

University of North Alabama

Introduction to APA Style

Center for
WRITING EXCELLENCE

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Introduction to APA Style

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Introduction to APA Style

Who. (When). What. Where.

The American Psychological Association has set the standard for communication in the medical and social sciences since 1929. This handout is based primarily on the Publication Manual of the APA, Sixth Edition © 2010.

The most important goal in writing an APA-format research paper is keeping track of information sources and how they are relevant to the topic and argument. Introducing sources and identifying how they support claims are just as important as the technical aspects of the citation itself.

Elements

Each paragraph or section of the research paper needs to have three distinct parts: **claim**, **evidence**, and **discussion**. The claim refers back to the thesis, the evidence supports the claim, and the discussion explains how the evidence given is relevant to the claim.

When using primary research, such as interviews or surveys, the research methods need to be explained. However, when evidence is one or more outside sources from a journal or a book, you will need to use the citation information to explain why each source is useful. The most important piece of information for APA style is the date; in this style, newer knowledge is almost always preferred.

Simply presenting evidence is never enough. Always explain how the source can be used to support the claims as well as the overall purpose of the paper. It is better to have one or two sources that are thoroughly explained than to have three or four sources that have no context or explanation.

Quick Layout Overview

Title page

Provides the author's name, the title, the running head (short title), and the university affiliation. May contain additional information in an author note (see page 3). Answers the questions of *Who* and *What*.

Abstract

Header matches the body pages, not the title page. Includes a short summary of the intentions and methods of the research project. Does not include sources or explain the project's conclusion. See page 3. Answers the question of *Why* and *How*.

Body pages

12 point Times New Roman, one-inch margins, indented double-spaced paragraphs. Starts with the full title centered on the page. Answers the questions of *When* and *Where*.

Reference page

"References" centered at the top of the page. Uses hanging indent to separate individual references. Answers all the basic APA questions (see page 4).

Use "Different First Page" to make this alternate header. The title page is page 1.

For more than two authors, separate their names with commas and add "and" at the end. "John Smith, Paul Jones, and Ron Mack."

Letting Go: How Boot Camp
Conditions Soldiers to Leave Their Homes
Jane P. Jones and Robert R. Smith
University of North Alabama

Ask your professor whether an abstract is required. Not all papers will need one.

Author Note

This research project was completed in March 2011 with the help of Dr. Jane Bruce in the Nursing Department during NU 453.

Thanks to the ROTC at t
conducting interviews and colle

Most undergraduate papers will not require an author note, but it is a good place for any additional information the title page might need. Ask your instructor.

Abstract

Boot camps are designed to provide recruits with a sense of group solidarity and identity within the military brotherhood. This project attempted to determine what theories for the adoption of new social constructs are modeled by this training. Research for this project was conducted using interviews with the university ROTC and searches of prior studies in the nursing research databases. This paper identifies the most common psychological systems used in boot camps.

The four sentences in this short paragraph introduce the topic, present the research question, explain the types of research done, and relate the intended results. Further summary is not necessary.

Letting Go: How Boot Camp

Conditions Soldiers to Leave Their Homes

For many soldiers, the most memorable aspect of their training was boot camp. Boot camp is the transitional period wherein troops learn to identify with their branch of the armed forces. The process of boot camp has grown along with the field of psychology, and so a comparison between boot camp methods and psychological methods poses an interesting series of questions.

The 1972 Boot Camp Reform Act (Thompson, 2008)

instituted a series of changes to

branches of the military conduct

The abstract page, the first body page, and all subsequent pages have the same header.

Title should be centered at the top of the first body page.

Double space all text in APA; use a hanging indent on the References page to show paragraphs.

References

Koch, R. (2007). *Pocket guide to Boot Camps* (2nd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Smith, M., Flanagan, F., Judd, A., Burstyn, E., Bullock, S., Knight, S., et al. (2002). Building connections through team projects. *Military Exchange Quarterly*, 10(3), 208-213.

