



## APA 7<sup>TH</sup> EDITION CHANGES FOR STUDENT WRITERS

Below you'll find the changes between APA 6<sup>th</sup> Edition and APA 7<sup>th</sup> Edition that are most relevant to student writers. They are organized by section of the paper, rather than section of the manual, to make them more intuitive as you write. The checklist items are also parenthetically cross referenced with section numbers from the APA Style Manual 7<sup>th</sup> Edition wherever possible. If the item doesn't seem clear, look it up!

**Student Writing vs Journal Writing:** APA now has two standard formats; one is for journals, which is what APA has always been designed for, but now there is another set of standards for student writers. The list below uses the student writing standard for items that differ between the two.

- **Title Page and Formatting for Student Writing**

- Unlike 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, you no longer use a running head on any pages; the header is just a page # aligned top right on all pages (2.18)
- Titles should be brief and clear, but there is no longer a word limit (2.4)
- Similar to 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, you put the Title in bold Title Case, centered, in top ½ of page, but with one blank line following (2.3)
- In 7<sup>th</sup> edition, students should put the Author, University, Course Name and Number, Course Instructor, and Due Date each on separate lines beginning one blank line down from title, all centered Title Case, not bold (2.3)
- The 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> level headings have been revised; 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> level headings are now the same as 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> level respectively, but indented with the paragraph text beginning on the same line as the heading (2.27)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Edition adds the option to use either serif or sans serif fonts that are clean and accessible (2.19)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Edition explicitly says to use only one space after a period (6.1)

- **Abstract** (not always required)

- "Abstract" is now a bold heading in 7<sup>th</sup> edition, like a normal 1<sup>st</sup> level heading (2.9)
- Numbers included in an abstract now follow the same guidelines as the rest of the text: spell out any number below 10, and use numerals for numbers 10 or larger (6.32)

- **Language**

- While previous editions of APA have encouraged third-person writing, 7<sup>th</sup> edition explicitly says you should not refer to yourself or your coauthors in the third person (4.16)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Edition endorses the singular "they" and says to avoid labeling people if the label is irrelevant to your research (e.g., use singular "they" by default and avoid gendered language when not needed; 5.5)
- Chapter 5 of the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition manual now provides updated bias-free language guidelines that are in line with current best-practice; that chapter is strongly recommended reading.
- When an abbreviation occurs next to a citation, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition says to put both in the same parentheses and separate them with a semicolon (e.g, like this; 6.25)



- **In-text References**
  - 7<sup>th</sup> Edition now uses “et al.” in any citation with three or more authors, unless doing so would create ambiguity about the citation (e.g., you have two sources from the same year with the same first author or authors; 8.18)
  - 7<sup>th</sup> Edition still requires page numbers for direct quotes, but no longer requires them for paraphrased material (8.25)
  - Personal Communication guidelines have been updated in 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. In addition to e-mail, conversations, letters, etc., you now cite class handouts and materials, if they *are not available to the reader*, as personal communication (e.g., J. Q. Anyone, personal communication, September 30, 2014; 8.9)
  - 7<sup>th</sup> Edition offers explicit guidelines on citations inside quotes; when quotes contain a citation, include the citation in your quote but do not include the source in the reference list (8.32)
  
- **References Page**
  - In 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, “References” is a normal 1<sup>st</sup> level heading
  - Reference types for many sources have changed between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Editions (9, 10)
  - In 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, always include the journal issues number (unlike 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, which omitted the issue number for journals paginated by volume; 10.1)
  - In 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, do not include a place name with the publisher for books (10.2)
  - Unlike 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition now includes up to 20 authors for a given citation before using “...” to indicate omitted names (9.8)
  - In 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, use a straight URL (without “retrieved from”) for most sources read online (9.33)
  - Use “retrieved from” with a date ONLY when the content is time-specific and designed to change, such as a social media feed, an online profile, and so on (9.16)
  - 7<sup>th</sup> Edition strongly encourages writers to include a DOI whenever possible, and to present them as hyperlinks rather than the old “DOI-colon-number” format (9.34)
  - Reverse DOI lookup is available for older work that has since been assigned a DOI (see the “search metadata” tab on [www.crossref.org/](http://www.crossref.org/))
  
- **Tables and Figures**
  - 7<sup>th</sup> Edition says to left-align all tables and figures (do not center them; 7.6)
  - In 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, unlike 6<sup>th</sup>, for *both* tables and figures, place the number, e.g. “Table 1,” in bold on one line above the table or figure, and the title in title case on a second line below the number, with both lines both above the table or figure itself (7.9, Table 7.1, 7.23, Figure 7.1)

*By the AUNE Writing Center*