APA 7ᵀᴴ Edition Checklist

Use the checklists below to help you cover the main points of APA Style. This first page is a baseline for learning APA Style and includes the most commonly-used components. Once you've mastered these, the second page covers some important details and nuances of APA, and also lists some occasionally-overlooked rules for those using APA style fluently.

The checklist items are parenthetically cross referenced with section numbers from the APA Style Manual 7th 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. These are the points you may want to practice or memorize to make writing in APA easier.

- **Title Page and Formatting for Student Writing**
  - ☐ Use a page # aligned top right on all pages (2.18)
  - ☐ Put the Title in bold Title Case, centered, in top ½ of page with one blank line following (2.3)
  - ☐ 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)
  - ☐ Use 1" margins, double-spaced, 1ˢᵗ line of each paragraph indented (2.21; 2.11)
  - ☐ Apply Correct heading/subheading format (2.27)
  - ☐ Use only one space after a period (6.1)

- **Abstract** (not always required)
  - ☐ Use fewer than 250 Words on a separate page (2.9)
  - ☐ Center "Abstract" as bold heading, and align the body text left with no indent (2.9)
  - ☐ Summarize main points without evaluation (2.9)

- **Language**
  - ☐ Choose specific and clear phrasing (4.4)
  - ☐ Use formal, non-colloquial language (4.8)
  - ☐ Do not refer to yourself or your coauthors in the third person (4.16)
  - ☐ Use the labels people want used for themselves (5.2)
  - ☐ Avoid labeling people if the label is irrelevant to your research (5; e.g., use singular "they" and avoid gendered language when not needed, 5.5)
  - ☐ Take care when comparing groups; avoid false hierarchies and essentialism; do not speak about groups as if they are homogenous, and avoid listing groups in order of social dominance (5.2)

- **In-text References**
  - ☐ Cite sources for direct quotes, summaries, and paraphrases, but also for data and data sets, tables or figures, general facts that are not common knowledge, and references to theories (8.1-8.2)
  - ☐ Avoid accidental plagiarism (e.g., copying from notes that were unattributed quotations; 8.2)
  - ☐ Use correct in-text references (Table 8.1)
  - ☐ Choose direct quotations carefully and sparingly (8.25)
  - ☐ Provide page numbers for direct quotes (8.25)

- **References Page**
  - ☐ Alphabetize sources, use a hanging indent, and double-space the whole list (9.43)
  - ☐ Check each reference is formatted correctly by source type (9)
  - ☐ Include all cited sources except personal communications (8.9)

Some Details and Nuances of APA Style:

These points address some of the issues one encounters when doing more complex writing in APA Style:

- **Title Page and Formatting**
  - Titles should be brief and clear (2.4)
  - Do not use a heading for the introduction unless named something other than "introduction" (3.03)
  - In-text seriation is (a) (b) (c) in a paragraph, or 1. 2. 3. in list form (6.50-6.51)
- **Language**
  - Avoid hedging, e.g. "I would suggest" and instead be direct, e.g., "I suggest" (4.14)
  - Avoid overusing passive voice (many writers struggle with this; 4.13)
- **In-text References**
  - Be careful not to create ambiguous citations through use of et al. (8.18)
  - Alphabetize multiple citations in same parentheses, but list multiple citations from the same author in order by year (8.12)
  - Cite e-mail, conversations, letters, etc., as (J. Q. Anyone, personal communication, September 30, 2014) (8.9)
  - When quotes contain a citation, include the citation in your quote but do not include the source in the reference list (8.32)
  - Use a block quote format for quotes more than 40 words, but do not use quotation marks (8.27)
  - Enclose journal article titles in your text within quotation marks (6.17)
  - Italicize book titles in your text (6.22)
- **References Page**
  - Recognize that many unusual sources will not have a prescribed reference type and use the format for the most similar type available (9.1)
  - 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)
  - Include doi for all content whenever possible (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/)
  - Check for updated APA format before copying a reference out of a book or journal (many formats have changed from previous editions)
- **Tables and Figures**
  - Refer to tables and figures either in the text, e.g. "Indicated in Table 1…" or parentheses, e.g. "(see Table 1)" (7.5)
  - Left-align all tables and figures (7.6)
  - 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)
  - Give all tables and figures brief and clear titles. Note that you should be able to generally infer the content of the table or figure from the chosen title (7.11, 7.25)
  - Take special care when constructing very complicated tables or figures; while they can be constructed using drawing tools in a word processor, those tools are often unstable between computers and operating systems. A safer option is to create your table or figure elsewhere and export it as a high-resolution image which can then be embedded in your document. If you take this approach, however, do not include the number or title in the image—add them in the document.

By the AUNE Writing Center