Formatting Tables & Figures in APA Format

Tables in APA Format

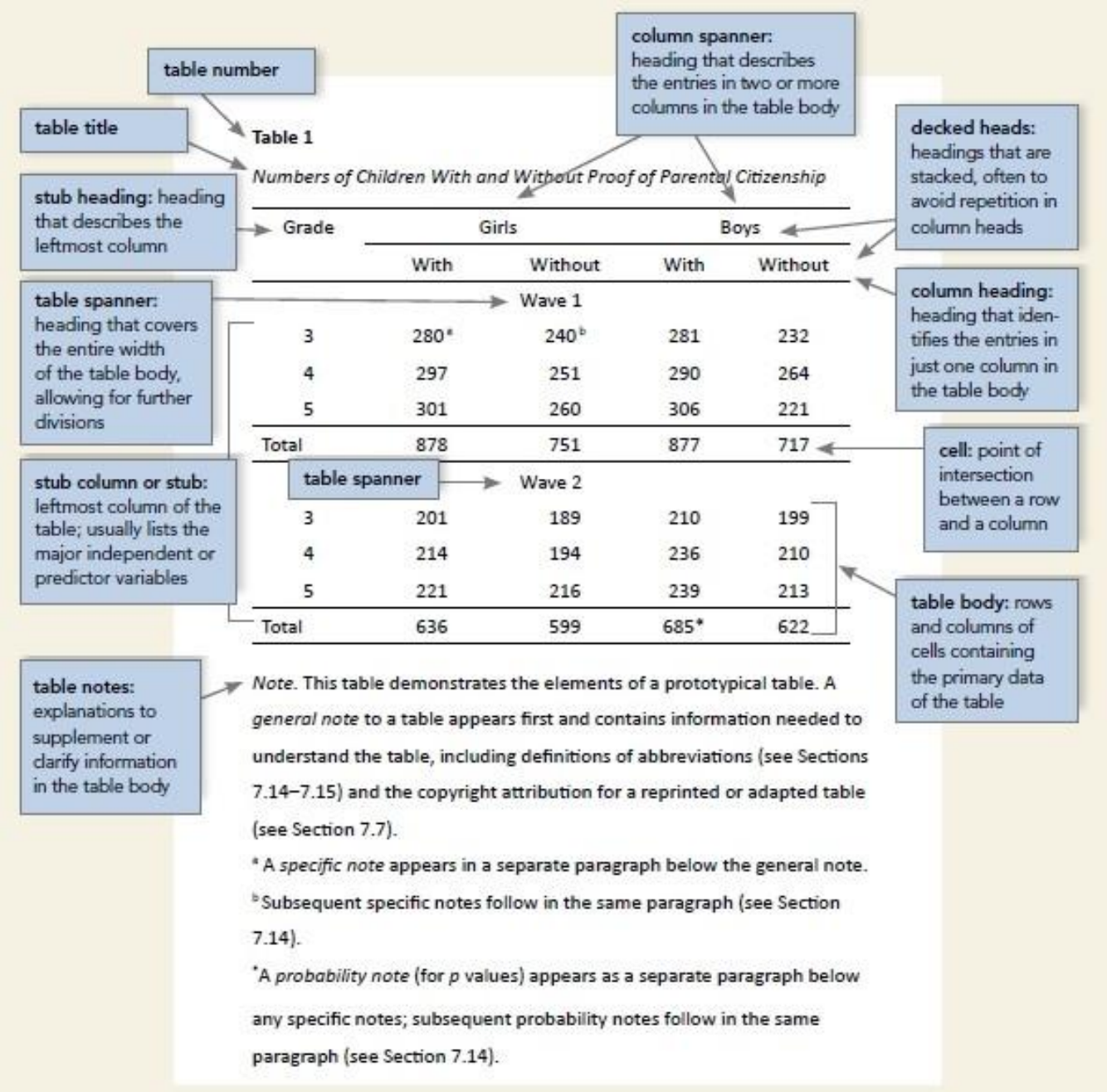
Tables are visual displays composed of columns and rows in which numbers, text, or a combination of numbers and text are presented. There are many common kinds of tables, including demographic characteristics tables, correlation tables, factor analysis tables, analysis of variance tables, and regression tables.

