

APA Style Guidelines Overview

This guide provides essential formatting and citation rules based on the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA), 7th Edition. It is designed by Academic Research to support writers in structuring their academic documents clearly and professionally.

Formatting

APA papers should be typed on 8.5 x 11-inch paper with 1-inch margins on all sides. Use a legible font between 10- and 12-point size, double-spaced. Include a page header on every page. The title, in all caps, should be left-aligned in the header, with the page number right-aligned. The title should be no more than 50 characters.

****Title Page****

- The title page must include the paper's title, your name, and your institutional affiliation—all centered and double-spaced.
- Student papers should also list the course number and name, instructor's name, and the due date.

****Abstract****

- Begin the abstract on a new page with the heading "Abstract" centered.
- Write a single paragraph summary of your paper, no more than 250 words.
- Abstracts are often not required for student assignments unless specified.

****Main Body****

- Include a header and page number.
- Use 1-inch margins.
- Indent the first line of each paragraph by 0.5 inches.

****Headings****

APA uses a five-level heading system:

- ****Level 1:**** Centered, boldface, title case.
- ****Level 2:**** Left-aligned, boldface, title case.
- ****Level 3:**** Left-aligned, bold italic, title case, ends with a period. Paragraph begins on same line.
- ****Level 4:**** Indented, boldface, title case, ends with a period. Paragraph begins on same line.
- ****Level 5:**** Indented, bold italic, title case, ends with a period. Paragraph begins on same line.

In-Text Citations

APA follows the author-date method for in-text citations. Include the author's last name and the year of publication in parentheses: (Smith, 2020).

- When quoting directly, also include the page number: (Smith, 2020, p. 45) or (Smith, 2020, pp. 45–47).
- When citing a source without quoting directly, only the author and year are needed.
- Use present perfect or past tense in signal phrases (e.g., "Smith (2020) found..." or "Smith (2020) has found...").
- For quotes over 40 words, use a freestanding block of text, indented 0.5 inches from the left, and omit quotation marks. The citation follows the final punctuation.

Citing Authors

- **Two authors:** Include both names joined by "and" in the narrative or by an ampersand (&) in parentheses: (Lee & Kim, 2021).
- **Three or more authors:** Use the first author's last name followed by "et al." in every citation: (Rodriguez et al., 2022).
- **Unknown author:** Cite the source by its title. Italicize book and report titles and use quotation marks for articles and web pages: ("APA Style," 2020).
- **Organization as author:** Use the full name of the organization the first time: (American Psychological Association, 2020). For subsequent citations, abbreviate if appropriate: (APA, 2020).
- **Multiple works in the same citation:** Alphabetize by first author and separate with semicolons: (Clark, 2019; Martin, 2020).

References

The reference list should appear at the end of your paper on a new page titled "References."

- Center the title and do not use bold, italics, or quotation marks.
- Double-space all entries.
- Use a hanging indent of 0.5 inches for each reference after the first line.
- List entries in alphabetical order by the first author's last name.
- List up to 20 authors; for more than 20, list the first 19, then use an ellipsis (...), followed by the final author's name.

Examples by Source Type

Single Author – Journal Article:

Author, A. A. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, volume number (issue number), pages. <https://doi.org/xxxxx>

Two Authors:

LastName, A. A., & LastName, B. B. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical, volume number*(issue number), pages.

****Three to 20 Authors:****

List all authors using commas, with an ampersand before the last one.

****Organization as Author:****

Organization Name. (Year). *Title of work*. Publisher.

****Unknown Author:****

Title of work. (Year). Publisher.

****Book:****

Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of book: Subtitle if included*. Publisher.

****Chapter in an Edited Book:****

Author, A. A. (Year). Title of chapter. In E. E. Editor (Ed.), *Title of book* (pp. xx-xx). Publisher.

****YouTube Video:****

Uploader Name. (Year, Month Day). *Title of video* [Video]. YouTube. URL

****Web Page or Article:****

Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). *Title of page*. Site Name. URL

****No Author – Web Page:****

Title of page. (Year, Month Day). Site Name. URL