



Top 10 APA Style Basics

Use this as a quick reference guide only. The APA Publication Manual, 7th edition is your authoritative guide.

- 1. Font (p. 44):** APA suggests the following fonts:
 - Serif: 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or 10-point Computer Modern.
 - Sans serif: 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, or 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode.
- 2. Margins (p. 45):** 1 inch on all sides (top, bottom, left, and right).
- 3. Line alignment (p. 45):** Text should be flush to the left margin, with the right margin unjustified (“ragged”). Paragraphs should be indented 0.5 inch. Do not hyphenate words at the end of a line.
- 4. Line spacing (p. 45):** Double-space everything.
- 5. Citations (p. 253):** “Cite the work of those individuals whose ideas, theories, or research have directly influenced your work ... Cite only works that you have read and ideas that you have incorporated into your writing ... The number of sources you cite in your paper depends on the purpose of your work” (APA, 2020, pp. 255-256). In addition, “each work cited in the text must appear in the reference list” (p. 257).

After a paraphrase (p. 263): Include the author’s name and the year of the work’s publication (no page number needed).
 - The public can receive skewed information from falsely balanced news sources (Koehler, 2018).
 - Koehler (2018) noted the dangers of falsely balanced news coverage.
After a quotation (p. 263): Include the parenthetical citation after the last quotation mark and before the period and include the page number.
 - “Falsely balanced news coverage can distort the public’s perception of expert consensus on an issue (Koehler, 2018, p. 263)
 - Koehler (2018) stated, “Falsely balanced news coverage can distort the public’s perception of expert consensus on an issue” (p. 263).
Personal communications (p. 260): When citing an email, text message, online chat or direct message, interview, or phone conversation, include the initial(s) and last name of the communicator and provide as exact a date as possible in the text. Do not include in the reference page.
 - (T. Nguyen, personal communication, February 24, 2020).
 - T. Nguyen said, “...” (personal communication, February 24, 2020).
- 6. References (p. 281):** “Each work in the reference list must be cited in the text” (p. 257). There are four elements of a reference: **Author** (Who is responsible for this work?), **Date** (When was this work published?), **Title** (What is this work called?), and **Source** (Where can I retrieve this work?).

**Correct spelling
and grammar
are always
important!**

- Alphabetize by the last name of the first author.
- The first line of an entry should be aligned to the left margin, with subsequent lines indented 0.5 inch (hanging indent).
- For 2–20 authors, include last names and initial(s) and an ampersand before the last author:
Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C.
- Pay attention to the formatting, capitalization, and punctuation for the examples in the box below:

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (2020). Title of journal article. *Name of Journal*, volume(issue), 1–14. URL or DOI, www.website.com

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (2020). *Title of book*. Publisher.

Title of webpage. (n.d.). www.website.com

- 7. Quotations (p. 270):** It is better to paraphrase content within the context of your own paper and style, but quotations should be used if “reproducing an exact definition ... when an author has said something memorably or succinctly, or when you want to respond to exact wording” (p. 270).
- For short quotations (fewer than 40 words), follow the formatting with quotation marks in the “After a Quotation (p. 263)” subheading’s example above.
 - For long quotations (40 or more words), use block quotation formatting; start the quotation on a new line with a 0.5-inch indentation, do not include quotation marks, and indent any following paragraphs an additional 0.5 inch.
- 8. Page numbers and headings (p. 44):** The title should be left-aligned in all capital letters in the header (see the top of this page), and page numbers should be right-aligned in the header. Use the automatic numbering in your word processor; do not manually type in page numbers.
- 9. Section headings (p. 48):**

Level	Format
1	Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
2	Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
3	<i>Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading</i> Text begins as a new paragraph.

Title case capitalization (p. 167): Capitalize the first word of the title; the first word of the subtitle; the first word after a colon or end punctuation; any major words, including the second word of a hyphenated phrase (e.g., “Self-Report”); words four or more letters long. Do not capitalize conjunctions, articles, or prepositions less than four letters.

10. Numbers (p. 178): In general, express numbers zero through nine in words, and 10 or more through numerals. There are a few exceptions:

When to use numerals (p. 178): Numbers preceding units of measurement (e.g., a 5-mg dose, with 10.5 cm); numbers that represent statistical or mathematical functions, fractional or decimal quantities, percentages, ratios, and percentiles and quartiles (e.g., 3 times as many, a ratio of 16:1), the 5th percentile); numbers that represent time, dates, ages, scores and points on a scale, and sums of money (e.g., about 8 months, scored 4 on a 7-point scale, 2-year-olds, received \$5).

When to use words (p. 179): Any number at the beginning of a sentence, title, or heading (e.g., Twelve students improved, and 12 students did not improve.) (avoid this by rewording the sentence if possible); common fractions (e.g., one fifth of the class, two-thirds majority); universally accepted usage (e.g., Twelve Apostles, Five Pillars of Islam).

11. Bonus Features:

Elements of a student title page (p. 30):

Title in the Upper Half of the Page, Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading, Followed by

Two Double-Spaced Returns

Name(s) of Each Author

Institutional Affiliation (most likely the University)

Course Number and Name

Instructor Name

Assignment Due Date

The running head (p. 37): Running heads are only required for works submitted for publication, not for student papers (unless required by the professor or institution).

Spacing after punctuation marks (p. 155): Use one space after every kind of punctuation, except for internal periods in abbreviations (e.g., a.m.) and colons in ratios (1:4).