APA FORMAT: GENERAL GUIDELINES

OVERALL FORMAT

• Use 1-inch margins at the top, bottom, left, and right of every page.

• Double-space all text.

• The preferred typeface is Times New Roman, with 12-point font size.

Title page (See sample on following pages)

Running head and page numbers

• Use the automatic functions of your word-processing program to generate headers and page numbers. The default setting is usually ½ inch from the top of the page, which is acceptable.

• Use the left alignment to start typing at the left-hand margin.

• Type the words: “Running head” followed by a colon.

• Follow the colon with the title or part of the title in uppercase letters. The running head should not exceed 50 characters, including letters, punctuation, and spaces between words.

• Find the tab indicator at the upper left hand corner of your document.

• Click and hold on this indicator and select the “right” tab.

• Hit the tab key on the keyboard to move the cursor to the right-hand margin.

• Follow with the page number by selecting “insert page number”.

• The Running head should appear flush left and the page number flush right at the top of the title page and all subsequent pages, including the References page.

All information in the APA Format: General Guidelines is excerpted from the following reference:

Revised: 8/09
**Title, author’s name (byline), institutional affiliation**

- The title, author’s name, and institutional affiliation are on separate lines and should be typed in uppercase and lowercase letters, centered between the left and right margins, double-spaced, and positioned in the upper half of the page.

- The recommended length for a title is no more than 12 words. Avoid using abbreviations.

- The preferred form of an author’s name is first name, middle initial(s), and last name.

- The affiliation identifies the location where the author or authors were when the research was conducted, which is usually an institution.

**Body of paper (See sample on following pages)**

- Format the body of the paper flush left style, and leave the right margin uneven, or *ragged*.

- Do not divide words at the end of a line, and do not use the hyphenation function to break words at the ends of lines. Let a line run short rather than break a word at the end of a line.

- Include the title, uppercase and lowercase, centered, at the top of the first page of text.

- Indent the first line of every paragraph. For consistency, use the tab key, which should be set at five to seven spaces or ½ inch.
General Guidelines on Formatting Papers

Betty J. Skaggs

The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing
General Guidelines on Formatting Papers

Citation of the source of information and ideas is an integral part of any scholarly paper. When the work of another person is quoted directly, paraphrased, or used as a source for thoughts and opinions, the use of that person’s literary and scientific efforts must be acknowledged. Because citation formats vary, students often have difficulty in selecting and consistently following one citation format. Consequently, the School of Nursing has selected a format widely used for scientific writing, one that will be most useful to you at this time and in the future. The official writing format for all work at the UT School of Nursing is the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2010), hereafter called the APA Manual. All papers written for course work in the School must follow these guidelines.

The American Psychological Association (APA) writing style was devised to promote clear communication between an author (student) and her/his publisher (faculty). Requirements such as specifications for margins, line spacing, and running heads, serve a purpose. For instance, the large margins and double spacing provide ample space for the editor to make notes on the paper and for the typesetter to read the editing marks. Running heads serve to get lost pages back with the appropriate document. Thus, using APA guidelines will benefit students by facilitating clear communication with faculty, meeting the objectives of the assignment, producing better grades, and preparing students for future professional tasks.

This paper demonstrates APA formatting and presents some common problem areas, such as citations, direct quote references, plagiarism, and formatting techniques. Study the form and content of this paper, and consult the APA Manual, available in the Learning Center. Faculty and/or the teaching assistant have the final word on the requirements of the paper you are to submit and may adjust some of the requirements to meet their specifications.
LEVELS OF HEADING (APA Manual, pp.62-63)

• Concise headings help the reader anticipate key points and track the development of your argument.

• The introduction to a paper does not carry a heading that labels it as the introduction. The first part of a paper is assumed to be the introduction.

• Do not label headings with numbers or letters.

