Please refer to the following information and examples for formatting a paper and using sources in the American Psychological Association (APA) style, widely used in the social and behavioral sciences. Consult the 6th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for additional information. Copies are available in the Nittany Success Center and in the library. An online *APA Quick Citation Guide* is also available from the “Citation Styles” link on the Penn State University Libraries’ home page.

**Basic Information**

*Publication Manual*, pages 228-230

1. Margins are to be one inch (1”) from the top, bottom, and sides.
2. Double space everything, including block quotes and citations.
3. Use 12-point Times New Roman font. **Note:** This is not the default in Microsoft Word 2007, so make sure to change the font and size.
4. Text is flush with the left margin. Do not justify lines.
5. Page numbering begins with the title page.
6. Indent the beginning of each paragraph using one tab space. Do not leave extra space between paragraphs.
7. Use two spaces after a period at the end of a sentence and one space after periods in a reference citation.
8. Check the *Publication Manual* for setting up charts, tables, and graphs.

**Writing Style**

*Publication Manual*, pages 65-70

Sections 3.05–3.11 deal with topics such as tone, word choice, precision, and strategies to improve your writing style. For example, it is acceptable in APA style to refer to yourself using “I” if you are the sole author of the paper and to refer to yourself and your coauthors as “we.” Read your paper aloud to catch mistakes or awkward wording. It is also a good idea to have someone proofread your paper.

**Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation**

*Publication Manual*, pages 77-96

Consult sections 3.18-3.23 for information on topics such as agreement of subject and verb, use of adverbs and pronouns, and parallel construction. For the most part, you should use the active voice, rather than the passive voice. Example: “We selected the individuals at random,” rather than “The individuals were selected at random.”

Sections 4.01-4.11 discuss punctuation. Note that APA style now recommends using two spaces, rather than one, after a period at the end of a sentence. Also, you do not use a period with measurement abbreviations, such as cm and ft, except for the abbreviation for inch (in.).
**Plagiarism**  

Plagiarism is using someone else’s work and submitting it as your own, failing to give appropriate acknowledgement when directly quoting or paraphrasing another, or presenting another’s line of thinking without giving credit. Do not repeat the author’s key words or sentence structure when paraphrasing. Commonly-known or understood material, such as a scientific truth or historical dates, do not have to be documented, nor do proverbs, sayings, and clichés.

When writing, keep the following in mind:

1. Differentiate between paraphrase or summary and directly-quoted material.
2. Do not copy and paste material directly from a source without citing it.
3. Memorable or key phrases must be reworded unless directly quoted.
4. Document or cite all lines of argument or reasoning.

**Use of Numbers**  
*Publication Manual*, pages 111-115

See the *Publication Manual* for additional examples and exceptions to the following.

1. Use numerals for numbers 10 and above.
2. Use numerals for numbers preceding units of measurement (15 mg, 7 cm).
3. Do not begin a sentence with a numeral – spell it out.
4. Use numerals for numbers representing mathematical or statistical functions, percentages, ratios, and percentiles (divided by 2, 11%, a ratio of 22:1, the 10th percentile).
5. Write out page numbers in full, such as 186-197.
6. Use commas to separate groups of three digits, except for page numbers.

**Abbreviations**  
*Publication Manual*, pages 106-111

Use abbreviations only if they will make your paper easier to read. Unless the abbreviation is one that is accepted as a word, such as IQ, ESP, and AIDS, you need to write it out completely the first time you use it and follow it immediately with the abbreviation in parentheses. For example:

To test this prediction, we used a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Write out abbreviations for units of measurement, unless they are accompanied by numeric values. Examples: several centimeters, measured in millimeters, 15-20 cm, 45 mm

Refer to Table 4.4 on page 109 in the *Publication Manual* for a list of common abbreviations for units of measurement.
**Common Types of Journal Articles**  
*Publication Manual*, pages 9-11

Much of the information found in the *Publication Manual* details the requirements for preparing manuscripts for publication in scholarly journals. Although you will probably be using the manual more for guidance in writing research papers, it will be beneficial to become familiar with the types of articles you will find in scholarly journals.

