

APA 7 Isn't So Bad: Sample Paper

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Abstract

Your professor may or may not require an abstract, which is an executive summary of your paper's purpose, main points, and conclusion. The abstract is 250 words or fewer, is placed on a page of its own, and does not use a paragraph indent. It may be easier to write the abstract after you've written the rest of the paper or once you know exactly what will be included in the paper.

APA 7 Isn't So Bad: Sample Paper

The following paper acts as a sample for APA 7 formatting. You may look back and forth between your own draft and this sample to see whether you're following paper formatting expectations. If you read within the sections about in-text citations and the references page, you'll find details about how to format those references and citations. Some of the content has been borrowed or adapted from Purdue University's OWL (online writing lab).

In-Text Citations

When using APA format, follow the author-date method of in-text citation. This means that the author's last name and the year of publication for the source should appear in the text, separated by a comma (Armstrong, 2019). The source you're citing may not have a specific person as the author, but group authors are allowed, which can be corporations, government agencies, organizations, dictionaries, and more. When a work has multiple layers of group authorship (e.g. The Office of the Historian, which is a part of the Department of State), list the most specific agency as the author and the parent agency as the publisher (The Office of the Historian, 2022). In addition, not all sources have page numbers. Instead, you may reference another logical identifying element: a paragraph, a chapter number, a section number, or something else that makes sense for the source (Vallares, par. 4).

Quoting Sources

If you are directly quoting from a work, you will need to include the author, year of publication, and page number for the reference. The page number will be indicated with a "p." for a single page and "pp." for a span of multiple pages. You can introduce the quotation with a signal phrase that includes the author's last name followed by the date of publication in parentheses. According to Malory (2017), "students often had difficulty using APA style,

especially when it was their first time" (p. 199). If you do not include the author's name in the text of the sentence, place 1. the author's last name, 2. the year of publication, and 3. the page number in parentheses after the quotation: The study found that "African Greys can recognize individuals in their flock" (National Geographic, 2020, pp. 16-19), similar to the findings of studies about ravens.

Paraphrasing Sources

If you are paraphrasing an idea from an outside source, rather than directly quoting, you will still need to make reference to the author and year of publication in your in-text citation, though you may omit the page numbers. Just like with direct quotes, you may use a signal phrase or parenthetical in-text citations. According to Malory (2017), APA style is a difficult citation format for first-time learners. African Grey parrots have been found to identify each other (National Geographic, 2020), similar to other studies' findings about crows.

Citing Multiple Authors

When there are two authors, name both by their last names in the signal phrase or in parentheses. Use the word "and" between the authors' names within the text and use the ampersand (&) in the parentheses. Research by Richards and Hoffman (2019) supports this hypothesis. Recent research has supported this hypothesis (Richards & Hoffman, 2019). For three or more authors, list only the first author's name followed by "et al." (Pegion et al., 2019). Pegion et al. (2019) suggest that APA gets easier to use over time. If the work does not have an author, cite the source by its title in the signal phrase or use the first word or two in the parentheses. Online recipes often include an introductory story from the author ("Tuscan White Bean Pasta," 2018).

Using Headings for Organization

APA style uses headings to help organize body paragraphs as demonstrated in this sample paper. The headings indicate the topic of a section: think about them just as you would an outline with your main points, sub-points, sub-sub-points, etc. In that case, your main points would be Level 1 Headings, the sub-points under each main point would be Level 2 Headings, and so on. See Table 1 for a list of the headings and how to format them.

Table 1

APA's 7th Edition Heading Styles

Level	Format
1	Centered, Boldface, Title Case Heading Text starts a new paragraph.
2	Flush Left, Boldface, Title Case Heading Text starts a new paragraph.
3	<i>Flush Left, Boldface Italic, Title Case Heading</i> Text starts a new paragraph.
4	Indented, Boldface Title Case Heading Ending With a Period. Paragraph text continues on the same line as the same paragraph.
5	<i>Indented, Boldface Italic, Title Case Heading Ending With a Period.</i> Paragraph text continues on the same line as the same paragraph.

Note. An optional note can be added beneath tables and figures to describe abbreviations or add clarification.

References Pages

The references list will start on a new page. Each entry will use a “hanging indent,” a type of indentation that is the opposite of a paragraph indent. To apply a hanging indent on Microsoft Word, select the Works Cited entry and right click it, choose “Paragraph” from the drop-down menu, and in the new window that opens, choose “Hanging” from the Special

Indentations options. In Google Docs, select the entry, click the “Format” option, select “Indentation Options,” and then “Hanging” from the “Special Indent” section.

The entries in the list of references should be alphabetized by the last name of the first author of each work. When referring to the titles of books, chapters, articles, reports, webpages, or other sources, capitalize only the first letter of the first word of the title and subtitle, the first word after a colon or a dash in the title, and proper nouns. Italicize titles of longer works (e.g., books, edited collections, newspapers, and so on). Do not italicize, underline, or put quotes around the titles of shorter works such as chapters in books or essays in edited collections. However, there is an exception to this rule as the names of webpages are italicized.

All authors' names should be inverted (i.e., last names should be provided first), and authors' first and middle names should be written as initials. For example, the reference entry for a source written by Jannel Marta Smith would begin with “Smith, J. M.” If a middle name isn't available, just initialize the author's first name: “Smith, J.” Include the last name and first/middle initials for all authors of a particular work up to and including 20 authors. Separate each author's initials from the next author in the list with a comma. Use an ampersand (&) before the last author's name. If there are 21 or more authors, use an ellipsis (. . .) after the 19th author, and then add the final author's name. Sometimes, sources have no single or group author; in that case, skip the author and start the entry with the title of the work. Similarly, sometimes there is no date associated with the source; instead of the year, use “n.d.” (which stands for “no date”).

For more information about APA in-text citations, formatting, and the references page, speak with a writing tutor or librarian, visit Valencia's library website, or check out Purdue OWL (online writing lab).

References

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