

**Common APA Writing Standards  
Naropa Writing Center, Naropa University**

- Department of Contemplative Psychotherapy • Department of Contemplative Psychology
- Department of Transpersonal Counseling Psychology

Writing Standards adopted by the above departments based on APA Publication Manual, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (This list is not inclusive of all features of APA you will need for your papers. Please consult APA Publication Manual, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, for further details and information not provided here. Also, check with individual instructors for specific requirements they may have for papers.)

**DOCUMENT PREPARATION**

- Paper Size: 8.5” by 11” paper. For most class papers, use one staple in the upper left corner to fasten your paper together; each page should be printed on one side of the paper only, not double-sided (p. 284 with Naropa revision).
- Typeface/Font: Times New Roman, Courier, or other similar "serif" font (p. 285), black in color. 12 points on a computer, or Pica or Elite carriages on a typewriter (p. 285).
- Margins: Use uniform margins of 1” at the top, bottom, left, and right of every page. Do not justify the right margin (pp. 286-287).
- Page Numbers: Order pages consecutively beginning with the title page. Use Arabic numerals (i.e., 1, 2, 3). The number should be 1” from the right edge of the paper, ½” from the top edge of the paper (p. 288), and five spaces after the page header.
- Page Headers: Use the first two or three words from the title in the upper right-hand corner, five spaces before the page number. All pages, including the title and reference pages, should have the page header and page number. This is used as an identifier should the pages become separated; it is different from the Running Head (p. 288).
- Running Head: This is an abbreviated title typed flush left on the top of the title page but double-spaced below the Page Header. After the caption “Running head: \_\_\_\_\_,” type the abbreviated title with all letters CAPITALIZED. Do not exceed 50 characters, including punctuation and spaces.
- MACP and BACP papers:** **Include a running head for all papers except Master’s Papers and Theses. Master’s Papers and Theses are considered self-published documents and are generally much too long for journal submissions.**

**DOCUMENT PUNCTUATION AND STYLE**

- Character Spacing: Space once (not twice) after ALL punctuation; this includes after commas, colons, and semicolons; after punctuation marks at the ends of sentences; after periods that separate parts of a reference citation; and after the periods of the initials in personal names (e.g., Mark T. Edwards); **DO NOT** space after internal periods in abbreviations, such as e.g., a.m., i.e., or U.S.A, or around colons used in ratios, such as 1:3 (p. 291).
- Double Line Spacing: Double space between all lines of the manuscript. Double space after every line in the title, headings, in-text and block quotations, references, figures, and all parts of tables (p. 286). (**NOTE:** *The APA Manual frequently single-spaces in the manual in order to conserve space.*)
- Indentation: Indent the first line of every paragraph and the first line of every footnote. For consistency, use the tab key, which should be set at five spaces or 1/2". Type the remaining lines of the manuscript to a uniform left-hand margin. The only exceptions to those requirements are (1) the abstract, (b) block quotes, (c) titles and headings, (d) table titles and notes, and (e) figure captions (p. 289).
- Italics: Use in References/Bibliography for book and journal titles (p. 286).
- Quotes—Short: (Running Text Quote) Quotations of fewer than 40 words should be incorporated in the text and enclosed by double quotation marks (“ ”) (p. 292).
- Quotes—Long: (Block Quote) Place quotations of 40 or more words in a double-spaced block of typewritten lines with no quotation marks. Indent five spaces (or 1/2 inch) from the left margin without the usual opening paragraph indent. If the quotation is more than one paragraph, indent the first line of the second and additional paragraphs five spaces or 1/2" from the new margin. Do not indent the right margin (p. 292).
- Citations: In Text: All citations used in text must be included in the References at the end of the paper (p. 215; pp. 207-214), except personal communication. Some examples of how to cite a reference in text (p. 118, 120-121) are:
- Example 1: Walker (2000) compared reaction times ...  
Example 2: In a recent study of reaction times (Walker, 2000) ...  
Example 3: In a recent study of reaction times (Walker & Thomas, 2000)...
- NOTE: The ampersand "&" is only used within parentheses.** When written in the text, the word “and” is spelled out.
- Example 4: Walker and Thomas (2000) compared reaction times ...  
Example 5: Walker (2000) reports, “Compared to the initial reaction...” (p. 5).  
Example 6: “Compared to the initial reaction time...” (Walker, 2000, p. 5). (p. 214). Also, see notes on page 3 in the sample paper for personal communications.

