APA Formatting - Quick Guide

Style

- Active voice.
- Writing should be specific and concise; avoid poetic and figurative language.
- Use past or present perfect tense for literature reviews and description if writing about past events.
- Use past tense when referring to results and experiments previously conducted.

Formatting

- Spacing -- Text is double-spaced and left-aligned.
- Margins -- 1” margins on all sides
- Font – A serif font (such as Times New Roman)
- Font size – 12 font
- Indents – Paragraphs should be indented 5 – 7 spaces or ½ inch.
- Page numbers – Place page numbers in the upper, right corner (or per professor instructions)
- Page headers – running head at the top of every page in caps; include the words "Running head" before the title at the top of the title page followed by a colon, then the title.
  - On subsequent pages, include the title without the words "Running head" in header.

Title Page

- Running head and page number in title
- Center in the upper-middle of the page the:
  - Title,
  - Author (Your) Name
  - Institution Name.
Abstract

- Second page of the document is the abstract; it should contain running head and page number.
- The word "Abstract" should be centered on the first line.
- A brief, comprehensive summary of the paper in about 150-250 words.
- Do not indent the first line.
- The abstract is not an introduction and will not contain any citations.

Main Body

Headings

- APA uses headings to separate paper sections. Headings should be in order, starting with level 1.
- Headings are similar to outline organization for your paper.
- Check with your instructor as to how they prefer headings to be used.
- For each section, include at least two subsection headings or none at all.
- Organization for headings should be as follows:
  - First level: Centered, boldface, uppercase and lowercase heading
  - Second level: Left-aligned, boldface, uppercase and lowercase heading
  - Third level: Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with a period
  - Fourth level: Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with a period
  - Fifth level: Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with a period
References

**In-Text Citations**

- Cite in-text whenever another author’s work is directly quoted or paraphrased.
- Citations should use an author, date format: (Author, Publication Year)
- Citation for direct quotes should include the page number.
  - Any quotation longer than 40 words should be made into a freestanding block of text with quotation marks removed.
- If no author is given, use a shortened version of the title.
- If publication date is unknown, use "n.d." in its place.
- For electronic sources that don’t include page numbers, use paragraph numbers.
- For works with three or more authors, list all in the first citation.
  - For subsequent citations, list the first author and "et al."
- When citing in-text, include the reference and version used.
- Two types of sources are cited only in-text: classical works and personal communications.

**Reference List**

- Second line and all subsequent lines of each citation (item on the reference list) should be indented.
- The reference list should be double spaced.

**Book**

- Author(s)
- Year of Publication
- Title (cap first word and first word of subtitle)
- Location
- Publisher

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle. Location: Publisher.
Article in a periodical

- Author(s)
- Year of Publication
- Title of Article
- Title of Periodical
- Volume number
- Issue number
- Pages


Article from an online periodical

- Author(s)
- Date of Publication
- Title of Article
- Title of Online Periodical
- Volume
- Issue
- Retrieved from (URL)


Website

- Author(s)
- Date of Publication
- Title of Document
- Retrieved from (URL)