

# APA Format Quick Guide

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**APA 6th Edition Online + Sample Papers =**

<http://www.apastyle.org/learn/index.aspx>

**APA using Word 2011 for Macs =**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAhHWNcU3vM>

**APA using Word 2010 for Windows =**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUjhwGmhDrI>

## **APA Formatting**

- preferred margins = 1" all sides
- preferred font & size = Times New Roman, 12 point
- preferred spacing = double space, flush left
- paragraphs = use tab indent 0.5"
- hanging indents = reference section, first line flush left, rest indented 0.5"

## **APA Style**

### ➤ **Title**

- first thing read during search (followed by abstract)
- includes main topic and concepts
- should include important variables (DV, IV)
- recommended length = no more than 12 words
- center, cap first letter each word (called "title case")

### ➤ **Title Page (page 1 of manuscript)**

- center title, place in upper third of page
- cap first letter of each word in title (called "title case")
- include author name(s) in format = first, middle initial, last
- next line state institutional affiliations of each author
- also includes "author note"
- start header on Title Page and include:
  - running head (abbreviated title) flush left and page # flush right
  - running head no more than 50 characters (including spaces)
  - format = "Running head: ABBREVIATED TITLE ALL CAPS"

- header on subsequent pages = leave off the words "Running head:" and simply include the running head itself (flush left) and page # (flush right)

➤ **Abstract (page 2 of manuscript)**

- ~150-250 words dependent upon journal
- brief summary of entire paper
- must include main problem being investigated
- no citations allowed!
- trick: take 1-2 sentences from each section and reword them (intro, methods, results, discussion)
- never use only the abstract when citing – lots of info missing, can be very misleading and inaccurate
- APA = accurate, nonevaluative, coherent & readable, concise
- center and cap the word "Abstract"
- write a single paragraph, no indents

➤ **Introduction (page 3 on...)**

- read section 2.05 in APA manual
- introduces reader to overall problem under investigation
- provides justification (argument) for why the study needs to be done
- reviews the research others have done on the same topic
- goes from broad statement of problem (1st paragraph) down to narrow statement of hypothesis (last paragraph)
- all paragraphs should have minimum of 2 sentences
- last sentence of paragraph should lead logically to first sentence of subsequent paragraph ("transitions")
- maintain parallel structure & rigidly organized subheadings
- APA format: starts with title of paper (technically a 1st level heading, centered, but it is not in bold)
- APA format does not start with the word "Introduction"
- 1st paragraph
  - catchy first sentence, general statement of problem area
  - last sentence = list what rest of intro will cover *in order* (parallel)
- 2nd – nth paragraphs
  - cover background literature
  - can use images/figures (but may be copyrighted)
  - use subheadings—2 minimum—to organize (see section 3.03)
  - use subheadings in order given in last sentence of 1st paragraph
  - argue your point—convince us why your study needs to be done
- last paragraph

- might include summary (if intro is long enough)
- formal statement of thesis with hypothesis(es)—no surprises
- brief methods
- notes on citations
  - use "and" if non parenthetical; use ampersand ("&") in parentheses
  - 1 author, always use name = Lee (1994)
  - 2 authors, always use both names = Lucas and Lee (2010)
  - 3-5 authors
    - ✓ example = 1st time in paper = Lee, Miyasato, and Clayton (1998)
    - ✓ example = use et al. in rest of the paper = Lee et al. (1998)
  - 6+ authors, o.k. to start with et al. even if it's the 1st time
  - 1st non-parenthetical time in a paragraph (but not 1st time in paper) = Lee et al. (1998)
  - 2nd non parenthetical time in same paragraph omit year = Lee et al.
  - every time parenthetical (except first in paper) = Lee et al. (1998)
  - 2 or more citations in same parentheses = put in alphabetical order and separate with a semicolon
  - 2 or more citations, by different author(s), in same parentheses = put in alphabetical order and separate with a semicolon
    - ✓ example = (Lee & Clayton, 2001; Schlinger et al., 1999; Zahn, 2000)
  - 2 or more citations, by same author(s), in same parentheses = put in ascending chronological order and separate with a comma (in press goes last)
    - ✓ example = (Lee & Clayton, 2001, 2002, in press)
  - 2 or more citations, by same author(s), in the same year, in same parentheses = use "a", "b", "c" – these will appear in reference section in alphabetical order by title of paper
    - ✓ example = (Lee & Clayton, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c)

## ➤ **Methods**

- continues from intro (i.e. do not insert a page break)
- starts with 1st level heading "Methods" (centered, bold)
- detailed description of how study was (or will be) conducted
- a "recipe" specific enough for reader to duplicate study use subheadings
- Human Participants
  - number and selection process
  - major demographics (sex, age, race, ethnicity, education, SES...)
  - agreements and/or payments to participants
- Nonhuman Subjects
  - genus, species

- strain number and/or supplier
    - number, sex, age, weight, physiological condition
    - feeding and light regimen
    - assertion of adherence to ethical guidelines on treatment & handling
  - Materials/Apparatus/Measures
    - all physical aspects of study (everything used)
    - if a measure/questionnaire, copy must be included in appendix
    - consider a picture/image!
  - Procedure
    - details of what actually happens usually in chronological order
  - Statistics
    - lists stats you used to test each hypothesis
- **Results ("Possible Outcomes" in proposal, see next section)**
- statistical reporting of data
  - report stats on each hypothesis in order presented at end of intro section
  - additional analyses may be included if results warranted
  - include tables & figures (graphs & images) to give additional info
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- **Discussion (becomes "Possible Outcomes" in proposal)**
- goes from narrow to broad (opposite of intro section)
  - reviews and interprets results in context
  - includes no statistics!
  - goes in hypothesis order (same as intro & results sections; parallel!)
  - states whether results supported or refuted hypotheses
  - discusses results relative to other research in intro section
  - reviews weaknesses in study and offers alternative explanations
  - ends with implications for future work
- **Possible Outcomes (becomes "Discussion" in final)**
- discusses potential outcomes of study per hypothesis
  - can include graphs of what supportive data *might* look like
  - first potential outcome supports hypothesis
  - other outcomes do not so you have to offer plausible explanations
- **References (start on new page)**
- consult APA manual often!!!
  - alphabetical list of all articles cited in entire paper
  - note: "citations" go in body of text, "references" go in reference section
  - provides others with your sources of info

- must be in precise APA format (then later in thesis format)
- use digital object identifiers (DOIs) if given (no period)
- if no DOI use uniform resource locators (URLs) of journal, newsletter, or magazine using format: Retrieved from <http://www.xxxxxxxx> (no period)
- no need to include "Retrieved from..." if using a large database such as EBSCO
- basic format issues:
  - start on new page, center "References" at top as heading
  - use hanging indents (at 0.5") NOT carriage returns!!!!
  - more than 7 authors = Gilbert, D. G., McClernon, J. F., Rabinovich, N. E., Sugai, C., Plath, L. C., Asgaard, G., ... Botros, N. (2004).
  - no first names of authors
  - no abbreviations other than initials of names
  - no caps in title of articles (other than first word of title or word after colon)
  - cap first letter of first word after colon (even if the original paper did not)
  - commas between all author names even if there are only 2
  - cap first letter of all words in journal name (except "of", "and", etc.)
  - cap only the first letter of the first word in book title
  - name of journal and volume italicized, issue is not
  - name of book italicized
  - use an ampersand ("&") for the word "and" in reference section

➤ **Appendices (start on new page)**

- if needed
- includes lengthy items not in other sections (e.g., questionnaires)