

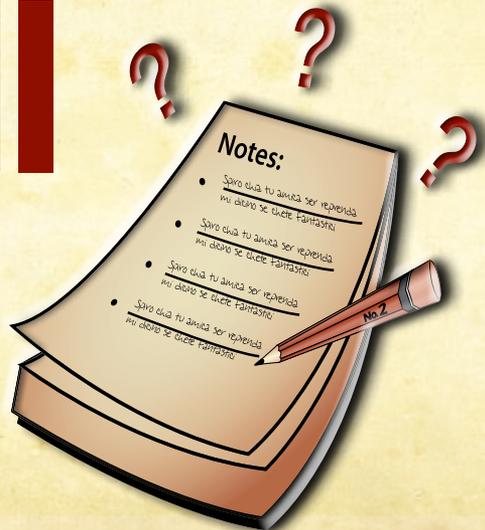
The WRITING CENTER

Elftmann Student Success Center

A Guide On How To:

Use APA Formatting

- APA Set Up
- Citations
- Resources



What is APA Formatting?

The APA (American Psychological Association) has created a **set of rules for structuring a piece of writing**, known as APA formatting. These rules also concern how language is used and how sources are cited.

APA guidelines were developed by and for writers who often need to present a lot of **detailed data** for publication in an academic journal. Many of these rules are in place to meet this need.

How is APA format used to set up a paper?

Your instructor may ask you to pay attention only to certain APA requirements, so first **check his/her instructions** for specific directions.

Each page should be **double-spaced** and use **1" margins** on all sides. In addition, each page should include a **page header** with **page numbers** on the right, and the **title** of your paper in all capital letters on the left. Use an **easy-to-read font** such as Times New Roman for the text.

Papers that use APA format are divided into **five sections**:

| Section | Format Guidelines |
|---|---|
| 1. Title Page | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centered, upper half of the page• Title, author's name, and author's affiliation each on new line• The page header includes "Running Head:" and the title of your paper in upper case letters |
| 2. Abstract | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start a new page; type "Abstract" centered on the first line• A brief summary of your paper on the next line, centered on the page |
| 3. Body a. Introduction b. Method c. Results d. Discussion | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start a new page to begin the body• No page break is used to start a new sub-section• Each sub-section is labeled with a heading, centered on the page• Text is double-spaced |
| 4. References | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start a new page, with "References" centered at the top• Full citations listed alphabetically• Use a hanging indent |
| 5. Appendices | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any additional documents are provided here (a copy of the survey given to research participants, images, etc.) |

What are citations?

Citations are how you tell your reader **where you got your information**. To fully tell your reader where you got your information takes an **in-text citation** and a **References list**.

In-Text Citation:

The in-text citation usually includes the **author's last name** and the **year of publication**, and is given through one of three ways:

- 1) In parentheses at the end of the sentence that uses the information

Example: *This is an example sentence (Smith 2012).*

- 2) The author's name is used in the sentence and the year is given in parentheses

Example: *According to Smith (2012), this is an example sentence.*

- 3) Both the author and year are used in the sentence

Example: *In 2012, Smith wrote an example sentence.*

Full Citation:

This citation matches to a **full citation**, which includes the rest of the source information, listed in your **Reference section**. What you specifically include in your citation depends primarily on **what type of source** it is; however, there are some **basic guidelines** for citations:

- **Cite any idea that is not yours**. Even if you paraphrase or rearrange the sentence structure, you must still cite the original source.
- All sources that you cite in your text must have a **full citation** in your Reference list.
 - ◊ Personal communications should only be given a **parenthetical citation** within the body of the paper.
- **Quotation marks** are used to show the exact wording of another author, and should include the **page number** in both the in-text citation and in the References list.

What resources are available to help me?

Using APA formatting can be overwhelming, but there are several helpful resources available. This list is simply a starting point.

- <http://www.apastyle.org> – APA’s official Website for tutorials, FAQs, and ordering the official APA manual
- <http://www.zotero.org> – Zotero is a free extension program writers can use to collect source information and implement it into a piece of writing
- <http://citationmachine.net> – a free citation maker
- Microsoft Word –the “Citations and Bibliography” section (under the “Reference” tab) on a Word document can help writers manage and create references and footnotes

References

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- The Writing Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison. (revised 20 January 2010). “American Psychological Association (APA) Documentation.” [PDF file]. Available [http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/American_Psychological_Association_\(APA\)_Documentation_M.pdf](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/American_Psychological_Association_(APA)_Documentation_M.pdf)

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