

# Grand Canyon University American Psychological Association [APA] Style Guide for Writing

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## Introduction

Students of Grand Canyon University (GCU) are required to use the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) for preparing written assignments, except where otherwise noted. All students should have a personal copy of the *APA Publication Manual*, which is available through the GCU Bookstore or local bookstores. In the interest of providing resource material for student use, this guide to APA style and format has been developed and made available. It is based on the current 6th edition of the APA Manual. However, the guide only highlights aspects of APA style and format, and so it is recommended that students use the APA Manual as a resource when writing APA-style papers.

An APA template has been provided in the Student Success Center's Writing Center for student download and use.

PLEASE NOTE: The curriculum materials (Syllabus, Lectures/Readings, Resources, etc.) created and provided by GCU in the online or Web-enhanced modalities are prepared using an editorial format that relies on APA as a framework but that modifies some formatting criteria to better suit the nature and purpose of instructional materials. Students and faculty are advised that GCU course materials do not adhere strictly to APA format and should not be used as examples of correct APA format, or in place of the APA Manual, when preparing written work for class.

# APA Format and Style

## General

Academic writing, which is independent thought supported by reliable and relevant research, depends on the ability to integrate and cite the sources that have been consulted. Use APA style for all references, in-text citations, formatting, etc.

Write in first- and second-person sparingly, if ever. This means, avoid using *I*, *we*, and *you*; instead, use *he*, *she*, and *they*. Do not use contractions.

## Paper Format

- 1) Use standard-sized paper of 8.5" x 11".
- 2) Margins should be 1" all around (top, bottom, left, right).
- 3) Use Times New Roman 12-point font.
- 4) For emphasis, use italics (not quotation marks, bold, etc.).
- 5) Double-space.
- 6) Align the text flush left.

## Organization

The basic organization of an APA-style paper includes the title page, abstract, body, and reference section, though students are encouraged to follow any specific directions given in their Overview assignment.

## Title Page

The title page includes four elements that should be centered in the middle of the page: title, author byline, institutional affiliation followed by the course prefix and number (e.g., Grand Canyon University: PSY 351), and date of submission. Please note that even though APA does not require the date on a title page, it is a requirement for GCU papers.

Being the first page, the title page is where to set up your page header, which includes the running head and the page number. The running head—an abbreviated title that is a maximum of 50 characters—should appear flush left in all uppercase letters in the header on all pages. Page numbers should be in the header, flush right.

To format your running head and page numbers in Microsoft Word, click View→Header and Footer. In the header box that shows up, type Running head: ABBREVIATED TITLE HERE. On the Header/Footer dialog box that pops up, click Insert Page Number (last button on the left). Put the cursor between the running head and the page number, and click the tab button a few times until the running head is flush left and the page number is flush right.

## Abstract

The abstract covers the main points of the paper and is not always required in a GCU writing assignment. Read the assignment instructions carefully to determine whether the assignment requires an abstract or not.

- 1) Abstract is page 2 of the assignment.
- 2) The word Abstract should be centered at the top of the page.
- 3) As per GCU policy, the abstract should not exceed 120 words.
- 4) Do not indent the abstract paragraph.

## Body

The body will contain all of the author's main points as well as detailed and documented support for those ideas.

- 1) The body begins on its own page.
- 2) The title of the paper should be centered at the top of the first page of the body, in initial caps.
- 3) The introduction follows the title, but is not labeled.
- 4) Use headings to separate sections of the paper, but none of the sections should start their own page. The first level of heading is centered and bolded with each word of four letters or more capitalized (see template for an example). The second level of heading (subheading) is flush left and bolded, with each word of four letters or more capitalized. Note that not all papers will have headings or subheadings in them. APA dictates that you should avoid having only one subsection heading and subsection within a section. In other words, use at least two subheadings under a main heading, or do not use any at all.

## References

The references page will contain a list of all sources actually cited in the paper.

- 1) This should start its own page.
- 2) The word *References*, though not in italics, is centered at the top of the page.
- 3) Include all, any, and only sources that were actually cited in the paper.
- 4) Arrange the sources in alphabetical order using the authors' last names.

