APA Step by Step

Writing Style Points

1. Use strong, clear writing.
2. Be sure to use strong topic sentences; say only what needs to be said.
3. Use active voice instead of passive voice.
   - Passive: The dog was seen by me while running down the street.
   - Active: I saw the dog run down the street.
4. Use a neutral, professional tone; avoid bias.
5. Use past tense when writing about research studies.

Title Page

- Begin your text three spaces down; place your cursor at the top of the page and hit enter three times.
- When formatting the header, click “different first page” in Word. All of the other pages include only “TITLE OF YOUR PAPER” and page number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Running head: TITLE OF THE PAPER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title of your paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blinn College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date – if requested by instructor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References Page

- Alphabetize each entry.
- Capitalize only first word of titles (and all proper nouns), even if the actual title has more capital letters.
- Whenever available, use DOI instead of the website for online sources.
- When you have multiple entries by the same author, list publications in order from least recent to most recent.
- If there is only one entry, use the word Reference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE OF THE PAPER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please see APA information on the other side. For more help, see the APA publication manual or the Purdue OWL.
American Psychological Association (APA) Style Guidelines Overview

Introduction

This poster provides basic rules for using APA style. To supplement this material, consult the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition). The APA manual is available in most writing centers, libraries, and bookstores. You may also reference the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) for information on APA: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl.

Formatting

Type APA papers on white 8.5 x 11 inch paper. Margins should be 1 inch on all sides. Text should be double-spaced with two spaces after punctuation in between sentences. Use a legible font in 10 to 12 pt. size. Include a page header at the top of every page. To create a page header, type: “THE TITLE OF YOUR PAPER” flush with the left margin. Abbreviate your title to 50 or fewer characters. Then insert page numbers flush right.

Title Page

Title pages should include the “Running header: TITLE OF YOUR PAPER” in the header; in the upper half of the title page, type your name, the byline, and affiliation centered on separate lines.

Abstract

On a new page, center and type the word “Abstract.” Beginning with the next line, type a double-spaced paragraph of 120 or fewer words containing your topic, research questions, participants, methods, results, data analysis, and conclusions.

Main Body

The top area of the body pages should contain the header and the page numbers. Page margins should be 1 inch. Indent first paragraphs of one-half inch from left margins.

Headings

APA uses a five-level heading system to separate papers: Level 1: Centered, boldface and lowercase heading; Level 2: Left-aligned, boldface, uppercase and lowercase heading; Level 3: Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with period; Level 4: Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with period; Level 5: Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with period.

In-Text Citation

Basics

Use the past tense or present perfect tense when using signal phrases to describe earlier research, e.g., “Jones (1998) found” or “Jones (1998) has found.” Follow the author-date method of in-text citation: (Jones, 1998).

Place direct quotations longer than 40 words in a free-standing block of typewritten lines and omit quotation marks. Start the quotation on a new line, indented five spaces from the left margin. Type the entire block quotation on the new margin and indent the first line of any subsequent paragraph within the quotation five spaces from the new margin. Place the parenthetical citation after the closing punctuation mark.

A Work with One or Two Authors

Name the author(s) in the signal phrase or in the parenthases. Spell out “and” in signal phrases but use the ampersand in parenthases.

Weigeh and Petty (1994) found that... (Weigeh & Petty, 1994).

A Work by Three to Five Authors

List all the authors in the signal phrase or in parentheses the first time you cite the source.

(Hernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry, & Harlow, 1995)

In subsequent citations, only use the first author’s last name and “et al.”

Hernis et al. (2001) argued... (Hernis et al., 2001).

A Work by Six or More Authors

Use the first author’s name then “et al.” in signal phrases or in parentheses.

Hernis et al. (2001) argued... (Hernis et al., 2001).

Unknown Author

If the work does not have an author, cite the source by its title in the signal phrase or use the first word or two in the parenthases.Italicize titles of books and reports; titles of articles and chapters go in quotation marks.

A similar study was conducted with students learning to format research papers ("Using APA," 2001).

Organization as Author

For organization or government agency authors, mention organizations in the signal phrase or the parenthetical citation the first time you cite it.

According to the American Psychological Association (2000),...

Two or More Works in the Same Parentheses

When your parenthetical citation includes two or more works, order them the same way they appear in the reference list, separated by a semi-colon.

(Bernst, 2002; Harlow, 1993)

Internet Sources

If possible, cite an electronic document the same as any other document.

In his online journal article, Kenneth (2006) explained...

References

Basics

References lists appear at the end of papers on a separate page. Center and type the word “References” at the top of your list. All lines after the first line of each entry in the list should be indented one-half inch from the left margin. Author’s names are inverted; give last names and initials for all authors of a work unless the work has more than six authors.

Single Author


Two Authors

List by author last names and initials. Use the ampersand, not “and.”


Three to Six Authors


More than Seven Authors


Organizational as Author

American Psychological Association (2001). Manual...