

APA 7th Edition: A Brief Introduction to Paper Format & Citation Rules

I. Formatting Your Document

The 7th edition of APA (published October 2019) describes two different formats for papers, the Professional Paper, and the Student Paper. This document will describe the Student Paper requirements; authors writing for journals or other formal media (e.g. theses) should consult with advisors or editors on the appropriate format. Both are well illustrated by Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL), at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_sample_paper.html

A. Title page, APA §2.3

A student paper title page should start with the page number **1** in the top right hand corner (use the insert > page numbers function of your word processor to create this “header”). The title and other text on the page should be double spaced (as should the rest of the paper, use the “Line and Paragraph Spacing” function of your word processor). Hit Enter two or three times after the page number header and add your **paper title**, which should be centered on the page, use capital and lower case letters (title case), and the text should be bold (this is the format for a Level 1 heading, see I.D. below). Hit Enter twice after the paper title, and add the following, also centered with upper and lower case letters, but not bold, each on a new line: student author's name(s); academic department and university name; class abbreviation and name; professor's name(s) preceded with “Dr.” if appropriate, or “Professor” if not; date completed. Separately, put the title of your paper, centered and bold, at the top of the page on which your text actually begins, in place of the heading **Introduction**, which APA disdains.

B. Font, APA §2.19

APA no longer requires Times New Roman 12-point font. Acceptable font options are sans serif fonts such as 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, or 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode, preferred for

online text, or serif fonts such as 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or 10-point Computer Modern, for printed text. With a few exceptions, you are required to use the same font throughout your document.

C. Your paper should have a page number in the top right corner of every page, beginning with “1” on the Title Page. There is no longer a text running header on student papers.

Setting the paper's page numbers:

- a. Open a new Word document or Google Doc
- b. Choose Insert > Page Number and choose the top righthand corner option. Check that the page number’s font matches that of your paper.

D. Headings, APA §2.27

Papers are organized in sections, and sections are labeled at their beginning with a heading.

Headings outline the structure and organization of your paper to your reader.

Common headings found in papers include: Literature Review, Methodology, Results, and Discussion. “Introduction” should not be a heading; begin your paper with the paper title styled as a Level 1 heading.

There are five levels of headings, and each heading level is formatted differently. Levels are also nested; a Level 2 section occurs only within a Level 1 section, for example. Never jump over a heading level, such as by following a Level 1 section with a Level 3 section--use a Level 2 section instead. You can see examples of nested headings in the [Purdue OWL sample papers](#).

Here are the heading levels and how they are formatted:

Heading Level Format

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Centered, Bold, Uppercase and Lowercase Letters |
| 2 | Flush Left, Bold, Uppercase and Lowercase Letters |
| 3 | <i>Flush Left, Bold, Italic, Uppercase and Lowercase Letters</i> |
| 4 | Indented, Bold, Uppercase and Lowercase Letters, Ends with a Period. |
| 5 | <i>Indented, Bold, Italic, Uppercase and Lowercase Letters, Ends with a Period.</i> |

With Heading Levels 1-3, your paper text should begin on the next line below the heading. For Levels 4 and 5, your paper text should begin on the same line as the heading, after the period.

Examples of headings--let's say your paper has four main sections: Introduction, Methodology, Results, and Discussion. The name of each section is formatted following the Level 1 heading

style. Within a section, your paper may have subsections. For example, the Discussion section may have one subsection named Limitations and another called Future Research—those would be formatted as Level 2 headings because they are nested within the Level 1 heading Discussion.

II. Attribution: Citations & References

A. When to cite

1. Cite other's ideas and influences
2. Cite facts and figures that are *not* common knowledge
3. Citing a source implies you have read it
4. Ensure your quotations are accurate
 - a. Direct quotations of:
 - under 40 words: quote in the paragraph using quotation marks;
 - 40 words or more: use a block quotation (Increase Indent in Word); do not use quotation marks
 - b. For direct quotations of online material without page numbers:
 - use paragraph numbers (para.) if they are present or can be easily counted, or
 - use a heading or section name in quotation marks
 - c. When quoting, some changes require no explanation:
 - changing the case of the first letter, or changing the final mark of punctuation;
 - spaced ellipsis show where material was omitted
 - d. When quoting, some changes require an explanation:
 - inserting material: “. . . to what extent [children’s] play is a luxury.”
 - adding emphasis: “with Liberty for *all* [emphasis added].”