• The heading style recommended by APA consists of five possible formatting arrangements:

  Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading←(Level 1)

Flush Left, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Headings←(Level 2)

  Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period←(Level 3)

  Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period←(Level 4)

  Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period←(Level 5)

• The number of levels of heading needed for your paper will depend on its length and complexity.

• If only one level of heading is needed, use Level 1; for a paper with two levels of heading, use levels 1 and 2; if three levels are needed, use Levels 1, 2, and 3; and so forth.

• Use at least two subsection headings within any given section or use none (e.g., in an outline, you could divide a section numbered I into a minimum of A and B sections; just an A section could not stand alone).
**CREDITING SOURCES/CITATIONS** (APA Manual, pp.169-174)

Using another author’s words or ideas necessitates giving that person or persons credit.

**Quoting:** Using the exact words of another. Requires quotation marks and citation.

**Paraphrasing:** Using another’s ideas stated in your own words. Requires citation.

**Plagiarism:** Using someone else’s words or ideas without attribution. Constitutes academic dishonesty.

**Direct quotation of sources**

- When quoting, always provide the author, year, and specific page citation or paragraph number for nonpaginated material.

- If the quotation comprises fewer than 40 words, incorporate it into text and enclose the quotation with double quotation marks.

**Direct quotation of fewer than forty words, appearing in mid-sentence**

She stated, “The ‘placebo effect’… disappeared when behaviors were studied in this manner” (Miele, 1993, p. 276), but she did not clarify which behaviors were studied.

**Direct quotation of fewer than forty words, appearing at the end of a sentence**

Confusing this issue is the overlapping nature of roles in palliative care, whereby “medical needs are met by those in the medical disciplines; nonmedical needs may be addressed by anyone on the team” (Csikai & Chaitin, 2006, p. 112).

**Direct quotation of forty or more words**

Quotations comprised of 40 or more words are started on a new line and block indented about a half inch from the left margin (in the same position as a new paragraph). Double-space the entire quotation and omit the quotation marks.
Example of block indented direct quotation:

Another is that the essence of writing is rewriting. Very few writers say on their first try exactly what they want to say. … “Effortless” articles that look as if they were dashed off are the result of strenuous effort. A piece of writing must be viewed as a constantly evolving organism. (Zinsser, 1998, p. 15)

CITING REFERENCES IN TEXT (APA Manual, pp.174-179)

• References are cited in text with an author-date citation system and are listed alphabetically in the reference list.

• Each reference cited in text must appear in the reference list, and each entry in the reference list must be cited in text.

One work by one author

✓ Kessler (2003) found that among epidemiological samples…

✓ Early onset results in a more persistent and severe course (Kessler, 2003).

✓ In 2003, Kessler’s study of epidemiological samples showed that…

• Within a paragraph, when the name of the author is part of the narrative (as in the 1st and 3rd examples above), you need not include the year in subsequent nonparenthetical references to a study.

✓ Among epidemiological samples, Kessler (2003) found that early onset results in a more severe course. Kessler also found a high rate of comorbidity.

• When both the name and the year are in parenthesis (as in the 2nd example above), include the year in subsequent citations within the paragraph.

✓ Early onset results in a more persistent and severe course (Kessler, 2003). Among the samples, Kessler (2003) also found…
**One work by multiple authors** (See Table 6.1 *Basic Citation Styles*, p.177, in APA Manual)

- When a work has **two authors**, cite both names every time the reference occurs in text.
- When a work has **three, four, or five authors**, cite all authors the 1\textsuperscript{st} time the reference occurs.
  
  In subsequent citations use the first author’s surname followed by the words “et al.” (not in quotes and with a period after “al.”)
  
  ✓ Smith, Jones, Williams, and Powers (2007) found…[Use as 1\textsuperscript{st} citation in text.]
  ✓ Smith et al. (2007) found…[Use as subsequent 1\textsuperscript{st} citation per paragraph thereafter.]

- When a work has **six or more authors**, cite only the first author’s surname followed by the words “et al.” for the first and subsequent citations.

