

## APA Guidelines

APA (American Psychological Association) style is most commonly used to cite sources within the social sciences.

### Purpose of Citation:

- 1) Provides credit to the original author
- 2) Allows readers to find the documents you cited on their own.
- 3) Enables readers to follow the continuum of research. What important contributions were made before your work and where does your body of research contribute to or add to current knowledge?
- 4) Enables others to verify the accuracy and completeness of your work. A thorough reference list demonstrates that you are knowledgeable about your field of inquiry.
- 5) Communicates integrity and helps you to avoid plagiarism.

### General Stylistics:

- Avoid gendered pronouns: use “they,” “their,” “person,” etc. instead of “him” or “her”
- Avoid labels i.e. the “elderly:” use terms like “elderly patients”
- Avoid poetic language (save that for creative writing)
- Be concise: re-word, condense information, and edit out unnecessary words
- Speak in first person when discussing experiments conducted: (I/We experimented...) because the figure doing the action is clearly identified. “Experiments were conducted” is inappropriate in this case.

## GENERAL ESSAY FORMATTING

- Double-spaced
- 8.5" x 11" paper
- 1" margins on all sides
- 12 pt. Times New Roman font

**APA’s 4 Major Essay Sections:** Title Page, Abstract, Main Body, Reference Page

### TITLE PAGE FORMAT

**Running Head format:** On the left of the **VERY** 1st page, place title (no more than 50 characters including spaces) on the left and the page number flush to the right in your header. Your running head should resemble the example below.

Running head: My Title

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----**Note:** After page 1, remove “running head” and use ONLY your title in the header.

**Remainder of Title Page:** After running head set-up, the title page should have the following information double-spaced and in the following order:

TITLE: No more than 12 words long with no abbreviations

AUTHOR’S NAME: first name, middle initial, and last, but no degrees or titles

INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION: location where author performed research

### ABSTRACT FORMAT

Your abstract page should include the page header. On the first line of the abstract page, center

the word “Abstract” (no bold, formatting, italics, underlining, or quotation marks). Beginning with the next line, write a concise summary of your research’s key points. **(Do not indent.)** Your abstract should contain your research topic, research questions, participants, methods, results, data analysis, and conclusions. You may include possible implications of your research and future work you see connected with your findings. **Your abstract should be a single paragraph double-spaced and 150-250 words in length.** You may also want to list keywords from your paper in your abstract. To do this, indent as you would if you were starting a new paragraph, type *Keywords:* (italicized), and then list your keywords. Listing your keywords will help researchers find your work in databases.

**Headings**

APA Style uses a unique 5 headings system to separate and classify paper sections. Regardless of the number of levels, always use the headings in order, beginning with level 1. The format of each level is illustrated below:

APA Headings	
Level	Format
1	<b>Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Headings</b>
2	<b>Left-aligned, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading</b>
3	<b>Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with a period.</b> Begin body text after the period.
4	<i>Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.</i> Begin body text after the period.
5	<i>Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.</i> Begin body text after the period.

Thus, if the article has four sections, some of which have subsections and some of which don’t, use headings depending on the level of subordination. Section headings receive level one format. Subsections receive level two format. Subsections of subsections receive level three format. For example:

- Method** (Level 1)
- Site of Study** (Level 2)
- Participant Population** (Level 2)
  - Teachers.** (Level 3)
  - Students.** (Level 3)
- Results** (Level 1)
- Spatial Ability** (Level 2)
  - Test one.** (Level 3)
    - Teachers with experience.* (Level 4)
    - Teachers in training.* (Level 4)
  - Test two.** (Level 3)
- Kinesthetic Ability** (Level 2)

**NOTE: The Introduction section never gets a heading and headings are not indicated by letters or numbers. Levels of headings will depend upon the length and organization of**

**your paper. Regardless, always begin with level one headings and proceed to level two, etc.**

### **Book: Reference Page**

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

Myers, M. (1978). *Samhain: Dark holiday*. Chicago, IL: Pearson.

### **Book: Short Quotations/In-text Citation**

If you are directly quoting from a work, include the author, year of publication, and the page number for the reference (preceded by "p."). Introduce the quotation with a **signal phrase** that includes the author's last name followed by the date of publication in parentheses.

According to Jones (1998), "Students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time" (p. 199).

Jones (1998) found "students often had difficulty using APA style" (p. 199); what implications does this have for teachers?

If the author is not named in a signal phrase, place the author's last name, the year of publication, and the page number in parentheses after the quotation.