References: The reference list at the end of an article or paper provides the information necessary to identify and retrieve each source (pp. 299 & 223). See below for information on how to set up the reference page. Authors should choose references judiciously and must include only the sources that were used in the research and preparation of the article or paper. References are listed alphabetically with an author-date citation system (p. 215).  
Examples include:

**Periodical (Ex: Journal, Magazine)**

Author, A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. (1994). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, xx(x), xxx-xxx.

**Nonperiodical (Ex: Book)**

Author, A. A. (1994). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher.

**Part of a Nonperiodical (Ex: Chapter in a book)**

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (1994). Title of chapter. In A. Editor, B. Editor, & C. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pp. xxx-xxx). Location: Publisher.

**Online Periodical (Ex: Online Journal or Magazine)**

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (2000). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, xx, xxx-xxx. Retrieved month day, year, from source (NOTE: Source is the URL in format "<http://...>" there is no period at the end)

**Online Document (Ex: Stand-alone document or site)**

Author, A. A. (2000). Title of work. Retrieved month day, year, from source (NOTE: no period at the end)

Levels of Headings: Most papers will require between one to three levels of headings at the most (pp. 113-114, 289-290). These include:

**One Level**

For a short article or paper, one level of heading may be sufficient:

The Methodology of Nonverbal Intelligence Testing  
(Heading is centered uppercase and lowercase; text begins on the next line)

**Two Levels**

For many articles and papers, two levels of heading are enough:

The Methodology of Nonverbal Intelligence Testing  
*Procedure* (Heading is flush left, italicized, upper and lowercase; text begins on the next line)

**Three Levels**

Three levels of heading are needed for articles and papers with more detail and discussion:

The Methodology of Nonverbal Intelligence Testing  
*Procedure*  
*Pretraining period.* (Heading is indented, italicized, lowercase and ends with a period; text begins right after the period on the same line as the heading.)

- Orphans:** Avoid having a new heading alone at the bottom of a page or one word or line of text from the preceding paragraph or section at the top of a page alone. There should be at least two lines of text after the start of a paragraph or new section heading at the bottom of the page or else simply move all the text to the top of the next page. Likewise, there should be at least two lines of text at the top of the following page to avoid a single line of text or single word at the top of the next page.
- Abbreviations:** Use sparingly and use only those abbreviations that will help communicate with your readers. A term initially must be written out completely and followed immediately by its abbreviation in parentheses in order to be used as an abbreviation in the text (pp. 103-104).
- Hyphenation:** Do not divide words at the end of the line and do not use the hyphenation function to break up words. Let a line run short rather than break a word at the end of a line (p. 89).
- Numbers:** In general, use figures to express numbers 10 and above and words to express numbers below 10 (pp. 122-129).  
Use only figures to express numbers when:
- numbers below 10 are grouped for comparison with numbers 10 and above
  - numbers immediately precede a unit of measurement
  - numbers represent statistical or mathematical functions, fractional or decimal qualities, percentages, ratios, and percentiles and quartiles
  - numbers represent time; dates; ages, sample, subsample, or population size; specific numbers of subjects or participants in an experiment; scores and points on a scale; exact sums of money; and numerals as numerals
  - numbers denote a specific place in a numbered series, parts of books and tables, and each number in a list of four or more numbers
- Seriation:** To show seriation within a paragraph or sentence, use lowercase letters in parentheses (p. 292). For example:  
Participants considered (a) some alternative course of action, (b) the factors influencing the decision, and (c) the probability of success.  
As a list, seriation looks like this:
1. Begin with paragraph indent. Type second and succeeding lines flush left.
  2. The second item begins a new paragraph.
- For seriation within a sentence, with or without letters in parentheses, use a comma to separate three or more elements that do not have internal commas; use semicolons to separate three or more elements that have internal commas (pp. 78-79, 115-116).
- Copyright:** Copyright policies vary among publishers. It is the responsibility of each author to determine the requirements needed in order to reproduce or quote various amounts of text in an article or paper. For all APA publications, permission to reproduce text is necessary from both APA and the original author(s) of the article if the author uses more than 500 words from the original article (p. 356).