Table components

APA Style tables have the following basic components:

- **number:** The table number (e.g., Table 1) appears above the table title and body in bold font. Number tables in the order in which they are mentioned in your paper.
- **title:** The table title appears one double-spaced line below the table number. Give each table a brief but descriptive title, and capitalize the table title in italic title case.
- **headings:** Tables may include a variety of headings depending on the nature and arrangement of the data. All tables should include column headings, including a *stub heading* (heading for the leftmost, or stub, column). The heading "Variable" is often used for the stub column if no other heading is suitable. Some tables also include column spanners, decked heads, and table spanners; these are described in the *Publication Manual*. Center column headings and capitalize them in sentence case.
- **body:** The table body includes all the rows and columns of a table (including the headings row). A *cell* is the point of intersection between a row and a column.
    a. The table body may be single-spaced, one-and-a-half-spaced, or double-spaced.
    b. Left-align the information in the leftmost column or stub column of the table body (but center the heading).
    c. In general, center information in all other cells of the table. However, left-align the information if doing so would improve readability, particularly when cells contain lots of text.
- **note:** Three types of notes (general, specific, and probability) appear below the table as needed to describe contents of the table that cannot be understood from the table title or body alone (e.g., definitions of abbreviations, copyright attribution, explanations of asterisks used to indicate *p* values). Include table notes only as needed.

This diagram is an illustration of the basic table components.



Principles of table construction

The most important principle to follow when creating a table is to present information in a way that is easy for readers to understand. Provide sufficient information in the table itself so that readers do not need to read the text to understand it.

When creating a table, place entries that are to be compared next to each other. In general, place different indices (e.g., means and standard deviations) in different columns rather than in the same column. Use the same font in tables as in the rest of your paper.

Use the tables feature of your word-processing program to create tables in APA Style papers. Do not use the tab key or space bar to manually create the look of a table.

Table borders

Limit the use of borders or lines in a table to those needed for clarity. In general, use a border at the top and bottom of the table, beneath column headings (including decked heads), and above column spanners. You may also use a border to separate a row containing totals or other summary information from other rows in the table.

Do not use vertical borders to separate data, and do not use borders around every cell in a table. Use spacing between columns and rows and strict alignment to clarify relations among the elements in a table.

Long or wide tables

If a table is longer than one page, use the tables feature of your word-processing program to make the headings row repeat on the second and any subsequent pages. No other adjustments are necessary. If a table is too wide to fit on one page, use landscape orientation on the page with the wide table. It does not matter if the page header also moves when switching to landscape orientation.

Placement of tables in a paper

There are two options for the placement of tables (and figures) in a paper. The first is to embed tables in the text after each is first mentioned (or "called out"); the second is to place each table on a separate page after the reference list.

An embedded table may take up an entire page; if the table is short, however, text may appear on the same page as the table. In that case, place the table at either the top or bottom of the page rather than in the middle. Also add one blank double-spaced line between the table and any text to improve the visual presentation.

Sample tables are covered in the seventh edition APA Style manuals in the Publication Manual Section 7.21 and the Concise Guide Section 7.21

Figures in APA Format

All types of visual displays other than tables are considered figures in APA Style. Common types of figures include line graphs, bar graphs, charts (e.g., flowcharts, pie charts), drawings, maps, plots (e.g.,

scatterplots), photographs, infographics, and other illustrations.