B. In-text Citations: Parenthetical and Narrative

1. In general, in-text citations should provide enough information in the in-text citation for the reader to locate the corresponding entry in the References list without difficulty
 - a. Keep authors' names in the order listed in the source; do not alphabetize or otherwise change the order of authors' names within an in-text citation
 - b. When a work has two authors, cite both names every time, using an ampersand (&) in parentheticals, and “and” in narrative citations

- c. When a work has 3 or more authors, include the first author's last name followed by et al. every time: (Foster et al., 2019).
- d. If all the information within a single paragraph draws from the same source, cite the source in the first and last sentences of the paragraph, but leave out all other in-text citations except if there is a direct quote, which will then require an in-text citation with a page number.
- e. When a work has no author, cite the first few words of the reference entry, if it is a title, or the corporate (organization) author, plus the year. Use double quotation marks around the titles of articles, book chapters, and Web pages. Italicize the title of a periodical, book, or report.
- f. To cite a specific part of a source, as with a direct quotation, indicate the page, chapter, figure, table, equation, or time stamp after the year. Where there are no page numbers, you may use a section heading; where the full section name is brief, insert it followed by the word "section" but where the section heading is long, abbreviate it and enclose the abbreviated text in quotation marks (examples from APA §8.28):
(Gecht-Silver & Duncombe, 2015, Osteoarthritis section).
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017, "What Can You Do" section).
(Chamberlin, 2014, para. 1).
(Cuddy, 2012, 2:12)
Abbreviate page ("p." or "pp." only where the quoted material extends to a second page), and paragraph ("para.") but do not abbreviate "chapter" or "section." For audiovisual sources, provide a time stamp when the quoted material begins.
- g. Use secondary sources¹ sparingly. Give the secondary source (the one you have) in the References list; in text, name the original work and give a citation for the secondary source:
. . . Jung's diary (as cited in Elliot, 2004). [Cite Elliot in your References.]
- h. Personal Communications. Personal communications may be private letters, memos, some electronic communications (e.g., e-mail or messages from nonarchived discussion groups or electronic bulletin boards), personal interviews, telephone conversations, and the like. Because they do not provide recoverable data, personal communications are not included in the reference list. Cite personal communications only in the main body of the paper. Give

¹ In this case, secondary source refers to one you have not read, but nevertheless need to cite through its use in another source that you do cite

the initials as well as the surname of the communicator and provide as exact a date as possible:

T. K. Lutes (personal communication, April 18, 2001).

(V.-G. Nguyen, personal communication, September 28, 1998).

- i. When a work has no identified author, cite in text the first few words of the reference list entry (usually the title) and the year. Use double quotation marks around the title of an article, a chapter, or a Web page and italicize the title of a periodical, a book, a brochure, or a report:

. . . on free care ("Study Finds," 2017).

. . . in the book *College Bound Seniors* (2018).

2. Parenthetical (within parentheses) citations

- a. Commonly consists of an author's last name, comma, year: (Freud, 1905).

- b. Alphabetize multiple citations within the same parentheses: (Clinton, 1947; Sanders, 1941; Trump, 1946). Where you cite multiple publications by the same author, list the years in chronological order: (Carraway et al., 2013, 2014, 2019).

- c. Where a parenthetical citation comes at the end of a sentence or paragraph, the sentence ending period should always follow the in-text citation's close parenthesis. There is one exception, which is where you have a block quotation (a quotation of 40 words or more). In that case the parenthetical citation should follow the closing punctuation and not be followed by a period (example from APA §8.27):

. . . shape expectations via qualitatively distinct processes. (Niese et al., 2019, p. 210)

- d. Parenthetical citation examples:

Also, cluster solutions that added less than 5% to the explained variation were eliminated from consideration (Onwuegbuzie, 2003).

Specifically, aggressive children are more likely than their nonaggressive peers to externalize blame in provocative social interactions (Dodge & Coie, 1987).

This methodological flaw may have culminated in the difficulties that investigators have experienced in predicting violent acts (Capaldi & Patterson, 1993; Cornell, 1987; Schlesinger, 1983).

Corporal punishment is defined as “the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain but not injury for the purposes of correction or control of the child's behavior” (Straus, 1994, p. 4).

3. Narrative citations

a. Use the author’s last name, or authors’ last names if there are 2 authors, connected with the word “and” (not &). If there are 3 or more authors, use the first author’s last name followed by “et al.”

b. Treat corporate/organization authors, and sources with no named author (where you use the source title as the first identifier in the reference) exactly as you would with parenthetical citations.

c. Where source material is copied directly, include the page number, or other location information, as a parenthetical at the end of the quoted material (example from APA §8.23): Webster-Stratton (2016) described a case example of a 4-year-old girl who showed an “insecure attachment” to her mother (p. 152).

d. Narrative citation examples:

More specifically, Cornell (1987) found that the best single predictor of violence is past violent behavior.