The types of articles described below have several common characteristics, such as:

- They are original publications, representing research that has not been published before.
- They are peer-reviewed.
- They include an abstract and a literature review (discussion of similar research published on the topic).

See the *Publication Manual* for descriptions of additional types of articles.

**Empirical Studies**

These types of studies test a research hypothesis. You will usually find the following sections in these articles: introduction, method, results, and discussion.

**Literature Reviews**

While most scholarly journal articles contain a literature review, there are also entire articles devoted to analyzing and critically evaluating this literature. This category includes research syntheses and meta-analyses. These types of articles can be extremely helpful to students and are a good starting point in your research since they provide an overview of the literature on a specific aspect of a topic, leading you to other research articles you can use. A meta-analysis analyzes several existing studies, looking for patterns and trends. Although you do not need to be an expert in statistics to understand a meta-analysis, you would need considerable expertise in statistics to write one.

**Case Studies**

A researcher doing a case study gathers and presents detailed information about a particular participant or a small group, often including accounts from the subject(s).

**Sections of an APA-style Paper**  

The pages on manuscript elements in the *Publication Manual* are worth reading as they contain detailed explanations on what is to be included in each of the following sections. Your instructor may not require all these sections in your paper.

Include a page header at the top of every page. This header contains the running head and the page number. The running head is an abbreviated title in all uppercase letters, flush with the left margin, while the page number is on the right. This abbreviated title is to be no more than 50 characters, including spaces. See the sample images on the next page. Note that the label **Running head:** only appears before the abbreviated title on the title page. The abbreviated title appears on subsequent pages without this label.
Title page

The title page for a student research paper should include the following items: header (with the running head and page number), title (upper and lowercase letters, centered in the upper half of the page), author’s name, and institutional affiliation. Papers submitted for publication also include an author’s note, but this is not usually required for a student research paper.

Abstract

The abstract, which is a brief summary of your paper, will usually refer to the purpose, the methodology, and the highlights of your research. See pages 25-27 in the Publication Manual for information on what should be included in an abstract for different types of studies. The abstract appears as a separate page (page 2) and is a single paragraph, without indentation. Center the word Abstract at the top of the page.

Introduction

The introduction of your paper begins on page 3. Do not label this as your introduction. Instead, indent the first paragraph under the centered title of your paper. The Publication Manual discusses in detail the following information that should be included in your introduction: introduction to the problem, importance of the problem, discussion of relevant scholarship, and an explanation of your approach to the problem.
**Method**

Do not start a new page for this section or for any of the remaining sections until you get to the References and Appendices. Begin this section with the word **Method**, centered on the page. This is considered a Level 1 heading in APA style (see the table below), so it will also be boldface with upper and lowercase letters. This detailed section of your paper will usually include subsections, again using headings as shown in the table.

**Results**

This section begins with the Level 1 heading of **Results**. Summarize all data and mention relevant results, even results that were not what you expected.

**Discussion**

This section, beginning with the Level 1 heading **Discussion**, includes your interpretation of the results and a conclusion.

**References**

Begin a new page for your reference list, with the word References centered at the top. This is the same format you used for the Abstract page. The terms Abstract and References function as labels, rather than headings, so they are not boldface. All entries in your reference list are double-spaced with hanging indentation.

**Appendices**

Each appendix begins on a new page. Guidelines for formatting appendices are found on page 39 in the *Publication Manual*.

