



APA Format Quick Reference

This handout covers basic principles of APA format, based on the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA), 7th edition (2020). Please refer to the *Publication Manual* sections included in parentheses for more help.

NOTE: Figures are not to scale; larger type and smaller margins are used for clarity.

GENERAL FORMAT

- Use one-inch margins at left, right, top, and bottom of each page (2.22).
- Use any serif or sans serif font (e.g. 11-pt. Calibri, 11-pt. Arial, 12 pt. Times New Roman; see 2.19).
- Double space everything. Do not add any extra lines between paragraphs (2.21).

TITLE PAGE (2.3)

- Includes the **title**, **author(s)**, **affiliation**, **course**, **instructor**, and **due date** – upper half of the page, centered, and double-spaced.
- Title should be **bolded** and one extra space above the other information. See Figure 1.
- Page number in upper right header (2.18).

NOTE: A running head is not necessary for student papers. If it is required, use a shortened version of the title with a max of 50 characters (does not need to be same words; see 2.8).

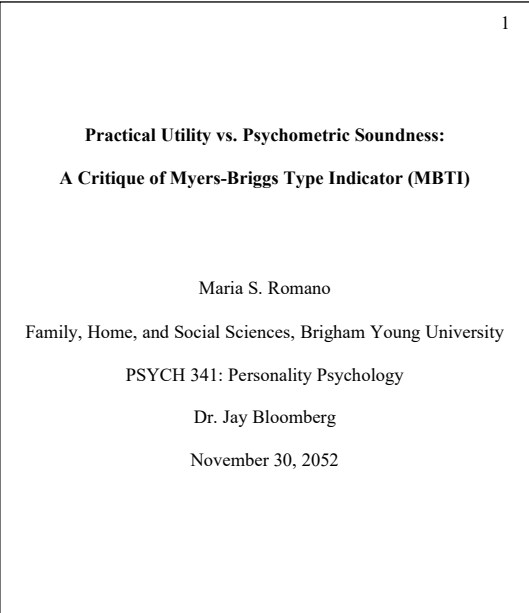


Figure 1: Sample title page

HEADINGS (2.27; see Table 2.3)

- APA has five levels of headings; most undergraduate papers only use three levels (see Figure 3). Content in subsequent headings should relate to initial headings.

NOTE: All other sections (**Abstract**, **Title**, **References**, **Appendices**) are centered, bold, title case headings. They use the same format as a Level 1 heading. The introduction heading is the title formatted as a Level 1 heading.

Level	Format
1.	Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading Used to introduce main ideas that will be divided into subsections by Levels 2, 3, 4, and 5.
2.	Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading Used to introduce subsections of each Level 1 heading.
3.	<i>Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading</i> Usually used to introduce case studies or specific examples introduced in Level 2.
4.	Indented, Bold, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period. Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.
5.	<i>Indented, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period.</i> Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

NOTE: If an instructor requires an abstract or appendix, please refer to the APA manual 7th edition for guidelines (see 2.9 and 2.14, respectively).

IN-TEXT CITATIONS (Chapter 8; see Table 8.1)

- In-text citations must accompany each use of information from another source, whether quoted, paraphrased, or summarized.

Information included: **author(s)**, **date** of publication, and **page number(s)**

- Guidelines for number of authors (8.17):

One or two authors: list all authors in each citation, as they are listed in the source.

Three or more authors: list only the first author, followed by et al. (which means, “and others”)

NOTE: If citing two different sources and the first two authors are the same in each source, but authors after the first two are different, list as many names necessary to distinguish each source (8.18).

No author listed: List the first 1-3 words of the source’s title as listed on the Reference page. If the source is an article, chapter, or web page, use double quotations; if it is a book, periodical, brochure, or report, italicize (8.14):

“Cancer Therapy,” 2052, p. A6) (*Depression*, 2052, pp. 24-68)

Authors		Citations in parentheses (8.11)	Citations in the text (8.11)
		Can be used within or after a sentence. If used after a sentence, place the period after the parentheses.	Emphasizes the author. Typically, the date directly follows the author in parentheses. NOTE: If emphasizing the date of publication as well, no parentheses are needed. e.g. “In 2052, Howard claimed... (p. 4)”
One author		(Howard, 2052, p. 4)	Howard (2052) ... (p. 4)
Two authors		(Valentino & Leitenberg, 2052, p. 4)	Valentino and Leitenberg (2052) ... (p. 4)
Three or more authors		(Wang et al., 2052, p. 4)	Wang et al. (2052) ... (p. 4)
Group author with abbreviation	First citation	(American Psychological Association [APA], 2052, p. 4)	American Psychological Association (APA, 2052) ... (p. 4)
	Subsequent citations	(APA, 2052, p. 4)	APA (2052) ... (p. 4)

- APA prefers the use of **primary** sources to **secondary** sources unless the primary source cannot be located. However, if citing a secondary source (i.e., you found the information in a secondary work, not the original source), name the original work, but cite the secondary source (8.6):

“According to Lee’s study (as cited in Wang et al., 2052) ...”

