Sixth Edition

Publication
Manual
of the American Psychological Association

Basics of APA Style Tutorial

In this tutorial you will learn how to apply some basic rules of APA Style.

For in-depth guidance on style and for comprehensive information on publishing in the social and behavioral sciences, we urge you to buy the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*.

Where various elements of APA Style are described, chapter and section numbers are given to tell you where more details can be found in the *Publication Manual*.
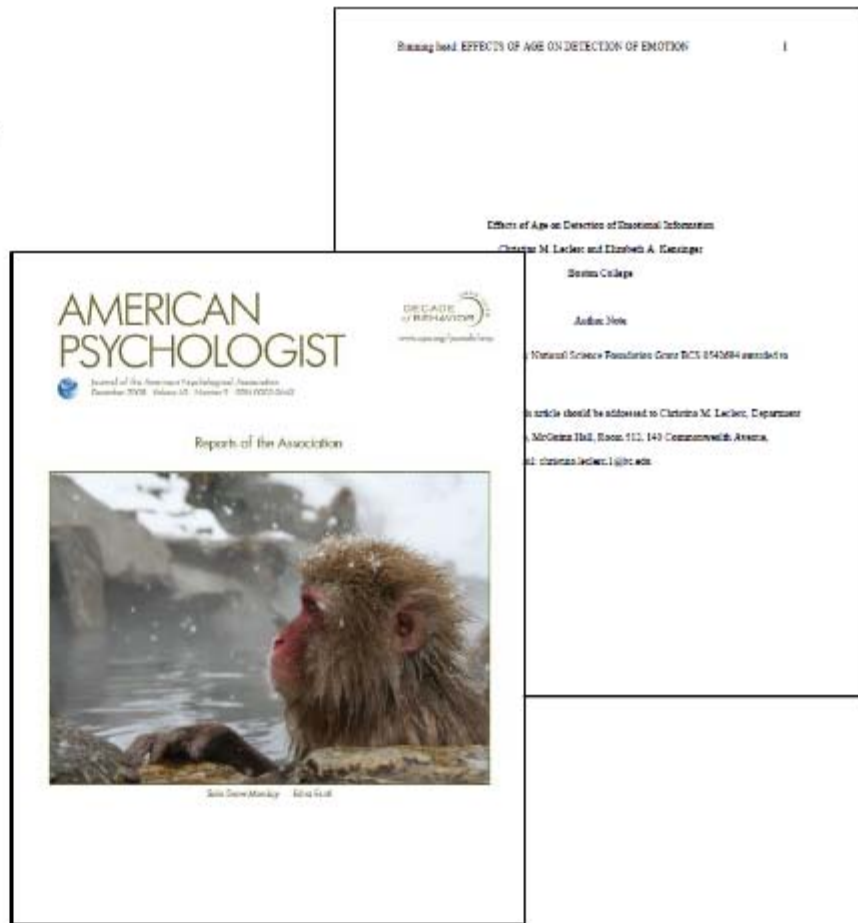
Begin the tutorial ▶

APA Style

Basics of APA Style Tutorial

Introduction

APA Style was developed by social and behavioral scientists to standardize scientific writing.

APA Style is used for

- term papers,
- research reports,
- empirical studies,
- literature reviews,
- theoretical articles,
- methodological articles, and
- case studies.

Manuscript Structure

APA research papers are divided into sections. The main sections are

- Title page (2.01–2.03)
- Abstract (2.04)
- Introduction (2.05)
- Method (2.06)
- Results (2.07)
- Discussion (2.08)
- References (2.11)
- Appendices (2.13)

Click on any of the research paper sections above to view a sample.

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Manuscript Format

Formatting your paper in APA Style means paying attention to mechanical details such as typeface, line spacing, margins, and page headers.