Stewart, T., & Biffle, G. (1999). Relationships in social dynamics. *Psychiatric psychology: Contemporary practice* (pp.124-138). Philadelphia: Lippincott-Williams and Wilkins.

Voltmeijer, I. A. (2000). A Buddhist response to the nature of human rights. *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 8(4). doi:10.1000/182

Whitmeyer, J.M. (2000). Power through appointment [Electronic version]. *Social Science Research*, 29, 535-555. Retrieved from <http://www.ssresearch.com/articles/04153873453>

For seven or more authors, list the first six with commas and add "et al."

For two to six authors, separate with commas and finish with the & symbol.

When citing an online source or journal, list the doi or the URL.

Article in a print journal.

Chapter in a book.

Creating a Reference Page

All the sources specifically mentioned in your paper must appear, alphabetized, on your reference page (certain exceptions exist for interviews, extremely common sources such as Scripture, and personal communication; see the APA Publication Manual). If your professor asks you to include a bibliography of sources you read but did not reference, this is also where they go.

If Microsoft Word's "References" tab is used, be sure to check the final product against a style guide. Automatic formatting or citation machines are often incorrect.

APA references follow the following pattern: Who. (When). What. Where.

Who. Identify the author, authors, or editors of a document. If a given document is produced by a corporate author, then the name of that entity may be used. The name of a website, however, should not be used here; it is part of *Where*, along with the page URL.

(When). Placing the latest date of publication in parentheses after the author indicates how recent the information is. The year of publication is usually sufficient; however, some source documentation formats require a more precise date. It can be included in the following format: (2008, September 30) or (2008, September). If there is no date, it is all right to use (n.d.) to indicate this; however, sources without a date may not be reliable.

What. This identifies the title of the article, book, webpage, film, project, section, or chapter. Only the first word and any proper nouns (plus the first word of the subtitle) should be capitalized, regardless of how the capitalization looked in the original title. Titles of major works, like books and films, should be italicized; titles published within a larger work are not italicized. Citations of a specific chapter in a book include the chapter title and the book title with only the book title italicized. If the source is an editorial, monograph, special section, diagram, or other uncommon source, indicate this at the end of the title using [brackets].

Where. This provides the reader with instructions on how to find the *What*. The type of information listed here depends on what type of source is being cited. Include the page number range if citing a specific portion of the text not identified in the in-text citation.

What type of source	Where to find it
<i>Book title.</i>	Location: Publisher.
Article in a print journal.	<i>Journal name, VOL(ISSUE).</i>
Article in an online journal or magazine, located with URL.	<i>Journal name, VOL(ISSUE).</i> Retrieved from http://URL
Article in an online journal, located with doi number.	<i>Journal name, VOL(ISSUE).</i> Doi:####
Web page.	<i>Name of web site.</i> Retrieved from http://URL
Chapter in book.	<i>Book title (pp. #-#).</i> Location: Publisher.

The point of citing sources is to provide the necessary information for the audience to be able to identify, assess, and locate sources. Include as much information about the source as possible. The goal is to present **who**, **when**, **what**, and **where** in the proper order with the proper formatting.

If one of the **who/when/what/where** elements is missing, then organize whatever is available such that **when** is still the second entry in the citation. For example, if you don't have an author for an online magazine article, organize the citation based on **what**, **when**, and **where**:

How to improve your writing. (2009, April 12). *Better Communication Weekly*. Retrieved from <http://www.bettercommunication.net/articles/2009/053153>

For more examples of APA citations, visit <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1> or look at the APA Sixth Edition Publication Manual.

In-Text Citations

All works used within your paper must be cited. If you use facts or paraphrase information from another source without giving credit for it, you are plagiarizing. All information that is not your own ideas or general knowledge must be cited.

When deciding which information to use from other sources, you should read the entire text. Make sure that the main ideas and key points behind the paper agree with what you wish to say. It is not acceptable to take a limited portion of the text and misrepresent the author's meaning.