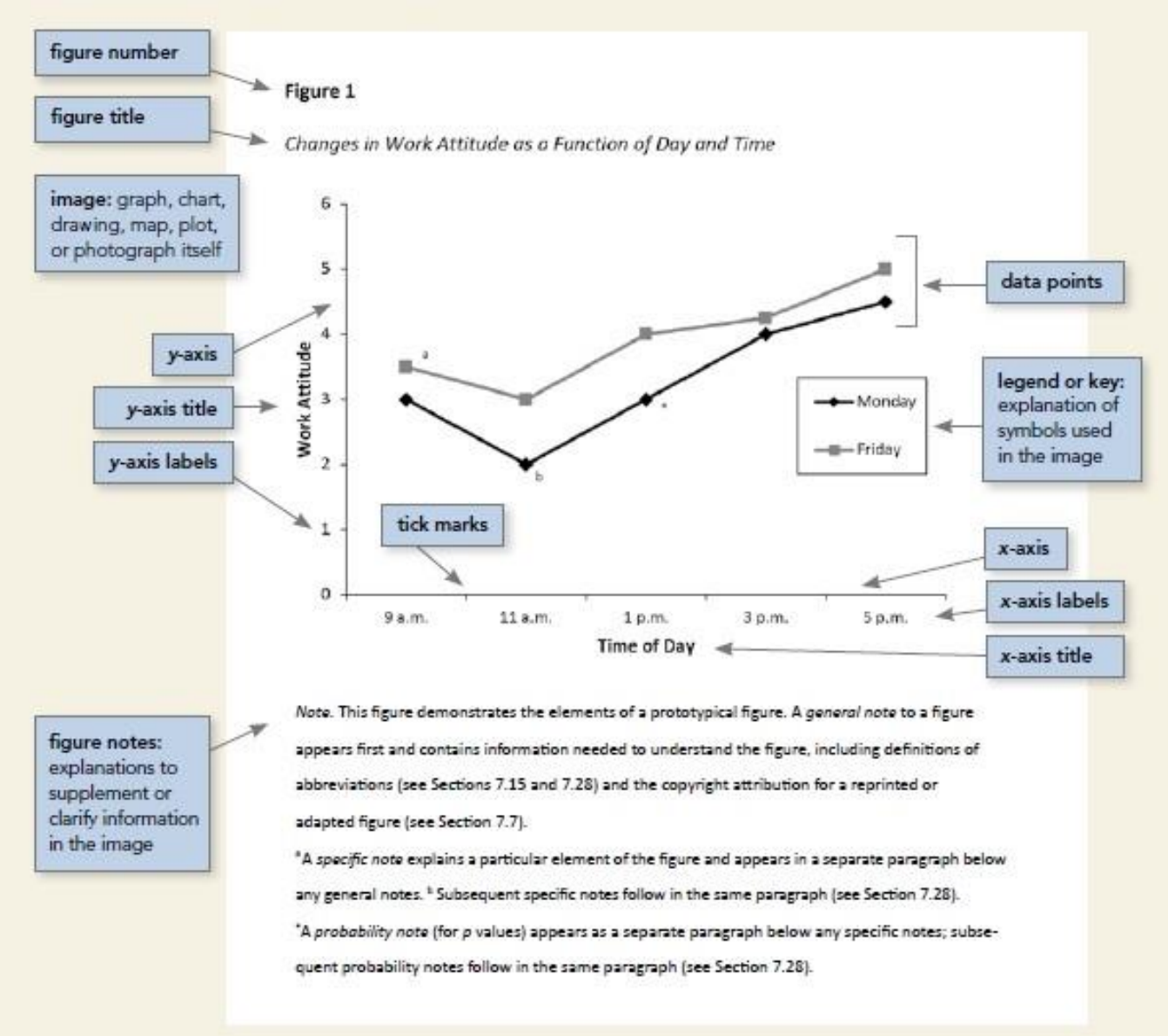
This page addresses the basics of figure setup, including figure components, principles of figure construction, and placement of figures in a paper. Note that tables and figures have the same overall setup.

Figure components

APA Style figures have these basic components:

- **number:** The figure number (e.g., Figure 1) appears above the figure title and image in bold font. Number figures in the order in which they are mentioned in your paper.
- **title:** The figure title appears one double-spaced line below the figure number. Give each figure a brief but descriptive title, and capitalize the figure title in italic title case.
- **image:** The image portion of the figure is the graph, chart, photograph, drawing, or other illustration itself. If text appears in the image of the figure (e.g., axis labels), use a sans serif font between 8 and 14 points.
- **legend:** A figure legend, or key, if present, should be positioned within the borders of the figure and explains any symbols used in the figure image. Capitalize words in the figure legend in title case.
- **note:** Three types of notes (general, specific, and probability) can appear below the figure to describe contents of the figure that cannot be understood from the figure title, image, and/or legend alone (e.g., definitions of abbreviations, copyright attribution, explanations of asterisks use to indicate *p* values). Include figure notes only as needed.

This diagram illustrates the basic figure components.



Principles of figure creation

The most important principle to follow when creating a figure is to present information in a way that is easy for readers to understand. Provide sufficient information in the figure itself so that readers do not need to read the text to understand it.

When creating a figure, ensure you meet the following standards:

- images are clear
- lines are smooth and sharp
- font is legible and simple
- units of measurement are provided
- axes are clearly labeled

- elements within the figure are clearly labeled or explained

Use graphics software to create figures in APA Style papers. For example, use the built-in graphics features of your word-processing program (e.g., Microsoft Word or Excel) or dedicated programs such as Photoshop or Inkscape.

Placement of figures in a paper

There are two options for the placement of figures (and tables) in a paper. The first is to embed figures in the text after each is first mentioned (or "called out"); the second is to place each figure on a separate page after the reference list.

An embedded figure may take up an entire page; if the figure is short, however, text may appear on the same page as the figure. In that case, place the figure at either the top or bottom of the page rather than in the middle. Also add one blank double-spaced line between the figure and any text to improve the visual presentation.

Figures are covered in the seventh edition APA Style manuals in the Publication Manual Sections 7.22 to 7.36 and the Concise Guide Sections 7.22 to 7.32