## Style, Punctuation, and Mechanics

### Numbers

- 1) Use numerals for numbers 10 and above (*12 of the subjects*); for numbers above and below 10 grouped for comparison (*2 of 16 responses*); for numbers representing times, dates, measurements, and ages (*2-year-olds, 2 hr 15 min*); for statistics and percentages (*multiplied by 5, 5% of the sample*); and for numbers denoting a specific place in a series, book, or table (*Table 3, Group 3, page 32*).
- 2) Spell out numbers below 10 that do not represent precise measurements (eight items, nine pages); for numbers beginning a sentence, title, or heading (*Forty-eight people responded. Ten subjects improved.*); for common fractions (*one fifth of the class*); and for approximations of numbers of days, months, and years (*about three months ago*).

## Acronyms


An acronym uses the first letter of each word in a name or title.

- 1) Acronyms must be spelled out completely on initial appearance in text. The abbreviation or acronym should appear in parentheses after that initial spelling out.
- 2) For example: *The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) had a profound impact on public education in the United States. The NCLB was an initiative of President George W. Bush in 2002.*

## Spelling and Word Usage

Use *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* as a default for spelling words. The dictionary can also be used as a resource for hyphenation, capitalization, etc.

## In-Text Punctuation

- 1) Use two spaces after punctuation marks at the end of a sentence. 
- 2) Use ellipses when omitting material within a quote.
- 3) Place a comma after the penultimate word in a series. For example: *Your books, ball, and bat are under the bed.*
- 4) If a compound word is not in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, use hyphens for clarity rather than omit them.
- 5) Hyphenate compound adjectives that precede the noun they modify, except when the first word of the compound is an adverb ending in -ly. For example: *role-playing technique, two-way analysis, middle-class families, widely used method*
- 6) Do not hyphenate a compound adjective if its meaning is established or it cannot be misread. For example: *grade point average, health care management*
- 7) See page 98 of the APA Manual for further rules on hyphenation.

## Initial Capitalization

- 1) Capitalize all words of four or more letters in titles (books, articles, etc.) used in text. This rule does not apply within the References section, except for the titles of periodicals.
- 2) Capitalize proper nouns and names.

## In-Text Citations

In-text citations are used in the body of a paper to show which sources a student used for particular material.

When you use material from a source, you need to document that source by using a citation and reference note. All quotations, paraphrases, and summaries must be referenced. Using material from a source without citing that source is considered plagiarism; please reference GCU's policy on Plagiarism in the University Policy Handbook.

## Citation Rules

- 1) In-text citations should note the author information, plus the publication year.

- 2) For a work by one author, cite last name followed by year on every reference. This citation can be placed at the end of the sentence, or it can be incorporated into the grammatical structure of the sentence.
  - a) *Researchers have concluded that food and comfortable setting were more important than games available to most students (Liu, 1999).*
  - b) *According to Liu (1999), researchers have concluded that food and comfortable setting were more important than games available to most students.*
- 3) For a work by two authors, cite both last names followed by year on every reference.
  - a) (Walker & Allen, 2004)
  - b) *According to Walker and Allen (2004)...*
- 4) For a work by three to five authors, cite all last names followed by year on first reference, and the first author's last name followed by et al. and year upon subsequent references.
  - a) (Bradley, Ramirez, Soo, & Walsh, 2006)
  - b) (Bradley et al., 2006)
- 5) For a work by six or more authors, cite last name of the first author followed by et al. and the year on all references.
  - a) (Wasserstein et al., 2005)
  - b) *According to Wasserstein et al. (2005)...*
- 6) If no author exists for the source, use the first few words of the title.
  - a) *Students were more concerned about having a place to socialize with other students than about all-out competition ("Philosophy and the Science," 2001).*
- 7) If the material is a direct quote, the page or paragraph number of the source should immediately follow.
  - a) *"Ethics examines moral values and the standards of ethical behavior" (Ornstein et al., 2008, p. 162).*
  - b) *Basu and Jones (2007) went so far as to suggest the need for a new "intellectual framework in which to consider the nature and form of regulation in cyberspace" (para. 4).*
- 8) Quotations with 40 or more words should be in block format.
  - a) Omit the encompassing quotation marks.
  - b) Start a block quote on a new line.
  - c) Indent the entire block 0.5 inches from the left margin (in the same position as a new paragraph)
  - d) Additional paragraphs within a block quote should have the first line indented an additional 0.5 inches.
  - e) The in-text citation for a block quote is placed outside the final punctuation for the quote.
  - f) Double space.

