American Psychological Association (APA) Format

From Purdue University Online Writing Lab
Revised by Germanna Community College’s Academic Center for Excellence

General Format

Your essay should be typed, double-spaced on standard-sized paper (8.5 X 11 inches) with margins of 1 inch on all sides. Your final essay should include, in the order indicated below, as many of the following sections as are applicable, each of which should begin on a separate page:

- Title Page, which includes a running head for publication, title, and byline and affiliation
- Abstract
- Text
- References
- Appendixes
- Author Note
- Footnotes/Endnotes
- Tables
- Figure Captions
- Figures

The pages of your manuscript should be numbered consecutively, beginning with the title page, as part of the manuscript header in the upper right corner of each page. Your references should begin on a separate page from the text of the essay under the label References (with no quotation marks, underlining, etc.), centered at the top of the page. Appendices and notes should be formatted similarly. Above is a sample title page in APA format. The header for the title page will include the definition marker “Running head:” and the running head aligned on the left and the page number aligned on the right. APA format centers the title, the writer’s name, and the institution name in the middle of the page. Always remember to consult your instructor if you are writing a paper for a class; the professor may have different guidelines for how a title page should appear. Also, be aware
In a recent study of student performance (Jones, 1998), Jones compared student performances that the header for all pages after the title page will not include the “Running head:” definition marker.

Handling Quotations in Your Text

If you are referring to an idea from another work but NOT directly quoting the material, or making reference to an entire book, article, or other work, 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). If you are directly quoting from a work, you will need to include the author, year of publication, and the page number for the reference. Here are some examples for referring to another idea or study:

Jones (1998) compared student performance…

In a recent study of student performance (Jones, 1998), …

In 1998, Jones compared student performances …

If there is no author to cite, such as when you are citing a webpage that lists no author, use an abbreviated version of the title of the page in quotation marks to substitute for the name of the author.

Webber did a similar study of students learning to format research papers (“Using APA,” 2001).

If you are citing a work that has no author and no date, use the first few words from the title, then the abbreviation n.d. (for “no date”).

In another study of students and research decisions, it was discovered that students succeeded with tutoring (“Tutoring and APA,” n.d.).

Personal communications, such as e-mail messages to you, or private interviews that you conducted with another person, should be referred to in your in-text citations but NOT in your reference list. To cite a personal communication, provide initials and last name of the communicator, the words personal communication, plus an exact date in the body of your paper. For example:
A. P. Smith also claimed that many of her students had difficulties with APA style (personal communication, November 3, 2002).

**Short Quotations**

To indicate quotations of fewer than 40 words in your text, enclose the quotation within double quotation marks. Provide the author, year, and specific page citation in the text, and include a complete reference in the reference list. Punctuation marks, such as periods, commas, and semicolons, should appear after the parenthetical citation. Question marks and exclamation points should appear within the quotation marks if they are a part of the quotation but after the parenthetical citation if they are a part of your text. For example:

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

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?

**Long Quotations (Block Quotes)**

Place quotations longer than 40 words in a free-standing block of typewritten lines, and omit quotation marks. Start the quotation on a new line indented five spaces from the left margin. Type the entire quotation on the new margin, and indent the first line of any subsequent paragraph within the quotation five spaces from the new margin. Maintain double-spacing throughout. The parenthetical citation should come after the closing punctuation mark. For example:

Jones’s 1993 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)
Choosing Double or Single Quotation Marks

If you are using a quotation that uses quotation marks as a short quotation, use **single quotation marks** to set off the material that was originally enclosed in quotation marks. If you are using a quotation that uses quotation marks in a block quote, use **double quotation marks** to set off the material that was originally in quotation marks.

Your Reference List

Your reference list should appear at the **end** of your paper. It provides the information necessary for a reader to locate and retrieve any source you cite in the body of the paper. Each source you cite in the paper must appear in your reference list; likewise, each entry in the reference list must be cited in your text. Your references should begin on a separate page from the text of the essay under the label References (with no quotation marks, underlining, etc.), and the label References should be centered at the top of the page. The Reference page should be double-spaced just like the rest of your essay.

Basic Rules

- Authors’ names are **inverted** (last name, first initial); give the last name and initials for all authors of a particular work. Your reference list should be alphabetized by the authors’ last names.
- Personal communications, such as e-mail messages to you, or private interviews that you conducted with another person, should **not** be cited in your reference list because they are not retrievable sources for anyone else. You should make references to these sources in your **in-text citations**.
- If you have more than one work by a particular author, order them by publication date, oldest to newest (thus a 1991 article would appear before a 1996 article).
- When an author appears both as a sole author and, in another citation, as the first author of a group, list the one-author entries first. If no author is given for a particular source, alphabetize using the **title of the work**, which will be listed in place of the author, and use a **shortened version of the title** for parenthetical citations.
- Use “&” instead of “and” when listing multiple authors of a single work (in text citations in parentheses, too).
- All lines after the first line of each entry in your reference list should be indented **one-half inch** from the left margin. This is called a **hanging indentation**.
- Capitalize only the first letter of the **first** word of a title and subtitle of a work.
- **Italicize** titles of books and journals.
- Note that the italics in these entries often continue beneath commas and periods.
- Provide a **Digital Object Identifier** (DOI) for electronic and print sources if available.
Basic Forms for Sources in Print

An Article in a Periodical (e.g., a journal, newspaper, or magazine)


**NOTE:** You only need to list the volume number if the periodical uses continuous pagination throughout a particular volume. If each issue begins with page 1, then you should list the issue number as well: *Title of Periodical, Volume number (Issue number), pages.* Note that the issue number is **not** italicized.

