



HOW TO: APA 7TH

The purpose of this document is to serve as a guide to writing APA papers, reports, publications, journals, etc. in the 7th edition. However, this should not be considered a substitute for the actual APA 7th edition Manual, as it is the comprehensive resource governing the topic. This paper is going to give you an overview of format and style. We, at the writing center, hope this helps you feel more prepared and confident when writing in APA. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to make an appointment with the Writing Center by going to brenau.mywconline.com.

**Happy Writing,
*Brenau's Writing Center***

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The Basics

FORMATTING & STYLE

Writing Style

APA has a very specific way in which they want writers to write, which is succinctly and scientifically as possible. This is a stark contrast to how MLA papers are written. Here is an example of the differences if one were to be talking about a dog running:

MLA - The graceful Golden Retriever gallops across the lush, green grass.

APA - The dog runs.

As you can see, APA is solely about the facts. There is no personal opinion, fluff, unnecessary adjectives, etc.; it is straight and to the point. The reason for this is because essentially everything you will be writing about will be on a topic with which you are not the expert, and so instead, you will be weaving together the findings of those who are the experts. Essentially, your paper will boil down to paraphrasing all your sources, weaving them together in a way that flows well, and getting to the point as quickly as possible. It might feel odd at first, and if you are struggling with cutting down the unnecessary, try reading it out loud to yourself and omit words you are questioning the need of. If the sentence still makes sense without the word there, then it most likely isn't needed! However, if you're still having trouble, come to the writing center!

General Formatting Guidelines

- Use 1 inch margins around the entirety of the document
- Double space the entire document, with no extra spaces between paragraphs.
- Fonts and sizes include: Calibri (11), Arial (11), Lucida Sans Unicode (10), Times New Roman (12), and Georgia (11)
- At the top of every page, you should have a shortened version of your title in all caps; you do not need to put "running head" in front of it
 - ex: Paper Title - **Exploration of Rett Syndrome**, shortened title: RETT SYNDROME
- Number your pages in the top right corner.
- On the first page of your paper, your title should be centered and bolded at the top of the page.
- For numbers 1-9, write them (i.e. nine not 9). For numbers 10 and greater, leave them in numeric form.

Word Choice

Along with the style of writing desired, there are a few different words which are not allowed within APA style. However, the rule of thumb whenever writing something is to always consult your professor. Sometimes assignments might be personal journals or about different life stories, and might require the use of these words, which would otherwise be prohibited. These words include: their, they, they're, I, we, you, our, yours, mine, etc.; as you can see, each is a pronoun (1st or 2nd person), and that is the exact reason they should not be used. APA is to be written in 3rd person, which again brings the paper/report back to being objective and all about the facts.

Another piece of this person first language and specificity in word choice. Person first language is used to introduce populations by the fact that they are human first and have this specific characteristic - showing that people are not defined by situation or diagnosis. An example of this is: An autistic child vs A child with autism. or The poor vs People living in poverty. The second options are the desired format.

Specificity in word choice is about accuracy and pointed measurement, which again goes back to the science and objectivity. Instead of providing broad categories and ranges, be direct in what you are referring to. For example, people over the age of 65 vs people aged 65-75 years old. The second example provides strict parameters on who and what you are referring to.

Organization

HEADINGS

Headings

These are a vital organization piece in APA. Headings help to break up the different parts of your paper to provide clear delineation between topic shift, give demarcation of sections, and increase overall readability/ability to locate topics.

APA defines 5 different levels of heading. Each is structured as follows:

Level 1 (Centered, Bolded, and Title Case)

Paragraph begins on a new, indented line directly under the heading.

Level 2 (Left Aligned, Bolded, and Title Case)

Paragraph begins on a new, indented line directly under the heading.

Level 3 (Left aligned, Bolded, Italicized, and Title Case)

Paragraph begins on a new, indented line directly under the heading.

Level 4 (Indented, Bolded, Title Case, and ends with period). Paragraph begins right after the heading.

Level 5 (Indented, Bolded, Title Case, and ends with a period). Paragraph begins right after the heading.

** At the beginning of your paper, your title, which is centered and bolded, serves as a Level 1 heading. As a result, if anything needs to be subdivided from here, then that would be done at a level 2 heading. However, if it is a completely new section of the paper, then it would require a new level 1 heading. For example:

Title of My Paper about Monkeys and Zoonotic Disease

Introduction all about monkeys. I am going to keep talking about how many different kinds there are, where they live, etc. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the types of monkeys that have spread zoonotic disease.

Zoonotic Disease

I am choosing to make a level 2 heading about zoonotic species because it needs some defining and explanation before getting into the body of my paper, but it is still part of the introduction.

Types of Monkey Related Zoonotic Diseases

Now I would begin the body of my text. This shifts to a level one heading because I am no longer in the introduction section of my paper.

Citations & References

IN-TEXT

When do you cite?

As the general rule of thumb when writing in any style, if the information did not come from your brain originally, it needs to be cited (in-text and on the references page). Another helpful way to think about it is to think about whether or not the information is common knowledge. If it is, it most likely doesn't need to be cited, but if it isn't, then it needs to be. For example, the sky is blue is not something that needs to be cited, but if you are discussing the refraction of light through water molecules and how this makes the sky look blue, that needs to be cited.

How to Cite - In Text

As explained above, citations need to be used anytime you are using material that is not yours and/or common knowledge. This is called an in-text citation because it lies within the body of the text. Instead of providing you with an exhaustive list of every iteration of citations, we will instead provide you with a list of the most commonly used ones. If you are citing something not included in this list, consult your APA manual and/or the writing center.

One to two authors: (McConnell & Kennedy, 2019).

Three or more authors: (McConnell et al., 2019).

