

The words *Running head* only appear on the title page. Use no more than the first 50 characters of the title. The title is in ALL CAPS. This first page header is different from the body page headers.

Use the Insert > Header feature in MS Word to insert the page number and add the running head.

Pages are automatically numbered consecutively starting with the title page.

Center the title and position on the upper half of the page. Use black, 12-point Times New Roman font and double-space throughout. Arial is also acceptable.

Your Full Essay Title

Your Full Name

Course/Number

Date (month, day, and year)

Instructor's Name

Abstract

What is an abstract? An abstract provides “a brief, comprehensive summary of the contents of the article; it allows readers to survey the contents of an article quickly and, like a title, it enables persons interested in the document to retrieve it from abstracting and indexing databases” (APA, 2012, p. 25). The length of a typical abstract ranges from 150 to 250 words. Note that the abstract is formatted as one paragraph double-spaced and that the first line of the abstract is not indented. The word “Abstract” is centered but not bolded. The writing should be clear and cover the important points in the paper or the article you are writing. The abstract is on a separate page preceding the body of your paper. While an abstract is very helpful to the reader because it provides an overview of the main points, check with your instructor to see if it is required for your paper.

Your Full Essay Title

Begin the text of the paper by repeating the title from your title page. The title is centered but not bolded.

Indent the first line of each paragraph five spaces or one-half inch using the tab key, not the spacebar.

→ The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) began as a brief journal article in 1929 and is now in its sixth edition. That 1929 article reported results from a meeting of scholars “to establish a simple set of procedures, or *style rules*, that would codify the many components of scientific writing to increase the ease of reading comprehension” (APA, 2012, p. xiii). Today, APA style continues to provide a standardized system for writing papers that clarifies many questions about spacing, margins, overall formatting, and how to cite sources to help the writer. “APA style greases the wheels of written communication in the educational and publishing worlds” (Eldridge, 2006, para. 4). While many students may feel that the APA style of writing a paper is challenging at first, they often find that referring to the APA *Publication Manual* or to the APA Style website provides examples and easy-to-follow instructions. Having a good sample of an APA-formatted paper to follow, such as this one, provides a helpful visual guide.

General Format Information

Level One Heading – Centered and bolded in upper- and lower-case letters.

This section will explain some of the most frequently asked questions regarding formatting a student paper. The information is from the sixth edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

Margins

Level Two Heading – Placed at the left margin and bolded in upper- and lower-case letters.

Margins are one inch on all sides of the paper—top, bottom, right, and left.

Font

The preferred font for APA style is black, 12-point Times New Roman (APA, 2012). However, Arial font is acceptable. Your instructor may have a preference, so be sure to check. Setting the default font in your word processing program is a convenient way to always use the proper font.

Page Headers

Here are the steps to create the headers on the title page and the body pages in Microsoft Word 2010. Remember that the phrase “Running head” appears on only the first page, as illustrated in this paper.

1. On the *View* tab, select the *Print Layout* document view.
2. Double click the header area of the document.
3. Select *Insert*, then *Header*. Select *Blank* as the header style.
4. On the *Header & Footer Tools Design* tab, in the *Options* group, select the check box for *Different First Page*.
5. In the *First Page Header* box at the top of page 1, type: Running head: YOUR BRIEF ESSAY TITLE.
6. Tab over 1-inch from the right margin and insert the page number 1 by choosing *Current position, Plain number*.
7. Go to page 2 of your document and click in the Header area. Delete *Running head*:
8. On page 1, *Running head* will remain in your first page header, and only your abbreviated title will appear on subsequent pages.

In-Text Citations

Level Three Heading – Indented and bolded. Capitalize only the first word and include a period at the end. Continue the text on the same line.

→ **Direct quotations.** When quoting from a source, the words must be copied exactly word for word. If there are spelling or punctuation mistakes or other errors in the original text, they must be copied as written. However, to alert the reader that errors are part of the original material, the word [*sic*] is enclosed in brackets and italicized after the erroneous material. The source of the quotation must be cited. The following is an example of how you may use a direct quotation from a website with an author: “Not all revised papers are good, but non-revised

papers are always bad” (Shpancer, 2011, para. 5). The author’s last name, the year of publication, and the paragraph number, (if provided, or count the paragraphs down from the beginning of the webpage) when no page number is available, are included in the citation.