### Sample Paragraph With In-Text Citations

Liu and Berry (1999) conducted a survey of college campuses to determine the best design for a student lounge. They concluded that food and comfortable seating were more important than games available to most students. Students were more concerned about

having a place to socialize with other students than about all-out competition. In fact, they continue,

arcade games could be a turn-off for some students because they did not want to compete with the noise to talk. These same students said that they would prefer to have a place where they could study and casually socialize at the same time, so seating, lighting, and noise level were all crucial. (Liu & Berry, 1999, p. 14)

This study and others (Wendell, 1978; Hartford, Herriford, & Hampshire, 2001; Johnson et al., 2004) confirm that while having activities is important, students are more drawn to comfortable *multi-purpose* environments.

### In-Text Citation Examples

1) Here is an example of a book reference:

Ellis, D. (2006). *Becoming a master student*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

2) Here is a related in-text citation example for a direct quote:

Ellis (2006) notes that “creative thinking is more appropriate in the early stages of planning and problem solving” (p. 223).

3) Here is a related in-text citation example without a direct quote:

It may be more appropriate to think creatively during earlier planning and problem-solving stages (Ellis, 2006).

## APA References

The reference list should appear at the end of a paper. It provides the information necessary for a reader to locate and retrieve any source you cite in the body of the paper. Each source you cite in the paper must appear in your reference list; likewise, each entry in the reference list must be cited in your text.

Your references should begin on a new page separate from the text of the essay; label this page References (with no quotation marks, underlining, etc.), centered at the top of the page. The References page should be double-spaced just like the rest of your essay.

- 1) All lines after the first line of each entry in your reference list should be indented one-half inch from the left margin. This is called hanging indentation.
- 2) Invert all authors' names; give surnames and initials for up to and including seven authors (e.g., Author, A. A., Author B. B., Author, C. C.). When authors number eight or more, include the first six authors' names, then insert three ellipses, and add the last author's name.

Gilber, D. G., McClernon, J. F., Rabinovich, N. E., Sugai, C., Plath, L. C., Asgaard,

G., ... Botros, N. (2004). Effects of quitting smoking on EEG activation and attention. *Nicotine and Tobacco Research*, 6, 249-267.

doi:10.1080/14622200410001676305

- 3) Reference list entries should be alphabetized by the last name of the first author of each work.
- 4) If you have more than one article by the same author, single-author references or multiple-author references with the exact same authors in the exact same order are listed in order by the year of publication, starting with the earliest.
- 5) When referring to any work that is NOT a journal—such as a book, article, or Web page title—capitalize only the first letter of the first word of a title and subtitle, the first word after a colon or a dash in the title, and proper nouns. Do not capitalize the first letter of the second word in a hyphenated compound word.

## Reference Examples: Books, Reference Books, and Book Chapters

### 1) Entire Book — Print Version

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

Daresh, J. C. (2004). *Beginning the assistant principalship: A practical guide for new school administrators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

### 2) Electronic Version of a Print Book

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). *Title of work*. Retrieved from

<http://www.xxxxx>

Shotton, M.A. (1989). *Computer addiction? A study of computer dependency* [DX

Reader version]. Retrieved from <http://www.ebookstore.tandf.co.uk/>

[html/index.asp](http://www.ebookstore.tandf.co.uk/html/index.asp)

Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of work*. doi:xxxx

Schiraldi, G. R. (2001). *The post-traumatic stress disorder sourcebook: A guide to healing, recovery, and growth* [Adobe Digital Editions version].

doi:10.1036/0071393722

### 3) Electronic-Only Book

Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of work*. Retrieved from <http://www.xxxxx>

O'Keefe, E. (n.d.). *Egoism and the crisis in Western values*. Retrieved from

<http://www.onlineoriginals.com/showitem.asp?itemID=135>



#### 4) Edited Book

Editor, A. A. (Ed.). (Year). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher.