## DOCUMENT COMPONENTS

- Title/Cover Page:** Include a cover page for all papers. Type the page header and running head as described above in Document Preparation. Type the title in uppercase and lowercase, centered between the left and right margins and positioned in the upper half of the page. The title should be 10-12 words (p. 10-11). If the title is two or more lines, double space the lines (p. 296). There are two exceptions to what you will find on page 296: Do not put the name of the university; instead, put the name of the course for which you have prepared the paper. Then, double space, and put the date the paper is due. See sample cover page included below.
- Abstract:** Term papers may or may not require an abstract, as requested by an instructor (MACP term papers do not require an abstract by department rule). The abstract should begin on a new page with the manuscript page header and page number 2 in the upper right-hand corner of the page. Type the word “Abstract” in uppercase and lowercase letters, centered, at the top of the page. Type the abstract itself as a single paragraph in block format (without paragraph indentation), and do not exceed 120 words (p. 298). Note: for theses papers, see Thesis Manual for additional information.
- Text:** Begin the text on a new page, and identify the first text page with the manuscript page header and the page number 2 (or page 3 if your paper has an abstract) in the upper right-hand corner of the page. Type the title of the paper centered at the top of the page, double space, and then type the text. The sections of the text follow each other without a break; do not start a new page or triple or quadruple space when a new heading occurs (pp. 298-299). **NOTE:** An introduction to a paper is never labeled “Introduction;” the first part of a paper is assumed to be an introduction.
- Reference List:** Start the reference list on a new page. Type the word “References” in uppercase and lowercase letters, centered, at the top of the page. Double space all reference entries. Use a hanging indent format, meaning that the first line of each reference is set flush left and subsequent lines are indented (p. 299). See sample reference list above.

**NOTE:** For theses papers, the inclusion of additional components may be appropriate or desired. These include the preliminary pages such as approval page, dedications, table of contents, inspirational quotes, appendices, and abstract. See the Thesis Manual for more details or consult with your thesis chair or instructor.

## WRITING STYLE

### Writing-Style APA Guidelines

Editorial *we*: For clarity, restrict your use of *we* to refer only to yourself and your coauthors (use *I* if you are the only author of the paper). Broader uses of *we* leaves your readers to determine to whom you are referring; instead, substitute an appropriate noun to clarify your usage. Examples: Change “We usually classify bird songs...” to “Researchers usually classify...” Change “We are passionate...” to “Humans are passionate...” Change “We tend to dispute...” to “As behaviorists, we tend to dispute...” (p. 41).

Active voice is preferable to passive voice: Change “The survey was conducted...” to “We conducted the survey...” Change “The experiment was designed by Simpson (2001)” to “Simpson (2001) designed the experiment” (p. 39).

### General Writing-Style Guidelines

Always check spelling, grammar, and punctuation carefully.

Attempt to write in a way that is clear and accurate with smooth transitions. Avoid wordiness, excessive adjectives and redundancy. However, brevity should not be at the expense of expression. Clear, concise, yet imaginative and descriptive language should be the goal of writing a professional paper.

When writing about human subjects and/or experience, humanize your descriptions. Balance clinical observations with subjective, descriptive writing. Present a whole human experience and/or person.

Be careful in your use of potentially sexist and/or racist language. APA’s guidelines on sexist language specify avoiding the dilemma of choosing gender-based pronouns (he or she) by modifying language as in the following example: Change “The researcher must avoid letting his own biases and expectations...” to “The researcher must avoid biases and expectations...”


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Many of the guidelines above were taken, with permission, from:  
Kennedy, R. (2002). Common department APA writing standards: Department of Somatic Psychology.  
Boulder, CO: Naropa University.


