

Formatting a Student Paper in APA Style (7th Edition) Using MS-Office

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Insert the course number and name here

Insert the instructor's name here

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Formatting your title page in APA style using MS Office

7 key components of any student paper cover page in APA style [Sections 2.2 & 2.3].

- Page setup including margins
- Page numbers
- Title of the paper
- Author(s) names and affiliation(s) including department and institution
- Course number and name of course-use the format shown on institutional materials.
- Instructor's name (Check with the instructor for their preferred naming format)
- Assignment due date

Page setup

All APA style student papers use one-inch margins on each side of the page [Section 2.22].

- Click on *Layout* located on the top line of the toolbar. It is to the right of the *Home* and *Insert* functions.
- Click on *Margins*. Select *Normal* which inserts 1-inch margins on all sides of the document.
- Click on *Orientation*. The *Portrait* choice should be highlighted rather than *Landscape*.

All APA style student papers use double spacing throughout the entire manuscript including the title page, abstract, references, etc. The only exceptions are text in the body of tables, figure images, and footnotes which use single spacing [Section 2.21].

- Click on the *Home* link located at the upper left section of the tool bar. This is the default page.
- Click on the line spacing icon located in the center of the tool bar directly beneath the link for *Mailings*. Positioning the mouse right over this link will open a popup window of text identifying the link and what it does.
- Open the drop-down menu and select 2.0 as your line spacing.
- MS-Word is set up to add spaces before and after each paragraph. If you see the phrase “Remove Space Before Paragraph” or “Remove Space After Paragraph” click on them so they change to read “Add Space Before Paragraph” or “Add Space After Paragraph” Doing so will ensure that no extra spaces are being added.

The preferred typeface in APA style is a serif font such as Times New Roman using a 12-point font or a sans serif font such as Calibri or Arial using an 11-point font respectively [Section 2.19].

Page Numbers [Sections 2.3 and 2.18]

APA style student papers omit the running head but do have page numbers located in the upper right-hand corner of each page. Follow the steps below for how to insert page numbers into your manuscript.

Do the following steps to insert the page numbers:

- Start on the first page of your manuscript which will be the cover page.
- Click on the *Insert* link on the tool bar at the top left of the page. IT should be just to the right of the *Home* link.
- Click on *Page Number* located towards the right-hand side of the toolbar.
- Place your mouse cursor on the choice *Top of the Page* from the drop-down menu.
- Select *Plain Number 3* which is the third choice. Notice that the number is flush right.
- Once you have the page number inserted and positioned properly on the first page, click on the red X box located at the top right of the tool bar. This will close the header-footer function.

Title [Section 2.4]

All titles on the cover page in APA are center justified which means spaced equally between the left and right-hand margins. The title uses sentence case which means the first letter in proper nouns is capitalized.

- Click on the *Home* link located at the upper left section of the tool bar. This is the default page.
- Click on the center justification icon located in the center of the tool bar directly beneath the link for *References*.
- Type in the full title using sentence case and proper punctuation.
- Double space between each line of the title if it uses two or more lines of text.

Author(s) Byline, Institutional Affiliation(s), Course name, Instructor's name, and the paper due date [Sections 2.5-2.7]

APA style requires that all authors and their institutional affiliations be identified on the title page. Like the title, all other information on the title page is center justified. List your department affiliation and the name of your institution. The order of authorship is determined by the authors themselves.

- Click on the *Home* link located at the upper left section of the tool bar. This is the default page.
- Click on the center justification icon located in the center of the tool bar directly beneath the link for *References*.
- Type in the name of the author using first name, middle initial, and last name followed immediately below with the institution the author is from.
- Type the name of the course as it is listed in institutional materials, i.e. syllabus.
- Type the name of the instructor-check with your instructor for their preferred form of address.
- Type the due date for the paper.
- Make sure all entries are centered and double spaced.

[See figure 2.2 Sample Student Title Page on p. 32 for an illustration of a completed title page]

Using hard page breaks between sections of an APA style paper

APA style student papers consist of the cover page, the full text of the paper, reference page(s), and tables/graphs. A hard page break is inserted between each of these specific sections of the paper. The page break preserves all formatting on the pages above it while allowing changes in formatting to the text and pages below it. Do the following to insert a page break after the title page:

- Position the cursor at the end of the last line of text on the page.
- Click on the *Insert* link located at the upper left of the toolbar.
- Click on the *Pages* icon located on the left side of the tool bar, just beneath the *File* link. This will open a drop-down menu.
- Clicking on *Page Break* will insert the page break. You can also use the Ctrl + Enter keys shortcut to insert page brakes.

Formatting an Abstract page [Section 2.9]

APA Style for student papers does not normally include an abstract. However, some instructors may require their students include an abstract because condensing an entire paper into a short paragraph is a way to improve your writing skills. If you include an abstract it immediately follows the title page, separated by a hard page break.

The abstract in APA style consists of a paragraph length summary of what your paper is about. The abstract should be 250 words or less in length depending what the journal requirements are.

- Separate the abstract from the title page using a hard page break.
- Type the label Abstract using upper case for the first letter and lower case for the rest of the word.
- Center the label Abstract by clicking on the *Center Justification* icon located in the center of the tool bar directly beneath the link for *References*.
- Use *Left Justification* for the text of the abstract. The *Left Justification* icon is located just beneath the link for *References* and is just left of the *Center Justification* icon.
- Type in the text of the abstract as a single paragraph but do not indent the first sentence of the abstract. Use double spacing for the abstract.
- Insert a Hard Page Break after the abstract text using the instructions above. This separates the abstract from the body of your paper.

Formatting the References List [Section 2.12]

- Insert a hard page break between the body of the paper and the reference page(s).
- Type the word References at the top of the page in all caps and bold the text then center it.
- Type in each reference in alphabetical order using the last name of the first author of each article or monograph.

- Two or more articles by the same person, order by year with the most recent article first.
- If no author is given, then use the first letter in the first word of the corporate author or title to alphabetize the order of presentation.

Creating Hanging Indentations

APA uses the hanging indentation which is the opposite of paragraph indentation. All lines following the first line of text are indented 5 spaces in hanging indentation.

- Highlight all the citations in the reference list.
- Click on the down arrow that is just to the right of the *Paragraph* settings. It is also below the *Review* link on the toolbar. A new box will open.
- Look for *indentation*. To the right will be a box under the word *Special*. Inside the box is the word (none) in parentheses. Click on the down arrow in this box.
- Select *Hanging*. The number in the *By* box will automatically adjust to .5 inches.
- Double check each citation to make sure the hanging indent was properly applied.

On-line web sites for APA style help

The Online Writing Center (OWL) at Purdue University offers on-line guides for formatting and using APA 6th edition style. Click on the link below then look at the right-hand column. Select Research and Citation from the right-hand menu choices. Then select APA Formatting and Style Guide.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html