*Exception:* If two references of more than three surnames with the same year shorten to the same form, cite the surnames of the 1\textsuperscript{st} authors and of as many of the subsequent authors as necessary to distinguish the two references, followed by a comma and et al.

- When surnames are used in text, separate the final name by using the word “and”.
  
  ✓ Jones, Martin, and Richardson (2005) state…

- In parenthetical material and in the reference list, join the names by an ampersand (&).
  
  ✓ (Edge & Groves, 2008).

**Groups as authors**

- The names of groups that serve as authors (e.g., corporations, associations, government agencies, and study groups) are usually spelled out each time they appear in a text citation.

- If the name is long and cumbersome and if the abbreviation is familiar or readily understandable, the name may be abbreviated in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} and subsequent citations.
• If the name is short or the abbreviation would not be readily understandable, write out the name each time it occurs.

**Works with no identified author**

• Cite in text the 1st 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.
  ✓ …on free care (“Study Finds,” 2007)

• Italicize the title of a periodical, a book, a brochure, or a report.
  ✓ …the book *College Bound Seniors* (2008)

**Works with an anonymous author**

• Cite in text the word “Anonymous” followed by a comma and the date. In the reference list, an anonymous work is alphabetized by the word “Anonymous”.
  ✓ (Anonymous, 2004)

**Secondary sources**

• In text, name the original work and give a citation for the secondary source. For example, if Allport’s work is cited in Nicholson and you did not read Allport’s work, use the following.
  ✓ Allport’s diary (as cited in Nicholson, 2003) illustrates how…

• List the Nicholson reference (secondary source) in the reference list.

**REFERENCE LIST FORMAT** (APA Manual, pp.180-192)

• Start the reference list on a new page. The word References should appear in uppercase and lowercase letters, centered at the top of the page.
• Double-space all reference entries.
• APA publishes references in a *hanging indent* format, meaning that the first line of each reference is set flush left and subsequent lines are indented 1/2 inch.
• The reference list should contain only the works cited in the paper.

• List the entries alphabetically by the first word in each entry, generally the author(s).

Authors

• Use authors’ surnames and initials, inverted: Lewis, J.

• Use commas to separate authors and to separate surnames and initials.

• Give surnames and initials for up to and including seven authors.

• When authors number eight or more, include the first six authors’ names, then insert three ellipses, and add the last author’s name.

• In a reference to a work with no author, move the title to the author position before the date of publication. A period follows the title.

Publication date

• Give the year the work was published in parentheses following the author’s name.

• For a work accepted for publication but not yet published, write “in press” in parenthesis.

• If no date is available, write “n.d.” in parenthesis. No quotation marks.

Title and Publication Information

• The title and publication information follows the publication date. The information included and format varies depending on the type of material cited. See the following examples.

REFERENCE EXAMPLES (for an extensive list, see APA Manual, pp.193-224)

Entire book, print version


Book by a group or corporate author

Electronic version of print book


Book by two authors, with an edition number


Edited book


Article or chapter in an edited book


Reference book


Entry in an online reference work

**Entry in an online reference work, no author or editor**


**Journal article without DOI (when DOI is not available)**


Notes:
If there is no DOI assigned and the reference was retrieved online, give the URL of the journal home page.
No retrieval date is needed.

**Journal article with DOI**


doi: 10.1037/0278-6133.24.2.225

**Journal article with DOI, more than seven authors**


Notes:
Use the following in-text citation: (Rosler et al., 2005).
When a reference has up to seven authors, spell out all authors’ names in the reference list.
APA/Writing Assistance

• APA Style website
  www.apastyle.org

• UWC (Undergraduate Writing Center)
  http://uwc.utexas.edu/

• Graduate Student Writing Services
  http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/tutoring/grad_writing_services.php

• The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)
  http://owl.english.purdue.edu/

• To download the *APA Format: General Guidelines*, go to
  http://www.utexas.edu/nursing/norr/html/courses/writing_apa.html
  Find it under: APA Resources in the Learning Center