American Psychological Association (APA) Documentation Style

Introduction

The American Psychological Association (APA) documentation style is most commonly used when writing in the social sciences. This handout offers examples for the general format of APA research papers, including title pages, in-text citations, reference pages, footnotes/endnotes, and notes to a table. Most of the information for this document was gathered from the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2010), which can be found in the Writing Center. If none of these examples seems appropriate, or further information is required, please consult a tutor or the full text of the APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition (2010), both of which are conveniently located in the Missouri S&T Writing Center, Room 113, CSF.

General APA Guidelines

Type your essay on standard 8.5" x 11" paper. Double-space all text, and use 1" margins on all sides. The APA manual suggests using 12 pt. Times New Roman font.

The body of the paper should be preceded by a title page and an abstract. It should be followed by a list of references. Tables, figures, and appendixes (if applicable) follow the reference pages.

Include a page header at the top of every page. To create a page header, insert page numbers flush right.
Title Page

On the title page, insert a page header. The words Running head, followed by a colon and the title of the paper should be inserted in the header flush left; the page number should be inserted flush right. The page header should look like this:

Running head: TITLE OF YOUR PAPER

The title page should display the title of the paper, the author's name, and the institutional affiliation. On the title page, the title should appear in upper and lowercase letters, and it should be centered in the upper half of the page. APA recommends that your title contain no more than 12 words and that it contain no abbreviations. Your title may take up one or two lines. All text on the title page (and throughout the paper) should be double-spaced.

The author's name (first, middle initial(s), and last) should appear immediately below the title. Do not include professional titles (Dr.) or degrees (Ph.D.).

Beneath the author's name, indicate the author's institutional affiliation (i.e., the institution with which the author was affiliated while conducting the research).
Subsequent Page Headers

Pages after the title page should also have a page header, but it should not contain the words Running head. It should look like this:

TITLE OF YOUR PAPER

Abstract

Following the title page, include an abstract of 150-200 words. The word Abstract should be centered below the page header. The text of the abstract should begin below the word Abstract. This text should comprise a single paragraph with no indentation.

The abstract should indicate the topic of the research, the questions or hypotheses that governed it, and a summary of the research methods, results, and conclusions.

A list of keywords may follow the text of the abstract. Begin the list of keywords on a separate line, and indent. Precede the list with the word Keywords and a colon, as follows:

Keywords: horses, equine behavior, nose bags

Note that the keywords themselves are not italicized.

In-Text Citations

All sources should be identified in the text of the paper using the author-date method. A full citation for each source must then appear on the References page. Following are examples of various types of in-text citations:

General Rule

The author’s last name and the publication date must appear in parentheses, separated by a comma. Multiple citations should be separated by a semi-colon.

Example 1: Predators prefer the taste of herbivores to that of omnivores or carnivores (Smithson, 2005).
Example 2: Both bears and large cats prefer the taste of herbivores; however, their preference is less marked than that of wolves (Smithson, 2005; Carter, 2002).

If the author’s name is mentioned in the text, include only the year of publication in parentheses.

Example 3: According to Smithson (2005), predators prefer the taste of herbivores to that of omnivores.

Example 4: According to Smithson (2005) and Carter (2002), bears and large cats prefer the taste of herbivores.

Direct Quotes

When a source is quoted directly, the in-text citation must include the number(s) of the page(s) on which the quoted text appears.

Example 1: Researchers have noted that “animals that are herbivores taste better to their predators than omnivores and carnivores” (Smithson, 2005, p. 107).

Example 2: As Smithson (2005) has noted, “animals that are herbivores taste better to their predators than omnivores and carnivores” (p. 107).

Multiple Authors

When a work has two authors, both should be indicated.

Example 1: The sea monster diet includes significant amounts of Vitamin E and arsenic (Jones & Willoughby, 1997).

When a work has three to five authors, all should be indicated in the first citation, but subsequent citations should indicate only the first author's name, followed by the abbreviation et al.

First Citation: More than 50% of ghosts report depression and violent urges as Halloween approaches (Brown, Black, White, & Finkelstein, 2007).
Subsequent citations: More than 50% of ghosts report depression and violent urges as Halloween approaches (Brown et al., 2007).

Corporate Author

If the author of a source is an organization, the organization name is used in place of an author’s last name. If the organization name is commonly abbreviated, the first citation should spell out the full name of the organization followed by the abbreviation in square brackets. Subsequent citations should use only the abbreviation.