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Visit the Naropa Writing Center, Monday-Thursday 10-6, Friday 10-2

Running head: WRITING APA RESEARCH PAPERS



The running head appears like this, below the page header and aligned with the left margin. Use keywords from the title of the paper. All letters of the abbreviated title are CAPITALIZED. Can be up to 50 characters.




The page header goes on the top of each page, aligned with the right margin. Use the first two or three words of the title, enter five spaces, and then enter the page number. Using the “header” function in MS Word can be helpful for this element of the paper.

## Writing Research Papers: A Sample of APA Format

Sally Doe & Thomas Doe

PSYT 700 Research and Statistics

October 15, 2004



This section should begin with the title of the paper (one or two lines usually), followed on the next line by your name, then the course and the date the paper is turned in. Double space between all lines.

Paper starts with the title on first page. The first section is assumed to be the introduction and does not need a label or heading.

## Writing Research Papers: A Sample of APA Format

The first level of headings, in a paper with three levels of headings, is centered on the line. Each main word is capitalized.

Papers in APA style should use the APA standards for page setup, typeface, cover page, reference page, in-text citation, figures and graphs, writing style, language bias, and more. The following sample is intended only to serve as a visual aid for APA layout for page headers and some of the common variations of in-text citations and references. Please consult your department guidelines and the *APA Publication Manual* for further details. All examples of in-text citations listed here are fictitious, except the APA manual citations.

### In-Text Citations

#### *Direct Quotes and Paraphrasing*

The second level of headings, in a paper with three levels of headings, is aligned with the left margin and the words are in italics. Each main word is capitalized.

Citations of sources must be included for material and ideas that are not the author's own original ideas. When quoting directly or paraphrasing, most citations will include the author's name, year, and page number. A page number is not needed for paraphrased material; however, it is desirable to include a page number if possible since this will help readers locate the information. For basic examples, see the section on references in the guidelines above.

#### *Some Variations for In-Text Citations*

*No author.* For any text without an author, "Cite in text the first few words of the reference list entry (usually the title) and the year" (APA, 2001, p. 211). Note that the APA citation in the previous sentence is an example of this kind of citation. In the body of the paper, use italics for titles of books, periodicals, brochures, or reports. For short titles such as chapters in a book, articles, or poems, put double quotation marks around the title, such as: "Short Article Title," 2002.

*Number of authors.* For three to five authors, list all the authors' names the first time the source is cited in your paper: Smith, Frank, and Doe (1994). Subsequent citations of the same

The third level of headings, in a paper with three levels of headings, is indented from the left margin and the words are in italics. Only the first word is capitalized. The heading ends with a period and text begins on the same line.

source should include the first author and then the phrase et al.: Smith et al. (1994). For six or more authors, cite only the lead author followed with et al (even for the first citation).

*Personal communications.* Personal communications include e-mails, discussion groups, lectures, letters, interviews, and other similar communication forms. They are not included in the reference list as they are not recoverable data, but they do need to be cited in text. As an example, a quote or paraphrase from a personal communication would be followed by: (R. J. Johnson, personal communication, January 15, 2004). If the author is mentioned in the sentence, the information would follow the author's name, as in: R. J. Johnson (personal communication, January 15, 2004) said the study was...

*Citation of a work discussed in a secondary source.* To cite another author's citation, i.e., to cite an author whose original work you have not read, but whose work or ideas are mentioned in a source you are using, use the following guidelines:

In text, cite the original author (or title if there is no author), and with the phrase "as cited in," cite the secondary source author, date, and page. For example: "Roberts and McDonald's study (as cited in Johnson & Frank, 1998, p. 3)..." In the reference list, cite *only* the secondary source. In the example above, only Johnson and Frank's text would be cited in the reference list.

### Reference Page

The following reference page is included to show a sample of how to cite a broad range of different types of publications. It is important to note that in research papers all references must be cited in text, and all in-text citations (except personal communications) must be included on the reference page. The attached reference page lists other sources in order to provide the reader with a picture of a larger range of source material.

<p>For all APA papers, use 12-point type, and a serif typeface such as Times New Roman or Courier. Each page should have one-inch margins on all sides, and all text should be double spaced.</p>
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See notes in boxes at the right margin to locate citation elements you are looking for specifically. See notes at the end for important general information.