There are three main ways to cite a source. A **summary** condenses the overall idea of an in-depth source into one or two sentences. A **paraphrase** takes a small amount of information and repeats it by incorporating it into your text *in your own words*; this is helpful when a detailed series of facts or figures needs to be explained. You should **quote** only when the author's words are so precisely and accurately stated that they cannot be paraphrased or when you intend to dissect the meaning of a quote.

Direct quotations that are less than 40 words should be incorporated into the text, surrounded by quotation marks, and cited. Quotations that are more than 40 words should be placed in a block quote without quotation marks around it (see example at right). Unlike paraphrasing, summarizing, and ordinary quoting, the parenthetical citation goes outside the ending punctuation.

to identify with their branch of the armed forces. The process of boot camp has grown along with the field of psychology. Research in the Navy found the following:

Psychological profiling in military situations has led to a decrease in the number of Basic Training dropouts wherever the practice has been instituted. Drugs to suppress incidents of "drill rage" were less successful than careful organization based on observed weaknesses and strengths. (Masterson, 1985, p. 248)

After General Wilson instituted the 1972 Reform Act for the Army's Basic Training in 1975, many drill sergeants

When using in-text citations, the goal is to provide enough information that the reader can find the citation on the References page. Additionally, the date is provided so that the reader knows right away how up-to-date the information is.

To help the reader find the citation on the reference page, start your in-text citation with whatever comes first on the reference page. This is usually the author's last name, but it can be the first part of the title if there is no author. If the title is the name of the article, put it in quotes; if the title is the name of a book, put it in italics. Then provide the year of publication: (Richards, 2008), ("How to improve your writing," 2009), or (*The Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary*, 2002, p. 484). Page 177 of the APA Publication Manual provides a clear table for producing different types of in-text citations.

Include page numbers if the source is a physical print publication and the citation is a paraphrase or quote of a specific portion of the text. Summaries of the entire source do not need page numbers. If you include a page range

on the references page, you should not include the same page range in your in-text citation.

Choosing Text to Integrate

1. Read the entire text, noting the key points and main ideas.
2. Summarize in your own words what the single main idea of the essay is.
3. Paraphrase important supporting points that come up in the essay.
4. Consider any words, phrases, or brief passages that you believe should be quoted directly.

In order to integrate a quotation, summary, or paraphrase more thoroughly into your text, **signal phrases** can be a very helpful tool. These are words or phrases used to introduce a quote or idea from another source. In some cases, signal phrases eliminate the need for parenthetical citations at the end of sentences. Additionally, signal phrases allow you to “sandwich” the cited information between the signal and the parenthetical citation; that way, your reader knows when the source material ends and where your discussion begins.

When integrating many sources, you can introduce evidence with a signal phrase, conclude it with the remaining parenthetical citation. You can place your discussion between these sections of evidence to separate them.

Examples of in-text citations:

Limited signal, everything in citation

. . . end of paraphrased or summarized sentence, in which you convey the author's ideas in your own words (Krepp, 1985, p. 103).

" . . . end of quoted sentence" (Krepp, 1985, p. 103).

Author and year in signal, page in citation

In 1985, Krepp reported that . . . (p. 103).

Krepp (1985) tells us that . . . (p. 103).

According to Krepp (1985), ". . ." (p. 103).

Multiple Authors signaled (list alphabetically)

Studies (Jones, 1966; Krepp, 1985; Smith, 1973) have shown that . . .

No Author

("Stocks Lose Again," 1991, p. B16).

According to the news article “Stocks Lose Again” (1991), . . . (p. B16).

APA style has specific recommendations for creating **levels of heading**. Generally, papers shorter than 5 pages will not require any headings; headings exist to separate sections of the paper, not to label individual ideas. Constructing paragraphs with topic sentences at the beginning and transitions at the end will serve to label and organize ideas; headings should only be used when very large sections need to be separated. If your professor has specific headings that he wants to see in your paper, follow those recommendations.