First citation: (National Association of Wombat Lovers [NAWL], 2004)

Subsequent citations: (NAWL, 2004)

Unknown Author

If the author of a source is unknown, the first few words of the title are used in place of the author’s name. If the source is a book, it should be italicized; if it is an article, chapter, or website, it should be enclosed in quotation marks.

Example: Studies of circus bears demonstrate that the genus Ursus has superior balance ("Animal motor skills," 2002).

Unknown Date

When the publication date is unknown, the abbreviation n.d. is used to signify “no date.”

Example: It has been scientifically proven that fish always bite the bait of the angler everyone else doesn’t like (Carlson, n.d.).

Reference Page

A reference list should follow the body of the paper on a separate page. This list provides the information necessary for a reader to locate or consult any source cited. Each source cited in the paper must appear in the reference list; likewise, each entry in the reference list must be cited in the text.
The reference page should have the title "References" centered at the top of the page (do NOT bold, underline, or use quotation marks for the title). All text should be double-spaced just like the rest of the essay.

- All lines after the first line of each entry in the reference list should be indented one-half inch from the left margin. This is called hanging indentation. Use the Word feature rather than tabs to create hanging indents.

- Alphabetize reference list entries by the last name of the first author of each work.

- Multiple sources by the same author(s) should be listed in order by the year of publication, starting with the earliest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEFINITIONS OF ONLINE COMMUNITIES</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Retrieved February 22, 2007 from</td>
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<td><a href="http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/">http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Capitalize all major words in journal titles.

• Capitalize only the first word and any proper nouns in the titles and subtitles of books, chapters, articles, or web pages.

• Italicize book and journal titles, but do not italicize, underline, or put quotes around the titles of other works such as journal articles or websites.

• Journal titles should be followed by the volume number (in italics) and the issue number (in parentheses and regular font), if available.

• After any book titles, indicate place of publication followed by a colon and the name of the publisher.

• When citing articles or portions of books, indicate relevant page numbers, but do not include the abbreviation p. or pp.

• Include a digital object identifier (doi) for journal articles when available. Most modern journal articles have a doi.

References

Book with one author

Basic Format:
Author, F.I. MI. (Year). Title. Location: Publisher.

Example:

Book with more than one author

Basic Format:
Author1, F. M., & Author2, F. M. (Year). Title. Location: Publisher.

Example:
Journal Article

Basic Format:

Example:

Online Periodical

Basic Format:

Example:

Online Document (author known)

Basic Format:

Example:

Online Document (author unknown)

Basic Format:
Article title. (Year or n.d.). Website title. Retrieved Date: month, day, year from URL

Example:
Conference Paper

Basic Format:

Example:

Government Document

Basic Format:
Author or Agency Name. (Year). Title of document. (Publication Number, if any). Location: Publisher.

Example:

Footnotes/Endnotes

Informational Notes

If necessary, information that is important but inappropriate to the body of the paper may be mentioned in informational notes. Such notes may be placed at the bottom of the page or on a separate page at the end of the document (following the References page). Superscript numbers are used to direct readers to informational notes.

Example:
The flight patterns of wild ducks are examples of such phenomena.³

The same superscript number precedes the corresponding footnote or endnote. These notes should be listed in the order in which they appear in the body of the paper.
Example:
3 Some scholars have questioned the use of such flight patterns in behavior studies; however, their applicability to studies of animal cognition is undisputed.

Copyright Permission Notes

When quoting 500 words or more of text, adapting substantial portions of another’s work, or using a graphic or table from another source, fair use laws demand that formal permission be obtained from the copyright holder to reprint that material. A note must be included to indicate that such permission has been granted. As with informational notes (addressed above), superscript numbers are used to direct the reader to the note.

Reprinted from a Book

**Basic Format:**
From *Title of Book* (Page), by F. M. Author, Year, Location: Publisher. Copyright date and name of holder. Indication of permission.

*Example:*

Reprinted from a Journal Article

**Basic Format:**
Title of article, F. M. Author, Year, *Journal Title*, Volume number (Issue number), Page. Copyright date and name of holder. Indication of permission.

*Example:*
Notes to a Table

General Notes

General notes provide information about the design or content of a table, including explanations of abbreviations or symbols. Such notes require no numbers; however, they must be preceded by the word Note. As indicated above, the use of graphics and tables from copyrighted sources requires the formal permission of the copyright holder.

Example:
Note. All broken links are omitted. X = polarity.

Specific Notes

Specific notes refer to a particular column, row, or individual entry. Readers are directed to such notes with the use of superscript lower case letters.

Example:
\( a \) \( y = 35 \).
\( b \) This subject was eliminated during the second trial.