She stated, "Students often had difficulty using APA style" (Jones, 1998, p. 199), but she did not offer an explanation as to why.

### **Book: Long Quotations**

Place direct quotations that are 40 words, or longer, in a free-standing block of typewritten lines, and omit quotation marks. Start the quotation on a new line, indented 1/2 inch from the left margin, i.e., in the same place you would begin a new paragraph. Type the entire quotation on the new margin, and indent the first line of any subsequent paragraph within the quotation 1/2 inch from the new margin. Maintain double-spacing throughout. The parenthetical citation should come after the closing punctuation mark.

Jones's (1998) study found the following:

Students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time citing sources. This difficulty could be attributed to the fact that many students failed to purchase a style manual or to ask their teacher for help. (p. 199)

### **Book: Summary or Paraphrase**

If you are paraphrasing an idea, you only have to make reference to the author and year of publication in your in-text reference, but APA guidelines encourage you to also provide the page number (although it is not required.)

APA style is a difficult citation format for first-time learners (Jones, 1998, p. 199).

### **On-line Database**

When referencing an article obtained from an online database (such as a database in the library), provide appropriate print citation information (formatted just like a "normal" print citation would be for that type of work). By providing this information, you allow people to retrieve the print version if they do not have access to the database from which you retrieved the article. You can also include the item number or accession number or database URL at the end. If you are citing a database article that is available in other places, such as a journal or magazine, include the homepage's URL. You may have to do a web search of the article's title, author, etc. to find the URL.

### **On-line Database Reference Page:**

Author, A. (Date of Publication). Article title. *Title of Journal*, volume number; page range.  
Retrieved from <http://www.someaddress.com/full/url>

Richard, M. R. and Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25; 54-67. Retrieved from <http://repositorio.minedu.gob.pe/bitstream/handle/123456789/2958/Intrinsic%20and%20Extrinsic%20Motivations%20Classic%20Definitions%20and%20New%20Directions.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

### **Website Reference Page:**

Last, F. M. (Year, Month Date Published). *Article title*. Retrieved from URL

Fleuhr, A. (2014, June 29). *Student athletes*. Retrieved from <http://www.buzzle.com>

### **NOTE: A web article with no author is cited as follows:**

*Student athletes*. (2014, June 29). Retrieved from <http://www.buzzle.com>

### **In-text citation for On-line Database and Websites:**

The same rules for using the signal phrase, author's name, and date are the same for websites and online databases. The only difference is that if there is no author, then place the first words in the title in parentheses followed by a comma and the date.

Student athletes have a greater difficulty fulfilling their commitments because of class and practice ("Student Athletes," 2014).

### **Reference Page Format:**

--Sources are to be arranged in alphabetical order

--Rules for multiple/no author entries are universal regardless of source (book, website, etc.)

--A physical periodical entry has the same information as online save the url address. The volume number and other information can be found on the cover and the spine of the periodical.

--Most of the information that fits into a book's citation can be found on the title page and pages prior to it!

### **Reference Page Format (Sample)**

## References

- Fleuhr, A. (2014, June 29). Basketball in town. *Student athletes*. Retrieved from <http://www.buzzle.com>.
- Myers, M. (1978). *Samhain: Dark holiday*. Chicago, IL: Pearson.
- Night, N., & Petty, R. E. (1994). *Mood management*. New York, NY: Scholastic.
- Olyphant, T., Kernis, M. H., Cornell, D. P., Sun, C. R., Berry, A., Harlow, T., & Bach, J. S. (1993). *There is more self-esteem*. Chapel Hill, NC: Simon-Schuster.
- Student athletes*. (2014, June 29). Retrieved from <http://www.buzzle.com>.

## APA RESOURCES:

**<https://owl.english.purdue.edu>**: Purdue Owl is the **best resource** for all issues regarding citation, includes reference materials for APA, MLA, and a host of other citation formats.

## Other Helpful Resources

**<http://libguides.gwumc.edu/APA>**: George Washington University's Library Guide provides the answers to citation questions through its user friendly website.

**[http://sites.umuc.edu/library/libhow/apa\\_examples.cfm?noprint=true](http://sites.umuc.edu/library/libhow/apa_examples.cfm?noprint=true)**: The APA Style Guide to Electronic References focuses solely on the citing of electronic resources and includes a wide variety of citation examples.

**<https://www.library.cornell.edu/research/citation>**: Cornell University's citation management guide assists writers with American Psychological Association (APA) citation style, Modern Language Association (MLA) citation style, and so forth.

**[www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org)**: A resource that provides easy to follow examples and references in all things APA.