho

Date of Publication: 2015

Publisher: Coffee Factz. San Francisco, California

Website URL: <http://www.usacoffeeactz.net/usconsumption>

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Answer Key:

Exercise 1:

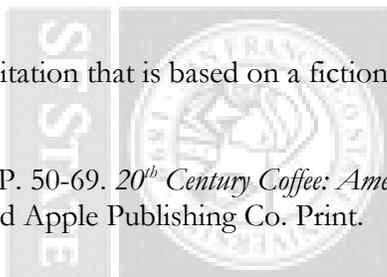
The following is an ASA style reference citation that is based on a fictional book provided in the first exercise.

Jackson, Alex. 2013. "The Vanilla Latte" P. 50-69. *20th Century Coffee: America's Addiction to Caffeine*. New York. Red Apple Publishing Co. Print.

Exercise 2:

The following is an ASA style reference citation based on the fictional website provided in the second exercise.

Cho, Patrick. 2015. "Coffee Consumption In The United States" San Francisco. Coffee Factz. Retrieved July 15, 2016. Web. (<http://www.usacoffeefactz.net/usconsumption>)



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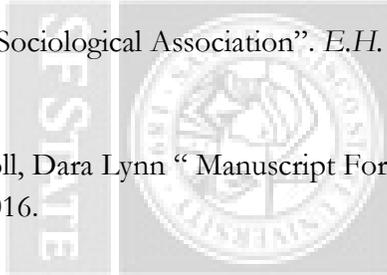
Works Cited

Richards, Carol J. "ASA Style: American Sociological Association". *E.H. Butler Library. Harvard University*. 2005. Web. 5 July 2016.

Paiz, Joshua M., Coe, Deborah L., Driscoll, Dara Lynn "Manuscript Formatting" *Online Writing Lab. Purdue U*. 2014. Web. 5 July 2016.

"Quick Tips for ASA Style" *American Sociological Association*. 2006. Web. 12 July 2016.

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