

McDaniel College Psychology Department APA Style Quick Guide

Style

APA Style Language

- *Clarity* – be specific in descriptions and explanations
- *Conciseness* – condense information when possible
- *Plain* – use simple, descriptive adjectives, minimize figurative language and metaphors

Point of View & Voice

- Use 3rd person point of view, rather than 1st person
 - *Correct*: The study showed that...
 - *Incorrect*: I found that...
- Use active, rather than passive, voice
 - *Correct*: The participants responded...
 - *Incorrect*: The participants have been asked...

General Formatting

- Typed, double-space everything
- 1" margins on all sides
- 12 pt Times New Roman
- All text should be left-justified
- Include a page number in the upper-right-hand corner of every page
- Order of lab pages: Title page, Abstract, text (Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion), References, Appendices, Tables, Figures

Title Page

- Title should be centered, bold and written in title case. It should be three-four lines below the top margin of the page
- Short title (10-12 words in length), meaningful description of main topic discussed in paper
 - For example, in the title "The Effects of Caffeine and Sleep on Performance", both independent and dependent variables are included and it is clear what is being investigated
- Capitalize the first letter of main words in the title
- Two lines below the title, your name should appear (First, Middle Initial and Last)
- Beneath your name:
 - Department
 - Name and Number of the course
 - Instructor's name
 - Date

In-Text Citations

- Do not use authors' first names (or initials) or titles (Dr., Ms., Mrs.) when citing in-text.
 - Use the word "and" for a citation with 2 or more authors, when the citations is not parenthetical in the text
 - Kaufman and Cochrane (1987) compared. . .
 - Use and ampersand (&) for a citation with 2 or more authors, when the citation is parenthetical in the text
 - ...as demonstrated in earlier work (Kaufman & Cochrane, 1987).
 - "...do it this way for quoted material" (Kaufman & Cochrane, 1987, p. 10).

- When a parenthetical citation includes two or more sources, they should appear in alphabetical order by first authors last name with each source separated by a semi-colon (Kaufman & Cochrane, 1987; Smith, 2008).
- When a source has three, four, or five authors
 - Only the first author's name followed by "et al."
 - Wilson et al. (1984) found...
 - ...as demonstrated by earlier work (Wilson et al., 1984).
- When a source has six or more authors, the first citation in the text should be "Wilson et al. (1984) found..." or "...as demonstrated by earlier work (Wilson et al., 1984).

References

- Order citations alphabetically by first author's last name
- First line of each reference should be left-justified and subsequent lines indented
- Capitalize only the first word of the title of a paper, the first word after a colon or dash in title, and proper nouns
 - The effects of caffeine on performance: A meta-analysis
- Capitalize all major words in journal titles
 - *Title of Journal*
- An article in a journal or magazine
 - Author, A.A. (year). Title of article. *Name of Journal/Magazine*, Volume number, page number(s) of article.
- Italicize titles of books, but only capitalize the first word of the title
 - *Title of book*
- Entire book reference format
 - Author, A. A. (year). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher.
- Chapter in a book reference format
 - Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (year). Title of chapter. In A. Editor, B. Editor, & C. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pp. xxx-xxx). Location: Publisher.

Other General Style Guidelines

- In formal APA there are no contractions (can't = cannot, isn't = is not, etc.)
- Write out numbers (using words), if
 - starting a sentence
 - if # is below 10
- Use number (not words), if
 - #s 10 and above
- Note: center the title of your paper above the first line of your introduction.
- For labs:
 - Start a new page for: Title page, Abstract, Introduction, References, each Table, each Figure, and each Appendix. Do not start a new page for: Methods, Results, or Discussion.
 - Do not leave a heading stranded at the bottom of a page. If this occurs, the heading should be moved to the next page.