References

Allport, G. W. (1979). *The nature of prejudice*. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Book; One author

Bourdieu, P. (1993). The market of symbolic goods. In R. Johnson (Ed.), *The field of cultural production: Essays in art and literature* (pp. 112–141). New York: Columbia University

Press.

The editor's name is in format: first initial (s). last name (Ed.). If there's more than one editor listed use (Eds.) after the editors' names.

Chapter in edited book

Congressional Budget Office. (1988). *Changes in the living arrangements of the elderly: 1960-2030*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Book; Corporate author

Conway, L. G., III. (2001). Number and age of citations in social-personality psychology over the lifespan of the field: Older and wiser? *Dialogue*, 16(2), 14-15.

This journal is volume # 16, issue # 2.

Journal article with issue #

Friedman, H. S. (Ed.). (1990). *Personality and disease* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Wiley.

Book; Editor as author; Edition other than first.

Goleman, D. (1991, October 24). Battle of insurers vs. therapists: Cost control pitted against proper care. *New York Times*, pp. D1, D9.

Newspaper article

Montani, C., Billaud, N., Tyrrell, J., Fluchaire, I., Malterre, C., Lauvernay, N., et al. (1997).

Up to six authors can be listed. If more than six use the term "et al." as in this example.

Psychological impact of a remote psychometric consultation with hospitalized elderly people. *Journal of Telemedicine and Telecare*, 3, 140–145.

This journal is volume # 3, there is no issue #.

Journal article no issue #, More than six authors

Male-female brain differences. (n.d.). In *BrainPlace.com: Brain SPECT information and*

The URL is not underlined and is not followed by a period.

*resources*. Retrieved October 18, 2004, from <http://www.brainplace.com/bp/malefemaedif/default.asp>

Line breaks for URLs should come after a period or slash.

No author; No date; Chapter or section in an Internet document

Morse, S. S. (1995). Factors in the emergence of infectious diseases. *Emerging Infectious*

*Diseases*, 1(1). Retrieved October 10, 1998, from <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/>

[EID/eid.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/eid.htm)

Journal article; Online

Undisclosed settlement reached out of court in Michigan Biodyne civil suit. (1992, March 1).

*Psychiatric Times*, p. 16.

If there's no author put title first, then date.  
Alphabetize by first significant word in title.

No author;  
Newspaper article

Viens, J., & Kallenback, S. (2004). *Multiple intelligences and adult literacy*. New York:

Teacher's College Press.

Two authors; Book

Wilson, E. O. (1998, March). Back from chaos. *Atlantic Monthly*, 281, 41–62.

For magazines (and newspapers), give date shown on the publication:  
month for monthlies, or month and day for weeklies and dailies.

Magazine article

Other items to notice in citing sources in APA style:

The word "References" is typed centered at the top of the page in regular type.

One inch margins are set for both sides, top, and bottom.

Use hanging indent style: after first line of the reference, bring all subsequent lines in five spaces from the margin. The next reference starts at the margin for its first line.

All entries are **double** spaced and listed alphabetically.

Note the differences in capitalization: For titles of books, chapters, and articles, **only** the first word of the title, the first word after a colon, and proper nouns are capitalized.

No other words are capitalized for these sources. For periodical titles (journal, magazine, and newspaper titles) **all** the major words in the title, skipping the small words such as "of," "from," "as," etc., are capitalized.

Note the use of italics: Book, journal, magazine, and newspaper titles are in italics.

Chapter, article, and poem titles are in regular type (no italics).

Note the differences in how page numbers are included in a citation – see the examples above. Newspapers, journals/magazines, and chapters in edited books have different formats.

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Guidelines and sample paper are provided courtesy of the Naropa Writing Center. This paper is not a comprehensive list of format and reference details; it is a general overview. For further information consult the APA manual or contact the writing center at (303) 245-4606.

The sample paper citations for the reference page were taken primarily from:

Scribe, A. (2001, September 18). *Dr. Abel Scribe's guides to research writing and style*. Retrieved October 18, 2004, from <http://www.docstyles.com>