Do not use numbers, letters, or roman numerals with your headings.

APA provides five levels of heading. For medium-length papers that only need to be broken up into 3 or 4 sections, use only the first level of heading. When those sections need to be broken up into smaller subdivisions, use the second level of heading for that. When those sections are still long enough to require further organization, use the third level of heading, and so on.

Level of heading	Format
1	Centered, Boldface, Capitalize
2	Flush Left, Boldface, Capitalize
3	Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.
4	<i>Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.</i>
5	<i>Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with period</i>

Only very rarely will more than the first two or three levels of heading be necessary. At right is an example of how the levels of heading can be used. Each heading should have a substantial quantity of text under it. Do not create subheadings if that subheading is the only one at its level.

The first part of your paper is always the introduction. Never use a heading for your introduction unless requested by the instructor. Your reader will assume that the first section is the introduction without a header.

Method
Sample and Participant Selection
Assessment and Measures
Q-sort measures of inhibition and aggressiveness.
Life history calendar.
Results
Outcome of Inhibited Children
Personality and self-esteem.
Social network.
Life history and IQ.
Outcome of Aggressive Children
Discussion
Inhibited Children: Delayed Social Transitions
Limitations of the Present Study
Conclusions and Future Prospects

without exception. The following steps are usually taken during the first few days of Marine Corps basic training (called Recruit Receiving):

1. The “jarhead” Marine haircut is given to all the recruits.
2. Uniforms and other items are issued.
3. Recruits memorize the basic rules of boot camp.
4. Lessons in drill and camp structure begin immediately.

Numbering and bulleting of lists can help organize groups of ideas in your paper. It is important that these lists maintain parallel structure; they need to follow the same grammar, syntax, and concept. Use ordinary numerals with a period following (see example at left).

Only use a numbered list when the order of the material has some significance (importance, usefulness, or chronology). For lists that can be presented in

any order, use bullets. Bullets can be small squares, circles, arrows, or anything else; remember, however, that academic writing should be professional; gaudy icons as bullets will likely distract readers.

When introducing bulleted or numbered lists, it is usually best to use passive voice to describe events and ideas. Because APA style is intended for scientific writing, passive voice is usually preferred. Occasional active voice can be used for emphasis.

Whenever a large quantity of information needs to be displayed, you can use a **table** to organize and present it. The table needs to have a numerical label (Table 1 or Table C or Table IV), a title (this should usually be italicized), and horizontal lines around the headings and at the base of the table. You can use Microsoft Word’s Insert > Table function to create these, or you can use paragraph formatting to insert the horizontal lines where you need them. The following shows basic table format for simple data presentation.

Explanation of tables in your text is important so that the reader will understand their relevancy.

Collaborators and

completely. The basic data obtained in the survey is shown in the following table.

Table 4

Average Age of Recruits Entering Basic Training

Branch	Male Recruits	Female Recruits
Army	20.2	20.6
Marines	19.1	19.3
Air Force	22.8	23.1

Table 4 shows that female recruits join the military at a later age than their male counterparts. Younger individuals are likely to enter the more rigorous branches

References

This APA style guide was created in 2011 for the University of North Alabama Library and Center for Writing Excellence by David MacMillan III as part of the Library's libguide redesign program. The following individuals contributed to the contents and design of this guide:

Amber Huett
Dr. Robert Koch, Jr.
Katie Sanders
Ash Taylor Crum

All instruction in this guide has been derived from the Sixth Edition Publication Manual © 2010 of the American Psychological Association. Further references used or consulted are included below.

References

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- Documenting sources at SNHU: APA style. (n.d.). Southern New Hampshire University. Retrieved from http://acadweb.snhu.edu/documenting_sources/apa.htm#Use%20a%20citation%20when%20you%20paraphrase
- Homepage: APA style. (2007). American Psychological Association. Retrieved from <http://apastyle.apa.org>
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