Wayland Multidisciplinary Writing Center
APA Format and Content

APA style and formatting is commonly used in papers written in the social sciences and in business courses. Therefore, APA encourages clear, concise writing as well as meticulous attention to detail regarding formatting, documentation, grammar, and usage.
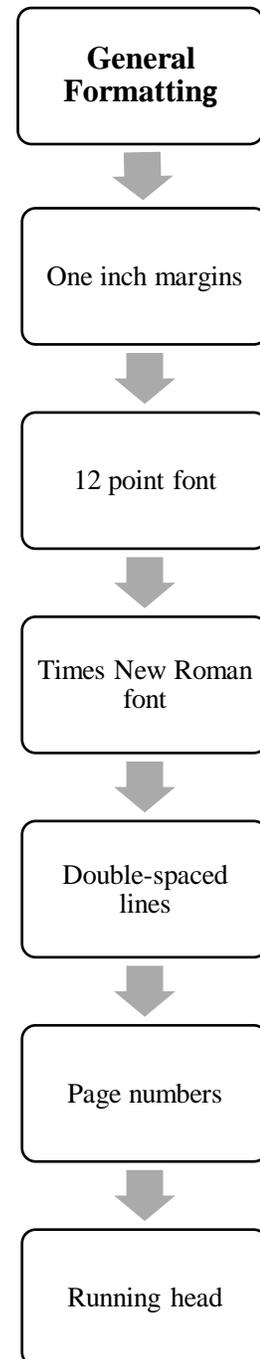
Formatting

Cover page

- The cover page will include the running head, which should look like this:

  Running head: TITLE OF YOUR PAPER.

  o The running head is designed to be a shortened title of no more than 50 characters including spacing and punctuation.

  o Only the cover page will include the words "running head" in the left-hand corner of the header. Only the shortened, capitalized title and the page numbers should appear on the following pages.

- The title should appear centered halfway down the page.

- The remaining heading information should appear centered directly below the title and should include your name and your institution.

Abstract

- An abstract is a one paragraph summary that introduces your topic in 150-200 words and defines any acronyms or abbreviations used throughout the paper.

- The title, "Abstract," should appear centered in plain text at the top of the page.

- The entire abstract paragraph is left-aligned without any indentions.

General Formatting

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One inch margins

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12 point font

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Times New Roman font

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Double-spaced lines

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Page numbers

↓

Running head

Reference List

- The reference list should appear on a separate page following the end of the paper.

- It is a successive page with a sequential page number.

- The title of the page should be center-aligned and should look like this: References (APA does not refer to this page as a bibliography).

- The reference list should contain a full list of sources directly referenced in your paper—either quoted or paraphrased.

Content

Introduction

- The introduction presents the topic that the paper addresses and sets the context for the rest of the paper.

- Typically, an introductory paragraph should not exceed two-thirds of a page in length (about five to eight sentences).

- In some circumstances, it may take two paragraphs to fully introduce the paper, but this occurs more in upper-level writing.

- An introduction will include a thesis statement that clearly defines the key issues of the paper. A thesis statement should be the centermost focus of the paper, support and develop the whole of the paper, and come at the end of your introductory paragraph.

Body Paragraphs

- Each paragraph should answer a question or address an issue present in your thesis.

- Each paragraph should have a topic sentence. This sentence should state the main concerns of the paragraph and should connect those ideas to your thesis statement.

- Paragraphs should present information in a logical, methodical, and organized manner.

- Organize the paper's paragraphs using the APA heading system consisting of five different heading levels to organize a paper's paragraphs. Format headings as follows:
    1. **Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading**
    2. **Left-aligned, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading**
    3. **Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with a period.** Body text follows the period.
    4. ***Indented boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with a period***. Text follows the period.
    5. *Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.* Body text follows the period.

<u>Conclusion</u>

- The conclusion should wrap up what you have been discussing in your paper. It should follow closely—but not exactly "mirror"—your introduction.

- The conclusion should leave the reader with a strong impression. Reiterate the points made in the thesis and the body of the paper to recap the importance of the topic, to emphasize future applications, or to call readers to action.