For an example of APA formatting, view the sample papers in the Resources section above.
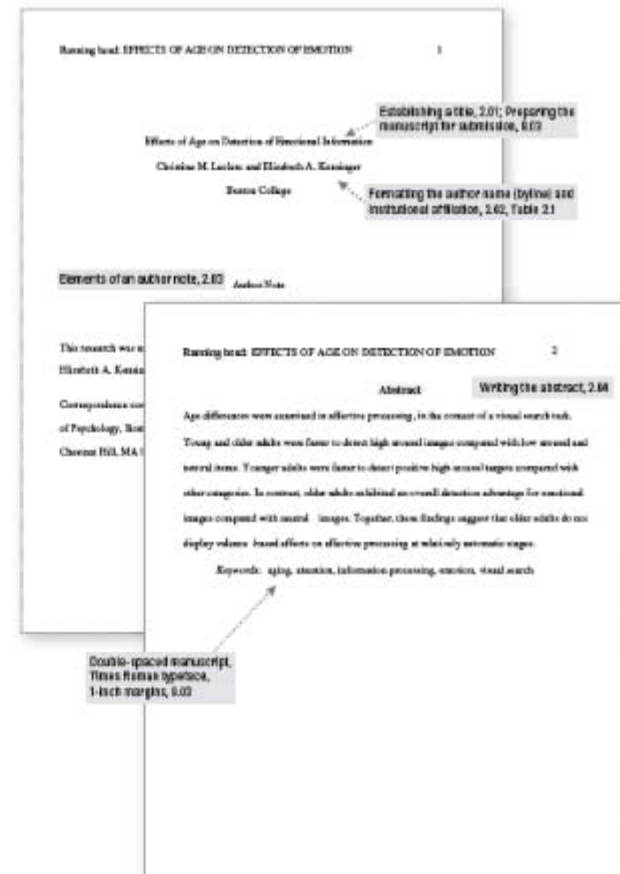
Paper adapted from "Effects of Age on Detection of Emotional Information," by C. M. Leclerc and E. A. Kensinger, 2008, *Psychology and Aging, 23,* pp. 209–215. Copyright 2008 by the American Psychological Association.

Manuscript Format

When preparing your manuscript for submission, format it as follows (6.03):

- Use a serif typeface, such as Times New Roman, for the text of your manuscript. Use a sans serif typeface, such as Arial, for figure labels.
- Double-space the entire manuscript. Double-space between lines of body text and titles, headings, and block quotations. Double-space the reference list and figure captions.
- Indent the first line of every paragraph one-half inch.
- Align the text to the left-hand margin, leaving a "ragged" right margin.

Serif typeface

Sans serif typeface

Heading

The manuscript is double-spaced for readability. There is no need for extra spaces between headings and body text. Indent the first line of every paragraph.

Next Heading

Align the text to the left margin, leaving a ragged right margin. Now I will introduce a block quotation.
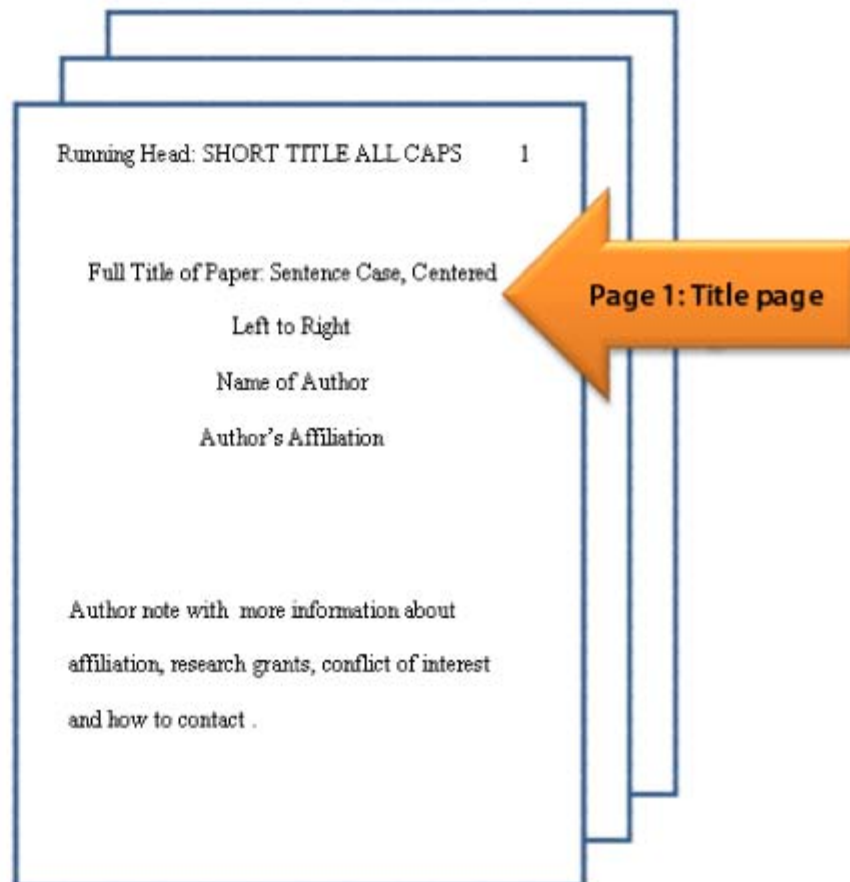
For a block quotation, indent the entire paragraph one half inch. Double space between body text and the block quotation as well as between lines in the block quotation. Use the same size typeface for the block quotation as you use for the rest of the paper. Don't forget to cite the source of your quotation. (Source, year, page number)