- for this one, notice that the only authors name that is used is the first author's, and all others' are replaced with "et al."

If your sentence has information from multiple sources, the in-text will be combined in alphabetical order like so: (McConnell & Kennedy, 2019; Smith et al., 2018; Yates et al., 2009).

- For this, please note that the alphabetizing refers to the order in which the citations are placed based on the first author's last name, NOT by changing the order of the authors' names in each citation.

Another important rule for in-text citations is that the period for the end of your sentence goes AFTER the citation.

Ex: The participants preferred store brand marshmallows to name brand (Smith et al., 2018).



Citations & References

IN -TEXT CONTINUED

Bookending

Lastly, since APA writing consists mostly of others' ideas, that means you are going to have to cite very frequently. To cut down on this, you can do something called bookending. This is where, in one paragraph, you put an in-text citation at the beginning of your information being cited from one source and at the last sentence. This can only be used if the sentences in between all include material only from the sources cited. If there are other sources used in the sentences in between, bookending cannot be utilized. Here is an example:

Many roles are defined through cultural and societal norms and expectations (Forsyth, & Kielhofner, 2011; Forsyth et al., 2019). For some this might mean wife, student, mother, father, financial supporter, bill payer, etc. Furthermore, roles are obligatory, inherited, or chosen. A person learns how to successfully be in a role through learned experience, which can be from modeling, culture, or society. Interaction with others is the way one learns how to or how not to be a specific role. It is these roles that help a person solidify occupational identity through the obligations and expectations within each role (Forsyth, & Kielhofner, 2011; Forsyth et al., 2019).

The in-text citations at the beginning and the end of the paragraph let the reader know that everything in between is also paraphrased material from those two sources. However, if there were to be a sentence in the middle from a different source, the bookending would have to be changed to reflect that.

Citations & References

REFERENCES PAGE

After having written your paper and inputting all of your in-text citations, you must create a references page which has a list of all the sources you cited throughout the paper. There are a few rules that go along with its creation:

1. The references page should begin on the page after you have finished your paper. At the top of the page, there should be a heading "References" centered and bolded.
2. The list has to be alphabetized. Since this is a list that comprises all of the sources in the paper, it will be alphabetized by the last names of the first authors.
 - a. Do not change the order of the authors' last names. They are put in the order they are in for a reason.
 - b. Each should start on a new line and have a hanging indent (this can be done by using the ruler function in Microsoft Word).
3. The page should still be in the same font and size as the rest of your paper and be double spaced as well.
4. If you have a source listed here, it needs to be cited in-text in your paper, and vice versa. You don't want to put something in your list if you didn't actually use it.
5. If your source has more than 20 authors, the first 19 last names should be listed, followed by an ellipsis, and then the last author.
 - a. ex: Miller, T. C., Brown, M. J., Wilson, G. L., Evans, B. B., Kelly, R. S., Turner, S. T., Lewis, F., Lee, L. H., Cox, G., Harris, H. L., Martin, P., Gonzalez, W. L., Hughes, W., Carter, D., Campbell, C., Baker, A. B., Flores, T., Gray, W. E., Green, G., ... Nelson, T. P. (2018). [rest of citation would follow after this]
6. If you have more than one source by the same author, put in order by oldest to newest.
 - a. If there are one or more sources with the same first author, alphabetize based on the second author's last name.
7. When selecting your sources, pay attention to the number and type your professor wants. Some might request only primary sources, original research articles and studies, instead of secondary, interpretations of something done by another.

Citations & References

REFERENCES PAGE CONTINUED

How to Make Your References

Just like with the in-text citations, there are different rules and method of construction based on the type of source, how many authors, how it was accessed, etc. However, instead of providing the entirety of those, we will instead provide those that are most commonly used. If what you are citing does not appear here, utilize your APA manual and/or the writing center!

Book:

Last Name, A. A., & Last Name, B. B. (year). *Title of book: Only capitalize the first word and the first word after a colon.* Publisher name.

Edited Book:

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle* (E. Editor, Ed.). Publisher.

Chapter in an edited book:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year of publication). Title of chapter. In E. E. Editor, & F. F. Editor (Eds.), *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle* (pp. pages of chapter). Publisher.

Article (online):

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical, volume number*(issue number), pages. <https://doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy>

- If it is an article in a print journal, omit the doi.

- If the doi is unavailable, put the URL of the journal's homepage instead

Webpage:

Last Name, F. M. (Year, Month Date). Title of page. Site name. URL

YouTube Video:

Last Name, F. M. [Username]. (Year, Month Date). Title of video [Video]. YouTube. URL

Podcast:

Host, A. A. (Host). (Year, Month Date). Title of episode (No. if provided) [Audio podcast episode]. In Name of podcast. Publisher. URL



Final Tips & Tricks

HOW TO CRUSH YOUR PAPER

Some final little tips include:

1. Remember to be as objective as possible; you aren't the expert and that is ok!
2. To avoid plagiarism, read through your source/the piece you are wanting to paraphrase and then close it. Do not allow yourself to reference back to the text as you are writing, this helps you process and explain the information in your own words.
3. When in doubt, cite it!
4. Use quality sources that are relevant (meaning not super old) within the current scientific world.
5. If you aren't sure, ask your professor! While APA's manual is the universal standard, sometimes professors want or expect something different. Since the APA manual is not the one grading your paper, always double check with your professor. In the end, it is better to be safe than sorry.

Hopefully this document has helped make you feel more prepared for writing your paper in APA 7th edition. Just remember the rules and tips given to you throughout this paper and you will do great! However, please know that if you are worried, still don't feel comfortable, or are at a roadblock - come to the writing center (or make an appointment online if needed)! We are here to help you succeed.