A Nonperiodical (e.g., book, report, brochure, or audiovisual media)

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

**NOTE:** For “Location,” you should always list the city, but you should also include the state abbreviation if the location is in the United States.

Part of a Nonperiodical (e.g., a book chapter or an article in a collection)


**NOTE:** When you list the pages of the chapter or essay in parentheses after the book title, use “pp.” before the numbers: (pp. 1-21). This abbreviation, however, does not appear before the page numbers in periodical references.

Basic Forms for Electronic Sources

Article in an Internet Periodical

**Nonperiodical Internet Document (e.g., a webpage or report)**


**NOTE:** If there isn’t a date available for the document use (n.d.) for no date.

**Part of Nonperiodical Internet Document**


**Online Encyclopedia or Dictionary**


**E-Book**


**Chapter or Section of a Web Document or Online Book**


**NOTE:** Use a chapter or section identifier and provide a URL that links directly to the chapter section, not the home page of the Web site.

**Audio Podcast**

**Video Podcast**


**Basic Forms for Audiovisual Sources**

**A Motion Picture or Video Tape**

Producer, P. P. (Producer), & Director, D. D. (Director). (Date of publication). *Title of motion picture*. Country of origin: Studio or distributor.

**NOTE:** If a movie or video tape is not available in wide distribution, add the following to your citation after the country of origin: (Available from Distributor name, full address and zip code).

**A Television Broadcast or Television Series**

Producer, P. P. (Producer). (Date of broadcast or copyright). Title of broadcast [Television broadcast or Television series]. City of origin, State Abbreviation: Studio or distributor.

**A Single Episode of a Television Series**
Writer, W. W. (Writer), & Director, D. D. (Director). (Date of publication). Title of episode [Television series episode]. In P. Producer (Producer), Series Title. City of origin, State Abbreviation: Studio or distributor.

A Music Recording

Songwriter, W. W. (Date of copyright). Title of song [Recorded by artist if different from song writer]. On Title of album [Medium of recording]. Location, State Abbreviation (if in United States): Label. (Recording date if different from copyright date).

Examples of Common Sources

Journal Article, One Author


Journal Article, Two to Seven Authors


Journal Article, More Than Eight Authors
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Type</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

A Government Publication

**A Brochure**


**A Book or Article with no Author or Editor Named**


**NOTE:** For parenthetical citations of sources with no author named, use a shortened version of the title instead of an author’s name. Use quotation marks and italics as appropriate. For example, parenthetical citations of the two sources above would appear as follows: (*Merriam-Webster’s*, 1993) and (“New Drug,” 1993).

**A Translated Work and/or a Republished Work**


**NOTE:** When you cite this work in text, it should appear with both dates: Laplace (1814/1951).
A Review of a Book, Film, Television Program, etc.


An Entry in a Print Encyclopedia


A Print Journal or Newspaper Article Retrieved from an Online Database

When referencing material 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). Then add information that gives the date of retrieval if the source is a periodical, and use the URL of the journal’s homepage only if the DOI cannot be found. This will allow people to retrieve the print version if they do not have access to the database from which you retrieved the article.


An Online Journal Article from a Periodical with No DOI

Online Encyclopedia or Dictionary


NOTE: The abbreviation n. d. is used to indicate that there is no date given for this source.

E-Book


Chapter or Section of a Web Document or Online Book


Message Posted to an Online Newsgroup, Forum, or Discussion Group


NOTE: If only the screen name is available for the author, then use the screen name; however, if the author provides a real name, use their real name instead. Be sure to provide the exact date of the posting. Follow the date with the subject line, the thread of the message (not in italics). Provide any identifiers in brackets after the title, as in other types of references.

Audio Podcast


Video Podcast

**A Motion Picture or Video Tape with International or National Availability**


**A Motion Picture or Video Tape with Limited Availability**

Harris, M. (Producer), & Turley, M. J. (Director). (2002). *Writing Labs: A History* [Motion picture]. (Available from Purdue University Pictures, 500 Oval Drive, West Lafayette, IN 47907)

**A Television Broadcast**


**A Single Episode of a Television Series**


**A Music Recording**

### Additional Sources

From the American Psychological Association:

  (ISBN: 978-1-4338-0561-5)
- *Displaying Your Findings: A Practical Guide for Creating Figures, Posters, and Presentations*  
  (ISBN:978-1-4338-0707-7)

From other publishers:


**Online Resources:**

- [http://www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org) (purchase an APA style manual and learn more about citing electronic sources)
- [https://www.germanna.edu/academic-center-for-excellence/helpful-handouts/](https://www.germanna.edu/academic-center-for-excellence/helpful-handouts/) (see handout on APA Sample Paper)
- [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/) (help with general formatting, in-text citations, and referencing sources)
- [http://libguides.lib.usm.edu/citation_help/cite_your_sources](http://libguides.lib.usm.edu/citation_help/cite_your_sources) (referencing sources)

**A Final Reminder…**

Germanna Community College’s Academic Center for Excellence is here to help answer any questions you may have about APA style. To make an appointment, call (540) 891-3017 for an appointment at the Fredericksburg Area Campus, (540) 423-9148 to make an appointment at the Locust Grove Campus or call (540) 834-1993.