Manuscript Format

When you submit your manuscript, number the pages consecutively starting with page 1 (8.03).

Put the pages in the following order:

- Page 1, Title page
- Page 2, Abstract
- Page 3, Beginning of text
- References begin on a new page after the last page of text.
- Each table begins on a new page.
- Each figure begins on a new page. Include the figure caption on the same page as the figure.
- Each appendix begins on a new page.

Running Head: SHORT TITLE ALL CAPS   1

Full Title of Paper: Sentence Case, Centered

Left to Right

Name of Author

Author's Affiliation

Author note with more information about

affiliation, research grants, conflict of interest

and how to contact .

Page 1: Title page

Headings

Headings help readers find key points of your paper and track the development of your thoughts.

APA Style uses five levels of headings (3.02–3.03).

The table below shows how each type of heading is formatted.

Table 3.1 Format for Five Levels of Heading in APA Journals	
Level of heading	**Format**
1	**Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading**[a]
2	**Flush Left, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading**
3	**Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.**[b]
4	***Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.***
5	*Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.*

[a] This type of capitalization is also referred to as *title case.*
[b] In a lowercase paragraph heading, the first letter of the first word is uppercase and the remaining words are lowercase.

Headings

Use heading levels consecutively (3.02–3.03).

For example, if your paper has three heading levels, use Levels 1, 2, and 3, as shown in the graphic.

for the arousing items than shown by the young adults (resulting in an interaction between age and arousal).

Method

Participants

Younger adults (14 women, 10 men, M_{age} = 19.5 years, age range: 18–22 years) were recruited with flyers posted on the Boston College campus. Older adults (15 women, 9 men, M_{age}

This example shows Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 headings.

Valence and arousal ratings. Valence and arousal were judged on 7-point scales (1 = negative valence or low arousal and 7 = positive valence or high arousal). Negative objects received mean valence ratings of 2.5 or lower, neutral objects received mean valence ratings of 3.5 to 4.5, and positive objects received mean valence ratings of 5.5 or higher. High arousal

58 SAMPLE PAPERS

Figure 2.3. Sample Meta-Analysis (continued)

APA Style

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Reducing Bias in Language

APA is committed to objectivity in scientific reporting as well as the fair treatment of individuals and groups. Long-standing cultural practice can exert a powerful influence over even the most conscientious author. Familiarize yourself with the following general guidelines to write about groups with accuracy and sensitivity (Chapter 3):

- Guideline 1: Describe at the appropriate level of specificity.
- Guideline 2: Be sensitive to labels.
- Guideline 3: Acknowledge participation.

Reducing Bias in Language

Describe at the appropriate level of specificity.