**Levels of Headings**

*Publication Manual*, pages 62-63

APA style uses five levels of headings to organize information in a paper. Begin with the first level for the formatting of the section name (Method, Results, Discussion). You do not need to include subsections in your paper, but, if you do use them, make sure to include at least two subsection headings within any given section. The following table is from page 62 in the *Publication Manual*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Flush Left, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please refer to the sample papers shown in the *Publication Manual* for examples of how these headings are used.
**Internal Documentation (in-text citations, parenthetical references)**

*Publication Manual*, pages 170-179

APA style uses the author-date system for citing references in the text of your paper. Each reference cited in the text will appear alphabetically in your reference list. A helpful chart of basic citation styles appears on page 177 in the *Publication Manual*.

**Direct quotations**

In addition to the author and the date, direct quotations must also include the page number (or paragraph number for nonpaginated sources). For example, (Blake, 2005, p. 27) or, for a nonpaginated source such as online material, (Myers, 2008, para. 4). Use the abbreviation pp. for multiple pages.

**Paraphrasing**

Page or paragraph numbers should also be included when paraphrasing to help your reader locate the material you used in the original source.

**Author’s name in tag line**


**Author’s name in parentheses**

Complex motor skills were studied in a baseball batting simulation (Gray, 2009).

**Two authors**

You need to cite both names every time you refer to a work by two authors. If the names are referred to in the text, only the year appears in parentheses. If the names are not referred to in the text, include them in the parenthetical reference, joined by an ampersand (&).

Baker and Hamilton (2007) found a high rate of depression in the participants.

A high rate of depression was found among the participants (Baker & Hamilton, 2007).

**Three, four, or five authors**

You must cite all authors, either in text or parenthetically, the first time they are referred to. From then all, use only the surname of the first author, followed by *et al.* Notice in the following examples that *et al.*, which means “and others,” is not italicized and ends with a period.

*First time authors referred to in the text:*

Rogers, Finney, and Myers (2004) presented participants with conflicting information.

*Subsequent references to the same authors in the text:*

Rogers et al. (2004) found that the subjects were unable to make decisions.

*First time authors referred to in the parenthetical reference:*

Participants in the study were presented with conflicting information (Rogers, Finney, & Myers, 2004).

*Subsequent parenthetical references to same authors:*

The subjects in the study were unable to make decisions (Rogers et al., 2004).
Six or more authors

When there are six or more authors, use the last name of the first author followed by et al. for the first citation in the text, as well as subsequent citations. Follow the same format for the parenthetical reference.

For example, the article “Inequality, Discrimination, and the Power of the Status Quo: Direct Evidence for a Motivation to See the Way Things Are as the Way They Should Be,” which appeared in a recent issue of the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, has seven authors.

Following are examples of citing this work in text. This format is used for the first citation in text, and all subsequent citations.

Kay et al. (2009) studied the power of the status quo.

A recent study examined the power of the status quo (Kay et al., 2009).

There are different rules for the reference list. The reference list will show all authors up to and including seven authors. See page 13 of this handout for the reference list citation for the above.

When there are more than seven authors, you will cite them in text as shown above, but the reference list will not show them all. An example of this situation (Harden et al., 2007) is also shown on page 13 of this handout.

Secondary sources

Use material from original sources whenever possible. If you need to cite something that was mentioned or quoted in someone else’s work, mention the original work in the text of your paper, but list the secondary source in your parenthetical reference and in the reference list.

For example, if Thompson’s work is cited in Smith’s work and you did not read Thompson’s work, you will mention Thompson’s work in the text of your paper, but reference Smith’s work, both parenthetically and in the reference list.

Thompson’s study (as cited in Smith, 2008) . . .

In the above example, Smith’s work will be the one listed in your reference list.

Work listed by title

If no author is given, use the article title (in quotation marks) or book title (italicized) in the text of your paper and in the parenthetical reference. You may use just the first several words, if the title is lengthy. For example, a parenthetical reference to the article “Remember the Facts by Cramming With Fat” which appeared in New Scientist without an identified author, would be shown as (“Remember the Facts,” 2009).

Personal communications

Personal communications that are not recoverable, such as personal or phone interviews, e-mail messages, and memos, are cited in the text only and are not included in the reference list.

