

Topic: APA Format

Unless directed otherwise, all students are expected to format all written assignments in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA; 5th ed.). Faculty members of the NIU School of Nursing developed “Minimum Expectations for APA Documentation” Course professors may have additional expectations. Minimal Expectations for use of APA Format : See below.

Northern Illinois University
School of Nursing
Minimal Expectations for APA Documentation

The following has been prepared to assist you in your writing. Please refer to the current Fifth Edition Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2001) for rules regarding the preparation of manuscripts.

Title Page:

- The title page includes three elements: running head for publication, title and byline and institutional affiliation.
- Identify the title page with a manuscript page header and the page number 1, placed in the upper right hand corner of the page.
- A title should summarize the main idea of the paper and should be fully explanatory when standing alone.
- The recommended length of a title is 10 to 12 words.
- Type the title in uppercase and lower case letters, centered between the left and right margins and positioned in the upper half of the page. If the title is two or more lines, double-space between the lines.
- Every manuscript includes a byline consisting of two parts: the name of the author and the institution where the investigation was conducted (without the words *by* or *from the*).
- Type the names of the authors in the order of their contributions using uppercase and lowercase letters, centered between the side margins, one double-spaced line below the title.
- The preferred form of the author's name is the first name, middle initial (s), and last name.
- Type the institutional affiliation, centered under the author's name, on the next double-spaced line. The institutional affiliation identifies the location where the author or authors conducted the investigation, which is usually an institution.
- An abbreviated title will be used as a running head for the published article. Type the running head flush left at the top of the title page (but below the manuscript page header) in all uppercase letters. Do not exceed 50 characters, including punctuation and spaces
- Refer to the Fifth Edition Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, pages 296-298, for title page information.

Manuscript Page Headers:

- Pages occasionally are separated during the editorial process, so identify each manuscript page with the first two or three words from the title in the upper right-hand corner above or five spaces to the left of the page number.
- Refer to the Fifth Edition Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, page 288, for manuscript page header information.

Headings:

- Levels of heading establish via format or appearance the hierarchy of sections to orient the reader.
- All topics of equal importance have the same level of heading throughout a manuscript.

- Headings function as an outline to reveal a manuscript’s organization. Avoid having only one subsection heading and subsection within a section, just as you would avoid in an outline.
- Use at least two subsection headings within any given section, or use none.
- Regardless of the number of levels of subheading within a section, the heading structure for all sections follows the same top-down progression.
- Each section starts with the highest level of heading even if one section may have fewer levels of subheading than another section.
- Refer to the Fifth Edition Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, pages 112-115, for levels of heading descriptions.

References:

- APA is a documentation system that gives credit to outside sources by using parenthetical citations within the text. This allows the reader immediately to see the source of information, and it saves the trouble of having to make footnotes or endnotes.
- The following information must appear within the text for each and every citation:
 1. Authors’ last name
 2. Source’s year of publication (Within the same paragraph, only the first time a work is referenced.)
 3. Page numbers for citations of direct quotations (or paragraph numbers using the paragraph symbol, ¶, for on-line sources without page numbers)
 *Items 1 and 2 must correspond with the information on the “References” page(s)
- Acronyms and abbreviations must be spelled out completely the first time they appear in text. The acronym or abbreviation follows in parenthesis and is used each subsequent time.
- Capitalize all words of four letters or more in periodical titles (*italicize*).
- Use hyphens for clarity only (e.g., role-playing)
- Use numerals for 10 and above (e.g., 16 students); for numbers grouped for comparison (e.g., 3 of the 16 students); for dates, times, and age (e.g., 2003, 3:00 PM, 24 years old); for specific places in a series, book, or table (e.g., Vols. 1 & 2, p. 290, Fig. 7), for precise measurements (e.g., 6’1” tall).
- Use words for 10 and below (e.g., eight onions) and for numbers that begin a sentence, title, or heading (e.g., Four birds flew; *Three Coins in a Fountain*; One Last Trait of Jaundice)
- Double quotation marks go around citations of less than 40 words (e.g., “A rose by any other name...”). Indent citations of 40 words or more five spaces from the left margin in a double-spaced block. Do not use quotation marks at the beginning or end. A page number in parentheses always immediately follows a citation, even if the author and date appear within the text:
 - E.g., “She got hired because of her ten degrees” (Smith, 1998, p. 34).
 - E.g., According to Mills (2001), “Eels have rudimentary legs” (pp.23-24).
- Refer to the Fifth Edition Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, pages 207-214, for information on referencing citations in text.

Reference Page:

- After the end of a text, the word “References” must be centered at the top of a new page.
- Sources must be alphabetized by the author’s last name or the first significant word of a title.
- Double space all entries and the entire list.
- The first line must be flush with the margin, and subsequent lines must be indented five spaces (use the hanging indent command, if available).
- Only the first words of books and article titles are capitalized; the first word after a colon and all proper names are also capitalized. Commas must separate:

- Surname from initials, e.g., Meniker, H.N.
- Newspaper title from p. or pp., e.g., *New York Times*, p. 14A
- Journal title from volume number, e.g., *Style*, 8
- Volume and issue number from page numbers, e.g., 8 (2), 34-49.
- City of publication from state, e.g., Caledonia, NY
- Refer to the Fifth Edition Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, page 299, for reference page information.

Helpful websites:

<http://www.wisc.edu/writetest/Handbook/DocAPAOrientation.html>

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html

Reference:

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

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