If the Internet source does not have page numbers, use abbreviation *para.* for the paragraph number.

Level Four Heading – In italics, indented and bolded. Capitalize only the first word and include a period at the end. Continue the text on the same line.

No author. If there is no author, the title of the article moves to the author position. The following example illustrates an in-text citation for a quote from a webpage with no author.

“APA citation is relevant because the work of another author backs up or supports your paper” (“Understanding the APA Citation Format,” n.d., para. 14). Because there is no date for this webpage, use the abbreviation n.d. for no date.

The following is an example of how to use a direct quotation from a book with one author: Schunk (2012) stated, “Learning involves acquiring and modifying knowledge, skills, strategies, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors” (p. 2). If the author’s name is stated prior to the quotation, include the date of publication (in parentheses) after the author’s name, and follow the quotation with the page or paragraph number. For a work with two authors, use both authors’ last names for every citation. If the source has three or more authors but fewer than six authors, list all authors in the first citation, and use the first author’s last name and the words *et al.* (without italics) for the rest of the citations. If the source has more than six authors, you may use the first author’s last name and the words *et al.* (without italics) for every citation (APA, 2012, p. 175).

End-of-sentence punctuation goes after the citation.

As we have seen in the examples above, quotations that contain fewer than 40 words are enclosed in double quotation marks (“) within the text. Use single quotation marks (‘) for quotations contained within a direct quotation. Quotations of 40 words or more are indented in a block format without quotation marks. Use double quotation marks to indicate a quotation

within the block quotation. The block quotation is started on a new line, and it is indented five spaces or one-half inch from the left margin. A sample block quotation appears on page 10.

Level Five
Heading –
In italics
and
Indented.
Capitalize
only the
first word
and
include a
period at
the end.
Continue
the text on
the same
line

Images must be cited. If photographs, graphics, tables, or illustrations are included in the paper, the source must be cited and included in the references. The image shown here was located in DeVry University's image collection database.



Paraphrased material. Paraphrasing is often used when writing papers. When you paraphrase from a source, you are presenting someone else's ideas or

Use
ampersand
(&) within a
citation.
Spell out *and*
when the
authors'
names are
mentioned in
your paper.

intellectual property. It is essential to give proper credit to the original author or authors (Lawton, Cousineau, & Hillard, 2001). When an author is paraphrased, the source must be cited in the text. If a source is mentioned more than once in a paragraph, a citation must be included each time. Page or paragraph numbers are not required for paraphrased material, but the *Publication Manual* recommends that writers include a page or paragraph number to help the reader easily locate the information (APA, 2012, p. 171).

If a writer who is paraphrasing information from an article located in an online database uses the information as a sentence within the text of the paper, the writer would format the citation as follows: Gysber (2013) defines student career readiness as a student being ready to take immediate action for their human career path.

Here is an example where the author is not mentioned within the sentence: Actions and steps towards the career process take into consideration the total person and their life roles,

settings, and events (Gysber, 2013). Note in both of the above examples, the author's last name and the date of publication are included.

Reference Page

Only references that have been cited in the paper are listed on the reference page. Each of the references on the reference page should be double-spaced using hanging indent style. In hanging indent style, the first line of the reference is at the left margin, and the lines that follow are indented five spaces or one-half inch to the first tab stop. Use the automated hanging indent feature of your word processor to streamline the formatting of the references.

The reference page is alphabetized by author or by title of the work when no author is listed, and each entry contains the date of publication in parentheses directly after the author's name. The title, the place of publication, and the name of the publisher follow the date of publication for a book entry. With so much use of electronic materials in academic papers, the APA has created formats designed specifically for Internet and web-based reference sources. For additional information about formatting electronic references, visit the APA website at www.apastyle.org. You will also find free tutorials and responses to frequently asked questions about using APA style on that site. Examples of formatting in-text citations from social media sites are provided in this paper on page 9.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism constitutes a serious academic concern. It is a form of cheating and unethical (Hansen, Stith, & Tesdell, 2011). Furthermore, according to Lawton, Cousineau, and Hillard (2001), "Academic communities demand that writers credit others for their work and that the source of their material clearly be acknowledged" (para. 6). Internet access has resulted in an increase in plagiarism (Hansen et al., 2011).