(H.J. Killian, personal communication, November 16, 2008)

Ellipsis

Ellipsis points (three spaced periods) are used to designate that material has been omitted from the source material.
Errors in source material

If there is an error in the original source which might be confusing to the reader, you may add *sic*, which is Latin for “thus,” to assure your readers that the quote is accurate, even with the error. Do not correct the error. The word *sic* should be inserted immediately after the error and should be italicized and bracketed, like this: *[sic]*.

Citing more than one source in a single parenthetical reference

Following are some examples.

*Two works by the same author (arranged by year of publication)*


*Two works by different authors (arranged alphabetically by the first author’s surname and separated by a semicolon)*

(Jones, 2006; Myers & Barton, 2003)

*Group authors*

Names of group authors, such as corporations, associations, and government agencies, are to be spelled out in full the first time they are mentioned in the text of your paper. You may choose to abbreviate the name in the parenthetical reference if the group’s name is long or if the group has a familiar or easily understandable acronym. If the group’s name is short, or if the group does not have a readily understandable abbreviation, write out the name each time you use it.

For example, write out the name National Institutes of Health (NIH) the first time you mention them in the text of your paper. Since this group is readily indentified through abbreviation, you may use an abbreviation in the parenthetical reference, such as (NIH, 2008). When you mention this group later in your paper, you may refer to them as the NIH, both in the text of your paper and in the parenthetical reference. If you did not mention the group in the text of your paper, but need to reference them parenthetically, your first citation will be formatted as in this example: (National Institutes of Health [NIH], 2008). Subsequent citations will be shown as (NIH, 2008).

*Block quotation*

If a quotation is 40 or more words, set it off by beginning a new line, indenting it one tab from the left margin. Double-space the quotation and do not use quotation marks. The parenthetical reference appears at the end of the block quotation, following the ending punctuation mark.

Example:

In 2006, Ray English reviewed the rationale for open access:

> The movement for public access to government-funded research is based on simple but powerful principles. Taxpayers who fund research have a right to easy and effective access to the research that they pay for through tax dollars. In the age of the Internet, in which research can be shared instantaneously, it makes no sense for federally funded research to be accessible only through expensive journals that are available only in a limited number of research libraries. (p. 251)

If the author and date were not mentioned in the introductory text, they would need to be included in the parenthetical reference at the end of the quotation. Example: (English, 2006, p. 251)
References
Publication Manual, pages 180-215

The list of references follows the text of the paper, beginning on a new page and continuing the page numbering of your paper. Center the title References one inch from the top. All sources used in your paper are listed in alphabetical order and are double-spaced with hanging indentation.

ABBREVIATED TITLE

References


Order of references in the reference list

- When alphabetizing, remember that “nothing precedes something.” In the above reference list, Brown precedes Browning.
- If you are citing two or more works by the same author, always repeat the author’s name and order them by year of publication, with the earliest first.
- One-author entries appear in the reference list before multiple-author entries beginning with the same surname, regardless of the year.
- For entries beginning with the same name, but with different coauthors, alphabetize by the last names of the second author listed.
All citations are to be double spaced with hanging indentation. In order to save space, the following examples are not double spaced.

BOOKS
Publication Manual, pages 183-192, examples on pages 202-205

Citations for books include the following:

- Author’s name (initials are used for the first and middle names)
- Year of publication (in parentheses)
- Title of work italicized (capitalize only the first word of the title, the first word of the subtitle, and any proper nouns)
- Publication information

**Place of publication**
List the city and state as shown on the title page. If the publisher is outside of the United States, list the city and country.
- If the publisher is a university and the name of the state is included in the university’s name, do not repeat the state in the publisher’s location
- Use the official two-letter U.S. Postal Service abbreviation for U.S. states

**Publisher’s name**
You may use a brief form of the publisher’s name, as long as it still clearly identifies the publisher.
- Write out the names of associations, corporations, and university presses
- Omit terms such as Publishers, Co., Corp., Inc.
- Retain the words Books and Press

**Book by a single author or editor**


Book by two or more authors

If there are more than seven authors, list the first six authors’ names, followed by three ellipses, and then add the final author’s name. See the example in the scholarly journal article section of this handout.