For example, if your paper mentions at-risk children, be specific about the risks:

- Not specific: *at-risk children*
- Specific: *children at risk for early school dropout*

If your paper discusses age groups, use a specific age range:

- Not specific: *over 18 years of age*
- Specific: *18- to 35-year-olds*

Part of writing without bias is recognizing that differences should be mentioned only when relevant. Marital status, sexual orientation, racial and ethnic identity or the fact that a person has a disability should not be mentioned gratuitously.

Reducing Bias in Language

Be sensitive to labels.

Call people what they prefer to be called, keeping in mind that these preferences can change over time.

For example, if your paper discusses Native Americans, you should determine how they would like to be described. Many Native American groups prefer their name to be in their native language, for instance, Dine rather than Navajo.

If your paper is about people with autism, you might use phrases such as the following:

- Persons diagnosed with autism may have a restricted repertoire of activities relative to their age.
- Most of the children in the autism group did not respond when asked their name.

Reducing Bias in Language

Acknowledge participation.

When you write about the roles of individuals in an experiment, use language that portrays them as active participants, rather than passive recipients of the experiment.

For example, choose phrases such as the following:

- The students completed the survey *instead of*
  The survey was administered to the students.
- The children viewed objects on the screen *instead of*
  The children were shown several on-screen objects.
- We collected data from the participants *instead of*
  The participants were run.

Write about the people in your study in a way that acknowledges their participation but is also consistent with the traditions of the field in which you are working. Thus, although descriptive terms such as *college students*, *children*, or *respondents* provide precise information about the individuals taking part in a research project, the more general terms *participants* and *subjects* are also in common usage.

APA Style

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Citing References in Text

Cite the work of those individuals whose ideas, theories, or findings have directly influenced your work, even if you are paraphrasing or describing someone else's idea (Chapter 6).

To avoid plagiarism, take careful notes as you research to keep track of all sources and collect the information you need to cite them properly.

The following screens illustrate how to format citations in text.

Citing References in Text

APA Style uses the author–date citation system. This system allows readers to find the sources cited in text in the reference list, where each source is listed alphabetically (Chapter 6).

To insert a citation in text, include the author's surname and year of publication. For a direct quotation, include the page number or specific location of the phrase or sentences in the original work.

Here are some examples of how to use the author–date citation when paraphrasing.

```
Kessler (2003) found that among epidemiological samples…
```

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Early onset results in a more persistent and severe course (Kessler, 2003).
```

```
In 2003, Kessler's study of epidemiological samples showed that…
```

APA Style

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Citing References in Text

The following chart shows how to format in-text citations (6.11–6.15)

Table 6.1 Basic Citation Styles

Type of citation	First citation in text	Subsequent citations in text	Parenthetical format, first citation in text	Parenthetical format, subsequent citations in text
One work by one author	Walker (2007)	Walker (2007)	(Walker, 2007)	(Walker, 2007)
One work by two authors	Walker and Allen (2004)	Walker and Allen (2004)	Walker & Allen, 2004)	(Walker & Allen, 2004)
One work by three authors	Bradley, Ramirez, and Soo (1999)	Bradley et al. (1999)	(Bradley, Ramirez, & Soo, 1999)	(Bradley et al., 1999)
One work by four authors	Bradley, Ramirez, Soo, and Walsh (2006)	Bradley et al. (2006)	(Bradley, Ramirez, Soo, & Walsh, 2006)	(Bradley et al., 2006)
One work by five authors	Walker, Allen, Bradley, Ramirez, and Soo (2008)	Walker et al. (2008)	(Walker, Allen, Bradley, Ramirez, & Soo, 2008)	(Walker et al., 2008)
One work by six or more authors	Wasserstein et al. (2005)	Wasserstein et al. (2005)	(Wasserstein et al., 2005)	(Wasserstein et al., 2005)
Groups (readily identified through abbreviation) as authors	National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH, 2003)	NIMH (2003)	(National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2003)	(NIMH, 2003)
Groups (no abbreviation) as authors	University of Pittsburgh (2005)	University of Pittsburgh (2005)	(University of Pittsburgh, 2005)	(University of Pittsburgh, 2005)

Citing References in Text

When you need to cite two or more works together, arrange the in-text citations alphabetically in the same order in which they appear in the reference list (6.16).

Here are some examples of citations that include more than one work in the same parentheses:

```
Training materials are available (Department of Veterans Affairs, 2001, 2003)
Past research (Gogel, 1990, 2006, in press)
```

```
Several studies (Derryberry & Reed, 2005a, 2005b, in press-a; Rothbart,
2003a, 2003b)
```

```
Several studies (Miller, 1999; Shafranske & Mahoney, 1998)
```

The Reference List

The purpose of a reference list is to help readers find the sources you used. Therefore, the reference list should be as accurate and complete as possible (6.22–6.25).

All citations should be listed in the reference list, with the exception of personal communications and classical works.

Put references in order by the author's surname, or first author's surname if there is more than one author.

Use the hanging indent paragraph style. Double-space the entire reference list.

View specific reference examples.

The Reference List

References contain the following components:

- author name or names (6.27),
- publication date (6.28),
- title of the work (6.29), and
- publication data (6.30).

Author names

Publication date

Title of work

Publication data

Mikulincer, M., Gerber, H., & Weisenberg, M. (1990).
Judgment of control and depression: The role of
self-esteem threat and self-focused attention.
Cognitive Therapy and Research, 14, 589–608.

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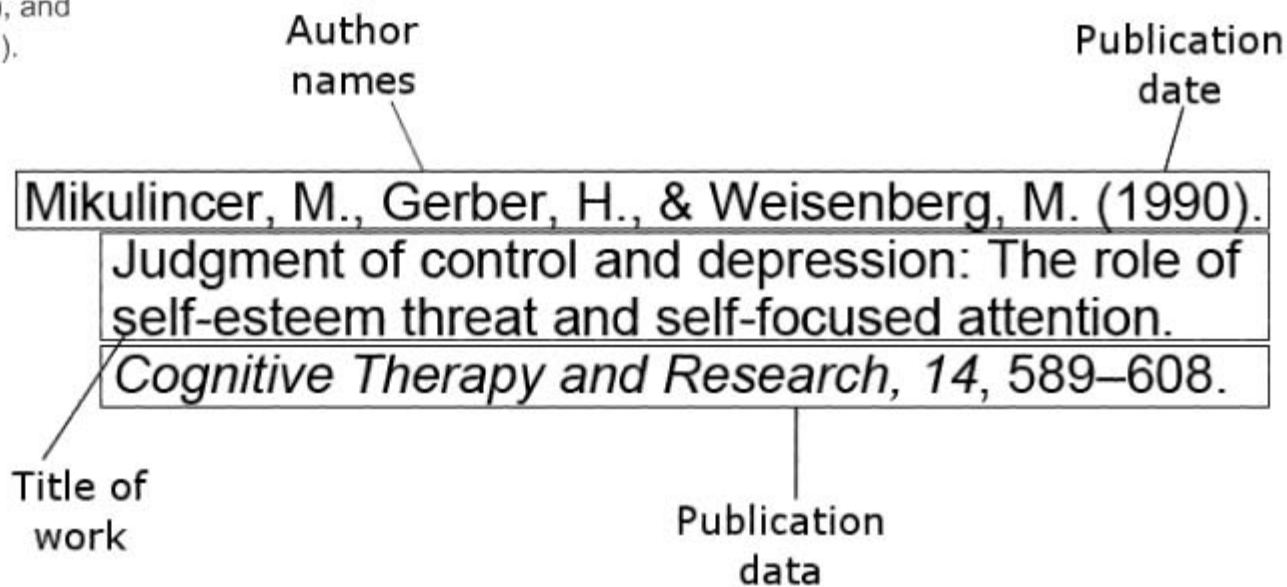
The Reference List

Follow these general guidelines when you are citing a source you found on the web or in an electronic database (6.31–6.32).

- Make sure the version you are citing is the most recent one.
- Include journal volume number and inclusive page numbers if this information is available.
- Type or use the copy–paste function of your word processor to capture, the article DOI and place it at the end of the reference.
- If there is no DOI, cite the home page URL.

What's a DOI?

A digital object identifier (DOI) is a permanent digital identifier given to an object. Its most common application is identifying electronic documents.

The International DOI Foundation (IDF) defines *DOI name* as "a digital identifier for any object of intellectual property."

The Reference List

Writers can include many kinds of material in their reference lists, such as dissertations, podcasts, book reviews, and archival material (Chapter 7).

For scholarly articles, the kinds of references most commonly included are

- journal articles,
- entire issue of a journal,
- chapter in an edited book,
- entire book, and
- conference proceedings.

The Reference List

Here are instructions for formatting references to journal articles (7.01):

- Type the article title in sentence case and the journal title in title case.
- Italicize the journal title and volume number.
- Include the issue number in parentheses if the journal is paginated by issue.
- Type the DOI in the format shown in the first example. Do not put a period at the end of the DOI.

DOI

Herbst-Damm, K. L., & Kulik, J. A. (2005). Volunteer support, marital status, and the
    survival times of terminally ill patients. *Health Psychology, 24,* 225-229.
    doi:10.1037/0278-6133.24.2.225

NO DOI

Light, M. A., & Light, I. H. (2008). The geographic expansion of Mexican immigration
    in the United States and its implications for local law enforcement. *Law Enforcement
