

## Checklist for Writing in APA Style

Need to write in APA style but don't know where to start? Use the checklists below to help you cover the main points!

The first page is a baseline for learning APA Style and includes the major and most commonly-used components. Once you've mastered these components, the second page covers some of the important details and nuances of APA, and then lists some occasionally-overlooked components for those using APA style fluently.

The checklist items are parenthetically cross referenced with section and page numbers from the APA Style Manual 6<sup>th</sup> Edition wherever possible. If the item itself doesn't jog your memory, look it up!

### ***Getting Started with APA Style:***

*This is the big picture of a paper in APA Style. Make sure these points are covered before moving on to the finer details.*

- **Title Page and Formatting**

- The phrase "Running head" and title on first page/title only on following pages, page # upper right on all pages (2.1, p41; 8.03, p229-230)
- Title, Author, and Institution on top ½ of title page (2.01+2.02, p23-24)
- 1" margins, double-spaced, 1<sup>st</sup> line of each paragraph indented (8.03, p229)
- Correct heading/subheading format at least to level 3 (3.03, p62-63)

- **Abstract** (not always required)

- Heading centered, not bold, text not indented (2.04, p27)
- Fewer than 250 Words (2.04, p27)
- Summarizes main points without evaluation (2.04, p26)

- **Language**

- Specific and clear (3.09, p68)
- Formal, non-colloquial language (3.09, p68)
- Objective, non-biased language (e.g., avoid gendered language when not needed) (3.11-3.17, p70-77)

- **In-text References**

- Writer understands why and when to cite a source (6.01-6.10, p169-174)
- Avoidance of accidental plagiarism (e.g., copying from notes that were unattributed quotations) (6.01, p170)
- In-text parenthetical references correctly formatted (Table 6.1, p177)
- Signal phrases used appropriately (6.11, p174)
- Page numbers provided for paraphrases and direct quotes (6.03-6.03, p170-171)

- **References Page**

- Alphabetized with hanging indent (6.25, p181; 2.11, p37)
- Each reference format correct for the reference type (7, p193-224)
- Includes all cited sources except personal communications (6.22, p180)

***Feeling comfortable with these? To delve a little deeper, move on to the next page!***

### ***Some Details and Nuances of APA Style:***

*These points are important for consistency and address some of the questions and issues one encounters when doing a lot of writing in APA Style.*

- **Title Page and Formatting**
  - Titles should be 12 words or fewer, shortened in running head to no more than 50 characters including spaces and punctuation (2.01, p23; 8.03, p229)
  - In-text seriation (a) (b) (c) in text, 1. 2. 3. in list form (3.04, p63-64)
  - All level subheadings correct (Table 3.1, p62)
  - No heading for the introduction (3.03, p63)
- **Language**
  - Third person when possible, but first person when discussing any actions taken (e.g., say “I reviewed...” rather than “This author reviewed...”) (3.09, p69)
  - Avoid passive voice (3.18, p77)
  - Avoid wordiness (3.08, p67)
- **In-text References**
  - In-text citations correctly use et al. (6.12, p175)
  - Alphabetize multiple citations in same parentheses (6.16, p177-178)
  - Cite e-mail, conversations, letters, etc., as (J. Q. Anyone, personal communication, September 30, 2014) (6.20, p179)
  - Quotation marks for article or chapter titles in text (4.07, p91)
  - Italicize book titles in text (4.21, p104)
  - Use a block quote for more than 40 words, no quotation marks (4.08, p92)
- **References Page**
  - Capitalization only the first word in titles and subtitles of works (6.29, p185)
  - Book chapters should be cited with the author(s) of the chapter as well as the editor(s) of the book (7.02, p202)
  - Use “retrieved from” if (a) you retrieved the article online, and (b) the online file is the version of record (version of record 6.24, p181; retrieved from 7.01 p198)
  - Include issue # only for journals paginated by issue, not by volume (7.01, p198)
  - Cite power point slides as you would cite information posted on a website) (not thoroughly covered in manual – see [blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2010/11/how-to-cite-something-you-found-on-a-website-in-apa-style.html](http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2010/11/how-to-cite-something-you-found-on-a-website-in-apa-style.html))

### ***Full APA Style, including:***

*Listing all of APA Style would simply be rewriting the manual, but these are some to be aware of:*

- **Formatting**
  - Though not absolutely required, APA notes that “spacing twice after punctuation marks aids readers of draft manuscripts.” (4.01, p88)
- **Language**
  - To avoid bias, refer to groups by their preferred name or title (3.11, p72)
- **References Page**
  - Include doi for electronic content whenever possible (6.32, p191)
  - If no doi for electronic content, use journal’s home page URL (6.32, p191)
  - Reverse doi lookup is available for older work that has since been assigned a doi (see [www.crossref.org/](http://www.crossref.org/))
  - Check APA before copying a reference out of a book or journal (may be modified APA)
- **Tables and Figures**
  - Provided at the end of the document, each on a separate page (8.03, p230)