

APA Table and Figure Guidelines



This handout covers basic APA table and figure guidelines adapted from the 7th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2020).

NOTE: The format of this handout does not necessarily represent APA format guidelines. Larger and smaller type (proportionally), smaller margins (proportionally), and different fonts are used for clarity in presentation.

Tables and figures present a large quantity of information clearly and concisely. They do not duplicate text, but present new, clarifying information. Include a table or figure only if necessary for understanding data. A reader should be able to understand them without the text.

Basic Presentation and Formatting

Placement (7.6): Refer to professor or journal preferences while choosing the placement option.

1. All tables and figures can follow the reference list. Each figure and table must be placed on a separate page. Tables and figures can also be placed in appendices at the end of the paper, if they are more supplemental than essential.
2. Place each table or figure in the text after the paragraph in which it is referenced. If the table or figure appear on the same page as the text, add a double-spaced blank line between the text and the table or figure. Place smaller tables and figures at the beginning or end of the page.

NOTE: All tables and figures must be aligned with the **left margin**, regardless of where they are located in the paper.

Numbering (7.10, 7.24): Number tables and figures in the order they appear in the text (e.g., Table 1, Table 2) NOT as “the table/figure above” (or “below”). If the table or figure is contained in an appendix, label it with the appendix letter as well (e.g., Figure A1, Figure A2, Figure B1).

Referring to Tables and Figures (7.5): Refer to every table and figure in the text of the paper, and tell the reader what to look for. Do not discuss every element of the table or figure—cover only the relevant highlights.

Acknowledging Sources (7.7): Permission must be obtained to reproduce or adapt information from a copyrighted source. New tables may be created using information from other sources. The sources must also be credited in the **general note** of a table or figure using the following wording:

Journal Adapted [or Reprinted] from [or the data in column x are from] “Title of Article,” by A. N. Author and C. O. Author, year, *Title of Journal*, volume #(issue #), p. xx (DOI or URL). Copyright [year] by the Name of Copyright Holder. Reprinted [or adapted] with permission.

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See sections 12.14-12.18 for more details on copyright attribution. Table 12.1 contains copyright attribution templates and Table 12.2 contains more copyright examples for tables and figures.

Table Example

Table number (7.10):
Located above the table, bolded, flush left, and using Arabic numerals (e.g. 1, 2, 3).

Table title (7.11): Located one double-spaced line below the table number, italicized and title-case, with no period.

Stub heading/column (7.12-7.13):
Information beneath the leftmost column heading should be flush left, unless the information is single digit numbers (centered).

Table notes (7.14):
Additional information that clarifies the data presented in the table body.

Abbreviations (7.15) that do not need definitions in notes: standard statistics (e.g. *M*, *SD*, *SE*, *F*, *df*, *n*, *p*), Greek letters (e.g. α , β , χ^2), or units of measurement (e.g. cm, m, mL, ng, oz, km/h, lb).

Confidence intervals (7.16) should be reported in the table if the table includes means, correlations, or regression slopes.

Table 1

Concise and Descriptive Table Title

Year	Women		Men	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1	14	16	10	20
2	20	34 ^a	40	32
3	13	23 ^b	45	20
4	29	30	22	14
5	33	47	29	37
Total	109*	150	146**	123

Note. This is an example of the elements in a typical table. This note is a *general note*, which appears first among the notes. It includes general explanations, abbreviations, and citations.

Example: *Note.* Non-responses were omitted from the data.

^a *Specific notes* appear in a new paragraph, after the *general note*. These notes refer to a specific row, column, or cell using superscript lowercase letters, located one superscript space after the data in reference. The descriptive note is located one superscript space after the respective superscript letter. ^b Place subsequent notes in the same paragraph.

Example: ^a *n* = 246 for each group.

^{*} *Probability notes* also appear in a new paragraph, after the *specific note*. These notes are used for *p* values and significance. ^{**} Place subsequent notes in the same paragraph, using the same formatting as *specific notes*.

Example: ^{*} *p* < .05. ^{**} *p* < .01.

Column headings (7.12):
Required for every column, centered in each cell. Headings should be singular, unless referring to a group, and be in sentence case, not bolded or italicized. Use column spanners (e.g. “Women” and “Men”) to avoid repetition in headings.

Table body (7.13): Rows and columns of the table that contain the primary data (can be single-, one-and-a-half-, or double-spaced). Center the information in each cell, unless flush left improves readability. Numbers with decimals can be aligned along the decimal, but should be centered. Insert a dash into a blank cell if the data were not obtained or not reported.

Table borders/shading (7.17): Avoid excessive borders and lines in a table. Only include horizontal lines to separate title and headings from data, or totals/summary information from other rows. Do not use vertical lines to separate data, or borders around every cell. Do not use shading in tables.

NOTE: For more examples of different types of tables, consult the *Publication Manual* (chapter 7).

Figure Example

Figure number (7.24):

Located above the figure, bolded, flush left, and using Arabic numerals (e.g. 1, 2, 3).

Figure image (7.26):

Elements of figures should be clear and legible, with 8-14 pt. font. Use title case for axis labels. Abbreviate “percentage” to “%” and “number” to “no.” Different types of figure images include: graphs, charts, drawings, maps, plots, and photographs.

Figure notes (7.28):

additional information that clarifies the information presented in the figure.

Abbreviations (7.15) that do not need definitions in notes: standard statistics (e.g. *M*, *SD*, *SE*, *F*, *df*, *n*, *p*), Greek letters (e.g. α , β , χ^2), or units of measurement (e.g. cm, m, mL, ng, oz, km/h, lb).

Figure 1

Concise and Descriptive Figure Title

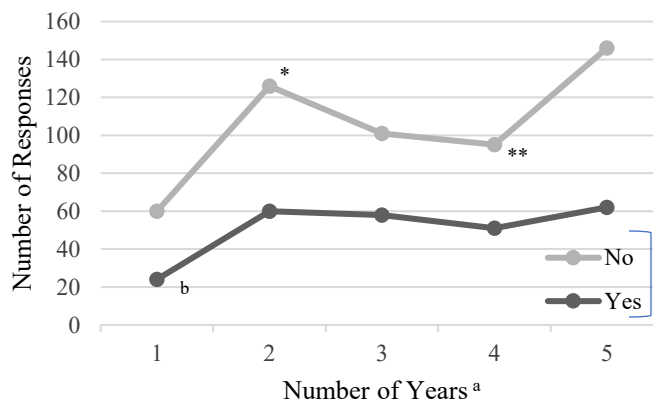


Figure title (7.25):

Located one double-spaced line below the figure number, italicized and title-case.

Figure legends (7.27):

(or *key*) required to explain any symbols, line styles, shading, or patterns in the figure, using the same font and size as the rest of the figure. Place within or below the figure. Use title case for legends or keys.

Note. This is an example of the elements in a typical figure. This note is a *general note*, which appears first among the notes. It includes general explanations, abbreviations, and citations.

Example: *Note.* Number of responses from each group are shown.

^a *Specific notes* appear in a new paragraph, following the *general note*. These notes reference elements of the figure using superscript letters, located near the element identified. The descriptive note is located one superscript space after the respective superscript letter. ^b Subsequent notes follow in the same paragraph.

Example: ^a *n* = 246 for each year

^{*} *Probability notes* also appear in a new paragraph, following the *specific note*.

These notes are used for *p* values and significance. ^{**} Subsequent notes follow in the same paragraph and use the same formatting as *specific notes*.

Example: ^{*} *p* < .05. ^{**} *p* < .01.

NOTE: For more examples of different types of figures, consult the *Publication Manual* (chapter 7).