    Executive Forum Journal, 8*(1), 73-82.

URL

Wheeler, D. P., & Bragin, M. (2007). Bringing it all back home: Social work and the
    challenge of returning veterans. *Health and Social Work, 32,* 297-300. Retrieved from
    http://www.naswpressonline.org

The Reference List

Here are instructions for formatting a reference to an entire issue of a journal (7.01):

- To cite an entire issue of a journal, give the editors of the issue and the title of the issue.
- If the issue has no editors, move the issue title to the author position and alphabetize the reference entry by the first significant word in the title.
- These instructions are also applicable to formatting a reference to a special section.

Example with editors:

> Greenfield, P., & Yan, Z. (Eds.). (2006). Children, adolescents, and the Internet [Special
>   section]. *Developmental Psychology, 42,* 391-458.

The Reference List

Here are instructions for formatting a reference to a chapter in an edited book (7.02):

- After the chapter title type *In*, the editor's name, the abbreviation *Ed.* in parentheses, and then the title of the book.
- Give the page numbers in parentheses after the book title.

Haybron, D. M. (2008). Philosophy and the science of subjective well-being. In M. Eid & R. J. Larsen (Eds.), *The science of subjective well-being* (pp. 17–43). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

The Reference List

Here are instructions for formatting a reference to an entire book (7.02):

- Type the title of the book in sentence case. Capitalize the first word following a colon or end punctuation in the title.
- If you cited an electronic book, give information about the format in square brackets after the title.
- For electronic books, give the DOI or URL in place of publisher location and name.

The third example shows how to format the name of a corporate author that is the same as the publisher name.

Print Book: Shotton, M. A. (1989). *Computer addiction? A study of computer dependency.* London, England: Taylor & Francis.

Electronic Book (With DOI): Schiraldi, G. R. (2001). *The post-traumatic stress disorder sourcebook: A guide to healing, recovery, and growth* [Adobe Digital Editions version]. doi:10.1036/10071393722

Corporate Author: American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

The Reference List

Here are instructions for formatting a reference to a conference proceeding (7.04):

- To cite proceedings that are published regularly, use the same format as for a periodical.
- To cite proceedings that are published in book form, use the same format as for a chapter in an edited book.

Published Regularly: Herculano-Houzel, S., Collins, C. E., Wong, P., Kaas, J. H., & Lent, R. (2008). The basic nonuniformity of the cerebral cortex. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 105*, 12593-12598. doi:10.1073/pnas.0805417105

Published in Book Form: Katz, I., Gabayan, K., & Aghajan, H. (2007). A multi-touch surface using multiple cameras. In J. Blanc-Talon, W. Philips, D. Popescu, & P. Scheunders (Eds.), Lecture Notes in Computer Science: Vol. 4678. *Advanced Concepts for Intelligent Vision Systems* (pp. 97-108). Berlin, Germany: Springer-Verlag. doi:10.1007/978-3-540-74607-2_9