List only the secondary source (e.g. Wang, 2052), not the original work, in the reference list.

- Paraphrasing** is summarizing and synthesizing information from multiple sources (8.23).
 - When multiple sentences paraphrase one source, place the citation in the first sentence. If any subsequent sentences refer to the same source, do not repeat the citation for each sentence — but make it clear the same source is being cited. However, if other sources, personal opinions, or ideas exist within the paragraph, repeating the citations is necessary (8.24).
- Page numbers** (p. #) are required for citations of quoted material, and they are encouraged for paraphrased ideas (8.23). Use other placement identifiers such as paragraph numbers (para. #) or section headings (Discussion section, para. #, Chapter #) if there is no page number provided (8.28).

e.g. (Howard, 2052, p. 32) (Howard, 2052, para. 3) (Howard, 2052, Discussion section, para. 4)

Pages cited in the text:

Howard (2052) claimed the MBTI “should be administered to individuals considering marriage” (p. 32).

- **Citing multiple sources** in one parenthetical citation: list sources alphabetically by first author’s last name; separate each source with a semi-colon (8.12). Do NOT change the order of authors in each source. e.g. (Howard, 2052; Valentino & Leitenberg, 2052; Wang et al., 2052)
- **Block quotations** are quotes over 40 words, started on a new line, with the entire quote indented one-half inch from the left and without quotation marks. Place citations after the final punctuation mark (8.27).

NOTE: Details of in-text citation may be more complicated. Refer to *Publication Manual* (Chapter 8) for more help.

REFERENCES FORMAT (Chapters 9 & 10)

Every cited source in the paper must appear in the reference list.

- Label **References** at the top of a **new** page, centered, and bolded (9.43).
- List all references alphabetically, double spaced, in hanging indent format (see Figure 2; 9.43-9.49).
- List all authors of the source; include up to 20 authors. Use an ellipsis after author 19 to omit names until the last author (9.8).
NOTE: References without recoverable sources (personal communications: classroom lectures, e-mails, etc.) should not be included in reference list (9.37).
- **Online identifiers** are necessary for any online source (9.35).
DOIs: <https://doi.org/xxxxx>
URLs: <https://xxxxx>

NOTE: Do not add a period after the DOI or URL.

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References
Howard, C. J. (2052). Understanding personality differences in gender. <i>Journal of Personality Psychology</i> , 4(8), 235-255. https://doi.org/10.2828/a329283
Valentino, V., & Leitenberg, P. (2052). Psychometrics of personality measures: A meta-analysis. <i>Research in Psychological Type</i> , 3(20), 670-690. https://doi.org/10.3934/e204e985
Wang, L., Thompson, P. J., & Lewin, T. (2052). Development of personality factors across the life-span. <i>Personality</i> , 5(34), 19-40. https://doi.org/11.2938/a2937447

Figure 2: References page example

COMMON REFERENCE ENTRIES

Online Journal Articles (10.1)

- Article titles are not italicized or underlined, nor placed in quotes; capitalize only the first word, the first word following a colon, and the proper nouns.
- Italicize journal names and volume numbers, capitalizing all major words.

Author(s). (Date). Title of article. *Journal Title*, volume #(issue #), page range. [DOI or URL](#)

Valentino, V., & Leitenberg, P. (2052). Psychometrics of personality measures: A meta-analysis. *Research in Psychological Type*, 3(20), 670-690. <https://doi.org/10.3934/e204e985>

Books (10.2)

- Italicize book titles, capitalizing only the first word, first word following a colon, and proper nouns.

Author(s). (Date). *Title of book* (edition). Publisher Name. [DOI or URL](#)

Wang, L., Thompson, P. J., & Lewin, T. (2052). *Personality psychology: Development across the lifetime* (2nd ed.). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/09.2384/se30348>

Website (10.16)

- When no specific author is listed, use the group author (e.g. organization). If the group author and site name are the same, remove the site name from the reference (10.16.111).
- If no author or group author are listed, place the title of the article/webpage in place of the author.
- Italicize article titles, capitalizing only the first word, first word following a colon, and proper nouns.

- If a page has no date associated with it, use (n.d.) if the page is not expected to change. If the information is subject to change, as with a social media site or a dictionary entry, use a retrieval date. (9.16)

Author(s) or Group author. (Year, Month Day). *Article or webpage title*. Name of Website or News Website. <https://URLxxx>

World Health Organization. (2052, April 4). *Personality changes within mental illness*.
<https://who.org/personalityxxxx>

Howard, C. J. (2052, March 14). *An issue of personality: How are world leaders different from the regular person?* HuffPost. <https://huffpost.com/personalityxxxxx>

American Psychological Association. (n.d.). *APA dictionary of psychology*. Retrieved June 14, 2019, from <https://dictionary.apa.org/>

NOTE: For other types of sources, consult the *Publication Manual* (chapters 9 & 10) for more help.