Book by a corporate author
A corporate author can be an association, a committee, or any group whose members are not identified individually. When the author and the publisher are the same, use the word *Author* as the name of the publisher.


Chapter in a book
Begin the citation with the information for the chapter you are using, followed by the information for the book. Notice the page numbers for the piece you are citing appear after the title of the book.


Article from a reference book
Begin the citation with the author for the entry you are citing. If no author is given, begin the citation with the title of the entry.


Article from an online reference book

Accessed through Gale Virtual Reference Library, a library subscription database
APA style recommends including the digital object identifier (DOI) for both print and online sources, if it is available. The DOI is a unique identifier assigned to articles as a way to help readers locate the content online through registration agencies, such as CrossRef.org. The DOI is usually found on the first page of the article, near the copyright notice.

Citations for articles usually include the following:

- Author’s name (initials are used for the first and middle names)
- Year of publication (in parentheses) for scholarly journal articles
- Year and exact date of publication (in parentheses) for magazines and newspapers
- Title of the article (capitalize only the first word of the title, the first word of the subtitle, and any proper nouns)
- Periodical title (use uppercase and lowercase letters and italicize the title)
- Volume number (italicized)
- Issue number (include, in parentheses and not italicized, only if each issue of the journal is paginated separately)
- Inclusive page numbers
- Digital object identifier (for both print and online sources, if available)

Guidelines for articles obtained through a library subscription database

- When a DOI is used, no further retrieval information is necessary. Most scholarly journal articles will have a DOI.
- If a DOI is not available, include the URL for the home page of the journal, magazine, or newspaper (do not include a period at the end of this URL). Do not include the name of the database in the citation.

This retrieval statement may not seem accurate to you, since you are stating the article was retrieved from the journal’s home page, when you actually retrieved it from a library subscription database. However, the intent of the APA rule is to lead a reader as closely as possible to the source. Since not everyone will have access to the same databases, and the journals included in a particular database are subject to change, the decision was made not to include database information in citations. This is true even if you cannot access the article online through the journal’s website.

The exception to the above rule involves material of limited circulation, as well as articles from discontinued journals that are archived in a database such as JSTOR, and articles that have been informally published in ERIC.
Scholarly journal article with continuous pagination


*If there are more than seven authors, list the first six authors’ names, followed by three ellipses, and then add the final author’s name.*


Scholarly journal article, journal paginated by issue


Informally published, from ERIC


Magazine article

*Print*


*From a library subscription database*


Despite the fact the above articles were accessed through ProQuest, the retrieval statement will show the home page for the magazine, even if the full text of the article is not available from the magazine’s website.
**Newspaper article**
Use the abbreviations p. or pp. preceding the page numbers for newspaper articles.

*Print*

*From a library subscription database*

*Online from the paper’s website*

You can see that the citations for the library database and the paper’s website are almost identical, with the exception of the page number and the date.

**TECHNICAL AND RESEARCH REPORTS**
*Publication Manual*, pages 205-206

*Corporate author, government report*

*Corporate author, task force report*

**ADDITIONAL SOURCES**
*Publication Manual*, pages 209-215

In addition to the sources shown above, you can find examples in the *Publication Manual* for the following types of sources:

- Section 7.07 Audiovisual Media
- Section 7.08 Data Sets, Software, Measurement Instruments, and Apparatus
- Section 7.09 Unpublished and Informally Published Works
- Section 7.10 Archival Documents and Collections
- Section 7.11 Internet Message Boards, Electronic Mailing Lists, and Other Online Communities