Dannells (1997) suggests several theories, including *in loco parentis*, contract, educational purpose, statutory, constitutional, fiduciary, and status, but “no general grant of legal jurisdiction” for colleges to discipline for criminal conduct exists (pp. 31-32).

Velez et al. (2018) found that for women of color, sexism and racism in the workplace were associated with poor work and mental health outcomes.

De Backer and Fisher (2021) noted that ...

In the pamphlet *Interpersonal Skills* (2019), job seekers are advised to ...*

* The S in *Skills* is capitalized here in the text, but not in the references, where book titles use sentence case

C. References Page

1. The References page is double-spaced. Center and bold the word *References* at the top of the page, as with a Level 1 heading.

2. For numerals, use Arabic numbers except when the number is a Roman number in a title.

3. Alphabetize by the author's last name. Alphabetize letter by letter. "Nothing precedes something," for example, Brown precedes Browning. With abbreviations, alphabetize as though the abbreviation is spelled out, so St. James precedes Smith.

4. References by the same author and same year are arranged alphabetically by title.

5. For references with the same author and year, add letters (a, b, etc.) to the years: e.g., 2012a, 2012b, in both the reference and the in-text citation.

6. If there is no author (individual or organization), move the title to the author position, and alphabetize by the first significant word:

December 2012. (2013). *Current History*, 112(751), 79–80.

<https://doi.org/10.1525/curh.2013.112.751.79>

7. Alphabetize organizational, or corporate, authors by the first significant word of the name. Use full official names. Where there are multiple layers of organization names, use the most specific organization name as the author, and list the others, from largest to smallest, as publishers after the document title:

National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. (2021, February 10). *Your guide to masks*. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Viral Diseases. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

8. With 21 or more authors, list the first 19 followed by a spaced ellipsis, and the last author's name (no &).

9. When citing an edited book, also called an anthology, place the editors' names in the author position and add (Eds.):

Wilson, D. S., Geher, G., Gallup, A. C., & Mativetsky, H. (2019). Teaching evolution across the curriculum: Beyond campus-wide programs. In D. S. Wilson, G. Geher, H. Mativetsky, & A. C. Gallup (Eds.), *Darwin's roadmap to the curriculum: Evolutionary studies in higher education* (pp. 424-460). Oxford University Press.

10. In reference to a chapter in an edited book, do not invert the editors' names.

11. For magazines and newspapers, give the exact date of publication (2021, February 10), but use only the year in the in-text citation.

12. Use n.d. if there is no date of publication. There is no space between the "." and the "d."

13. Enclose additional information—e.g., report or document number—in parentheses.

14. Italicize the journal name and volume number when citing a journal article.

15. Include the issue number in parentheses if the journal is paginated separately by issue.

16. Place of publication is no longer required for books, just the name of the publisher (APA §9.29), which should be in as brief a form as is intelligible. Omit superfluous terms, e.g., Publishers, Co., Inc. Retain the words "Books" and "Press," as in Duke University Press.

17. When the author is the publisher, use that entity as the author and omit the publisher from the reference to avoid repetition.

18. If a document, particularly a journal article, has a Digital Object Identifier (DOI), include that unique alphanumeric string as an active link. All URLs can now be active links in your References, both DOIs and web addresses:

Sevincer, A. T., & Oettingen, G. (2009). Alcohol breeds empty goal commitments.

Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 118, 623-633. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016199>

19. Reference format examples

a. Authors

In your References, list all authors by their last names, followed by their initials. For example:

Skinner, B. F.

Tolkein, J. R. R.

List any suffixes—like Jr. or III—after the author's middle initial; separate the middle initial and the suffix with a comma and a space. For example:

Gates, H. L., Jr.

Howell, T., III

If an author has two first names connected by a hyphen abbreviate both first names and include the hyphen. For example, cite Cheong-Yi Park as Park, C.-Y.

If an author has a hyphenated last name, keep the names and the hyphen in the original order. For example, cite Frances Munet-Vilaró as Munet-Vilaró, F.

List up to the first nineteen authors. If your work has more than twenty-one authors, include the first nineteen authors' names, insert three spaced ellipsis points, and add the last author's name:

Polly, M. B. (1 author)

Polly, M. B., & Santi-Foe, B. (2 authors)

Polly, M. B., Santi-Foe, B., & Berlin, L. H.

Bavel, J., Baicker, K., Boggio, P., Capraro, V., Cichocka, A., Cikara, M., Crockett, M., Crum, A., Douglas, K., Druckman, J., Drury, J., Dube, O., Ellemers, N., Finkel, E., Fowler, J., Gelfand, M., Han, S., Haslam, S., Jetten, J., ... Willer, R. (2020). Using social and behavioural science to support COVID-19 pandemic response. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 4(5), 460–471. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-020-0884-z>

List the works in alphabetic order by the author's last name.