McCabe noted (as cited in Sterngold, 2004), 41 percent of students said they engaged in *cut-and-paste* plagiarism from online sources. The sentences and phrases used in one's paper must be original or cited and referenced accordingly. Although it may be easier for a writer to use someone else's words, doing so discredits the writer.

Use secondary sources sparingly (Sterngold), for instance, when the original work (McCabe) is out of print. Give the secondary source in the reference list. In the paper, name the original work and cite the secondary source.

There are two schools of thought on how to convince students not to plagiarize sources in their assignments. One approach is to encourage students to become confident learners and the other style is through surveillance and fear (C. B. Smith, 2003; K. Smith, 2012).

Two sources within a citation are separated with a semicolon. Arrange alphabetically in the same order in which they appear in the References. If last names are the same, include first initials.

Smith (2012) believes that as students become more engaged in their learning, they are better positioned to become facilitators of their own knowledge and are prepared to speak from their own voice and less dependent on parroting the words of other writers. His theory of education is that learning is a progressive experience that takes practice and patience. In this environment, the student and instructor are assigned a learning space where confidence and self-governance is encouraged. By being educated on the issue, you are less compelled to take from another because you're comfortable articulating the information in your own words. Be the explainer, not the repeater (Smith, 2012).

Smith (2003) views plagiarism as an immediate war-like threat that needs to be defeated by academia. In this approach, instructors must have pre-emptive strategies along with proper anti-plagiarism software that correspond with warnings to students that these tools are always on alert. In this instance, the learning space between the student and instructor is partitioned by filters and technology.

Educators and librarians should emphasize that they are very aware of the Internet term paper mills that sell prepackaged or customized term papers This point should be stressed at every opportunity, when handing out syllabi, explaining instructions for assignments, and conducting library research sessions (Smith, 2003). A recent tweet also notes that technology integration has caused an increased risk of plagiarizing (Turnitin, 2014a). Plagiarism from the Internet is not confined to student papers as tweeted by Turnitin, (2014b), who recommends that PowerPoint presentations also need to be checked for plagiarism.

Please note that even social media and information provided in your course should be cited and included in your references.

As a way to remind students that citing sources is important, DeVry University Professor Larry Johansen (2014) discusses the plight of a former president of Hungary who lost his job because he plagiarized when he was in college.

In addition, instructors must make clear to their students that self-plagiarism, or presenting one's own previously written work as if it were new, is also plagiarism. Students should "always provide attribution whether the work is another's or their own" (Cruetz, 2010, para. 11). If a student re-cycles some areas of a paper into another paper he or she wrote without self-attribution, this would be self-plagiarism (Jones, 2010a). It is important that a student informs others that the writing was borrowed from an earlier work he or she wrote. Jones (2010b) states that by citing oneself, it also allows readers to know what other works the author wrote that might be of interest to them.

Writing Mechanics

Not only formatting, but also correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure are essential components of academic writing. Strunk (1918/1999) was particularly

keen on emphasizing the importance of a clear, succinct writing style that omits needless words.

He said:

Block quotations (for 40 or more words) are indented five spaces from the left margin and do not contain quotation marks.

Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all his sentences short, or that he avoid all detail and treat his subjects only in outline, but that every word tell. (para. 13)

The in-text citation for block quotations occurs outside of the punctuation that ends the sentence.

Just a few mistakes in spelling or word usage may cause the reader to lose confidence in what the writer is trying to say (Thurman & Shea, 2003).

Conclusion

The last section of your paper is the conclusion section where the highlights and key points of your paper are summarized. A good understanding of APA style and proper usage will help to create papers that are formatted correctly and that accurately reference the sources of information. Be sure to proofread your paper for accuracy! With a quality presentation of your content, you are on your way to creating a successful assignment.

References

When the author and publisher are the same, use the word Author as the name of the publisher.

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All months should be spelled out and not abbreviated.

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DOI = digital object identifier, a unique series of numbers, that identifies a specific electronic article, making it easier for the reader to find.

If an article does not have a DOI, use a retrieval statement instead, like the one in the Smith, C.B. citation.

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