

The Fundamentals of APA FORMAT

**From the fifth edition of the American
Psychological Association Publication Manual**

**Compiled by
Springfield College
Writing Center
Revised, Fall, 2003**

APA Manuscript Guideline Checklist

Minimum one-inch margins, except when writing a thesis.

Double-space the paper, including references.

Left justifies the margins, not the right.

Italicize; do not underline (fifth edition change).

Indent five to seven spaces for each new paragraph.

Number pages consecutively, starting with the title page.

Use Arabic numerals for page numbers placed in the upper right hand corner.

Place the first two or three words from title next to the page number.

Title should summarize the paper.

Center title on separate title page with your name and the name of the institution.

Abstract (Summary) may be required.

Language and Number Use

When expressing ideas, be orderly and efficient.

Avoid jargon (monetary scarcity), wordiness (the fact that at the present time), and redundancy.

Use active voice verbs; use past tense for actions or conditions from the past.

AVOID BIAS by using the following more accurate words and phrases:

*men and women NOT man

*gay men and lesbians NOT gays

*African American or Black NOT Negro or black

*Asian American NOT Oriental

*Hispanic, Latino, or Chicano depending on where they are from

*Older person, NOT Elderly

*sexual orientation NOT sexual preferences

Avoid labeling people- DO NOT use “at risk” or “borderline” to describe people

Use “participants or “individuals” NOT “subjects”

Use figures for numbers 10 and above or numbers being compared (2 out of 10)

Use words for numbers zero through nine, for imprecise measurements (about fifteen), to begin a sentence, title, or heading (Fifteen individuals were examined)

Avoid third person (“The experimenters instructed the participants”) when referring to yourself. Instead, use a personal pronoun (“We instructed the participants”)

Quotations in Text

Author-date method of citation:

Examples of stylistic variations:

Smith (2000) compared reaction time...

In a recent study of reaction times (Smith, 2000),...

In 2000, Smith compared reaction times...

Short Quotations: When using a quotation of fewer than 40 words in your text, enclose the quote within double quotation marks.

Examples:

She stated, “The placebo effect disappeared when behaviors were studied in this manner” (Miele, 1993, p. 276), but she did not ...

According to Miele (1993), “the placebo effect disappeared when behaviors were studied in this manner” (p. 276).

Miele (1993) found that “the placebo effect disappeared” in this case (p. 276).

Long Quotations: When using a quotation in your text of more than 40 words omit the quotation marks. Start on a new line indenting the left margin five spaces. Do not single space. Type the entire quote on the new margin, and indent the first line of the following paragraph.

- * Use double quotes to enclose any quoted material within a block quotation.
- * If any incorrect spelling, punctuation, grammar, or usage in the source might confuse or offend readers, insert the word *sic* in bracketed italics (i.e., [*sic*]), immediately after the error in the quotation (fifth edition change).
- * If you want to emphasize a word(s) in a quotation, italicize the word(s). Immediately after the italicized words, insert within brackets the words *italics added*, that is, [*italics added*].
- * Do not omit citations imbedded within the original material you are quoting.

Example:

Miele (1993) found the following:

The “placebo effect,” which had been verified in previous studies disappeared when behaviors were studied in this manner. Furthermore, the behaviors *were never exhibited again* [*italics added*], even when reel

[sic] drugs were administered. Earlier studies (e.g., Abdullah, 1984; Fox, 1979) were clearly premature in attributing the results to a placebo effect (p. 276).

How To Cite Electronic Sources

WEBSITES: Cite the **ENTIRE** website address in the text of the paper, but only when referring to the **ENTIRE** website:

Example: Kidspsych is a wonderful interactive website for children
(<http://www.kidspsych.org>).

Information contained **WITHIN** a website must be cited the same as any other source—both in the paper (author or title, year, p. #) and on the references page:

Format:

Author's last name, first initial. (year). Title of article or section of website you are citing.
Name of Journal, if it comes from a journal. Name of Organization or Website.
Retrieved January 25, 2000 from <http://...>

Example:

Dow, J. (2000). Heart disease and exercise. American Heart Association. Retrieved January 25, 2000 from <http://www.americanheart.org>

ELECTRONIC DATABASES: Cite as usual in the paper (author or title, year, p. #) and on the reference page:

Format:

Author's last name, first initial. (year). Title of article. Name of Journal, volume number, pages. Retrieved January 25, 2000 from database name OR <http://...>

Journal article retrieved from library databases:

Dow, J. (2000). The effects of stress on elementary school performance. *Journal of elementary education in america*, 45(3), 200-210. Retrieved January 25, 2000 from ERIC database.

Journal article retrieved from internet:

Vanden Bos, G., Knapp, S. & Doe, J. (2001, March 7). Role of reference elements in the selection of resources by psychology undergraduates. *Journal of Bibliographic Research* 5, Article 0001A. Retrieved November 20, 2000 from <http://...>

Reference Page Overview

Part of a Non-periodical (book chapter or article in a collection)

Example:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year of Publication). Title of Chapter. In A. Editor & B. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pp. 20-45). Location: Publisher.

Book

Example:

Calfee, R. C., & Valencia, R. R. (1991). *APA guide to preparing manuscripts for journal publication*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Government Publication

Example:

National Institute of Mental Health. (1990). *Clinical training in serious mental illness* (DHHS Publication No. ADM 90-1679). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

A book or article with no author or editor

Example:

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (10th ed.). (1993). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.

An article in a journal (multiple authors)

Example:

Deutsch, F.M., Lussier, J. B., & Servis, L. J. (1993). Husbands at home: Predictors of paternal participation in childcare and housework. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65, 1154-1166.

Multi-page document created by private organization, no date available

Example:

Greater Milford (Ct) Area Healthy Community 2000, Task Force on Teen and Adolescent Issues (n.d.). *Who has time for a family meal? You do!* Retrieved October 5, 2000, from <http://...>

Reference Page Information

Hanging Indent format: the first line of each reference is set flush left; subsequent lines are indented.

Alphabetize each entry by author's last name.

Italicize names of periodicals (published regularly) from title through number.

Italicize titles of longer non-periodicals (books).

(note: fourth edition rules: underline, don't italicize).

Use of Headings

There are five levels or categories of headings that can be used in APA style, but most writers don't use more than three. Each level represents a sub-category or section within the previous level or section.

Example of Two Levels:

Centered, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

Flush Left, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

Example of Three Levels:

Centered, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

Flush Left, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Side Heading

Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.

Example of Four Levels:

Centered Uppercase and Lower Case Heading

Centered, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

Flush Left, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Side Heading

Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.