If you have two or more works by the same author(s), list the works in chronological order, with the earliest work first. For example:

King, S. (1980). *Firestarter*. New York, NY: Viking Press.

King, S. (1981). *Cujo*. New York, NY: Viking Press.

One-author entries come before multiple-author entries:

Polikowski, M. B. (2004).

Polikowski, M. B., & Santos-Eggimann, B. (2004).

If necessary, alphabetize by the second author:

Polikowski, M. B. (2004).

Polikowski, M. B., Santos-Eggimann, B., & Berliner, L. H. (2004).

Polikowski, M. B., & Tolan, P. (2004).

Complete names come before names with similar beginnings:

Brown, J. R. comes before Browning, A. R.

b. Dates

If your work does not have a date then list “n.d.”—without the quotes—where the date would go; for example: Zahid, I. (n.d.). *Ramadan: Rules & regulations*.

- When you cite this work in your paper include n.d.; for example: (Zahid, n.d.).

Include the month and day of publication if you are citing a work that begins each issue with page 1. (See ISSUE NUMBERS below for more information.) Do not abbreviate the month, and put the month after the year, for example:

Black, M. E., & Healing, T. D. (1993, September 21).

- When you cite this work in your paper list only the year, for example: (Black & Healing, 1993).

If you have two or more works with the same author(s) and dates, alphabetize the entries by title and use *a*, *b*, etc. in the dates; for example:

King, S. (1983a). *Christine*. Viking Press.

King, S. (1983b). *Pet sematary*. Doubleday.

- When you cite the work in your paper use the date in the same format: (King, 1983b).

Web sites sometimes do not list dates. If your web site does not list a date of publication, update, or copyright, use n.d.; for example: Foster, R. (n.d.).

c. Titles

- i. Articles: Capitalize the first word in the title, the first word of the subtitle—if any—and all proper nouns. A proper noun is the name of something, like a person, a place, or a thing. Do not put the article title in quotes. In some cases quoted text is part a title, in which case you should present the title exactly as it appears in the article.

Examples:

Campbell, A. L. (2003). Participatory reactions to policy threats: Senior citizens and the defense of Social Security and Medicare.

Kedar, N. P. (2003). Can we prevent Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease?

Wright, R. C., & Nemhauser, J. (2019). Plant synthetic biology: Quantifying the “known unknowns” and discovering the “unknown unknowns.” *Plant Physiology*, 179(3), 885–893. <https://doi.org/10.1104/pp.18.01222>

- ii. Books: Capitalize the first word in the title, the first word of the subtitle—if any—and all proper nouns. Put the title in italics.

Examples: *The evolution of mental health law: An introduction*

Memory systems

Quotable New York: A literary companion

- iii. Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers: Capitalize all the major words in journal, magazine, and newspaper titles and put the titles in italics.

Examples: *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*

Psychology Today

The New York Times

- d. Volume numbers - put the volume number in italics

- e. Issue numbers

Include the issue number if you are citing a work that begins each issue with page 1. Such works include magazines, newspapers, and some journals. Include the issue number in parentheses, not in italics, with no space between the volume number and the parentheses.

If a journal continues its second issue where the page numbers of its first issue end then do not include an issue number in your citation. For example, issue 1 of volume 16 of the *Journal of Personality Disorders* ends with page 106; issue 2 starts with page 107. When citing the *Journal of Personality Disorders* do not include any issue number.

- f. Place of publication - place of publication is no longer required for books.

g. Publisher

“Give the name of the publisher in as brief a form as is intelligible. Write out the names of associations, corporations, and university presses, but omit . . . terms, such as *Publishers, Co., or Inc.*, which are not required to identify the publisher. Retain the words *Books* and *Press.*”

Examples: Wiley *for* Wiley and Sons

Springer *for* Springer Publishing Company

Oxford University Press *for* Oxford University Press

Bantam Books *for* Bantam Books

h. URLs

When citing a Web site do not put a period after the URL. If you need to separate a long URL onto two lines break it after a slash or before a period. Do not add any hyphens to a URL that are not already in the URL. For example:

GVU's WWW user survey. (n.d.). http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/user_surveys/survey-1997-10/

URLs can now be active links, both underlined and in blue text, if your word processor or other program creates that style text for links by default.

i. Page numbers

Cite all of an article or chapter's page numbers in your references; in your in-text citations cite a page number only if you directly quote text, or reproduce graphics or media. Do not use p. or pp. in your references. To cite a news article with non-sequential page use a comma between the page numbers: A1, B15. Your citation should list all the pages on which the article appears.