Feldman, P. R. (Ed.). (1997). *British women poets of the romantic era*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University.

#### 5) Chapter in a Book

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

Haybron, D. M. (2008). Philosophy and the science of subjective well-being. In M. Eid & R. J. Larsen (Eds.), *The science of subjective well-being* (pp. 17-43). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of chapter or entry. In A. A. Editor & B. B. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pp. xxx-xxx). Retrieved from <http://www.xxxx>

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of chapter or entry. In A. A. Editor & B. B. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pp. xxx-xxx). Location: Publisher. doi:xxxxxxx

#### 6) Multiple Editions of a Book

Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of work* (xx ed.). Location: Publisher.

Parker, F., & Riley, K. (2004). *Linguistics for non-linguists: A primer with exercises* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

#### 7) Entry in an Online Reference Work — Byline Available

Author, A. A. (Year). Entry title. In B. B. Editor (Ed.), *Title of reference work* (xx ed.). Retrieved from <http://www.xxxxx>

Graham, G. (2005). Behaviorism. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy* (Fall 2007 ed.). Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/>

behaviorism

8) Entry in an Online Reference Work — No Byline Available

Entry title. (Year). In *Title of reference work* (xx ed.). Retrieved from

<http://www.xxxx>

Heuristic. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary* (11th ed.). Retrieved from

<http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/heuristic>

9) Entry in Reference Work — No Byline

Entry title. (Year). In A. Editor (Ed.), *Title of reference work* (xx ed., Vol. xx, pp.

xxx-xxx). Location: Publisher.

Heuristic. (2007). In J. Smith (Ed.), *The book of words* (7<sup>th</sup> ed., Vol 3, pp. 65-66).

New York, NY: Jones and Lawrence.

10) Book Written and Published by Organization

Organization Name. (Year). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher.

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American*

*Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Note that the organization is both the publisher and the author, so the word "Author" is noted in place of the publisher's name.

## Reference Examples: Periodicals

1) Journal Article With DOI

Author, A. A. (Year). Title of article. *Journal Title*, Volume(Issue), xxx-xxx.

doi:xxxxxxx

Herbst-Damm, K. L., & Kulik, J. A. (2005). Volunteer support, marital status, and the survival times of terminally ill patients. *Health Psychology*, 24, 225-229.

doi:10.1037/0278-6133.24.2.225

2) Journal Article Without DOI and Retrieved From Internet

Author, A. A. (Year). Title of article. *Journal Title, Volume(Issue)*, xxx-xxx.

Retrieved from <http://www.xxxxxxxx>

Sillick, T. J., & Schutte, N. S. (2006). Emotional intelligence and self-esteem mediate between perceived early parental love and adult happiness. *E-Journal of Applied Psychology, 2(2)*, 38-48. Retrieved from <http://ojs.lib.swin.edu.au/index.php/ejap>

3) Journal Article Without DOI and Retrieved From Print Version

Author, A. A. (Year). Title of article. *Journal Title, Volume(Issue)*, xxx-xxx.

Light, M. A., & Light, I. H. (2008). The geographic expansion of Mexican immigration in the United States and its implications for local law enforcement. *Law Enforcement Executive Forum Journal, 8(1)*, 73-82.

4) Article in a Magazine — Print

Author, A. A. (Year, Month). Article title. *Magazine Title, Volume(Issue)*, xxx-xxx.

Mehta, P. B. (1998, June). Exploding myths. *New Republic, 290(25)*, 17-19.

5) Article in a Magazine — Online

Author, A. A. (Year, Month). Article title. *Magazine Title, Volume(Issue)*. Retrieved from <http://www.homepage>

Clay, R. (2008, June). Science vs. ideology: Psychologists fight back about the misuse of research. *Monitor on Psychology, 39(6)*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/monitor>

6) Article in a Newspaper — Print

Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Article title. *Newspaper Title*, pp. xx, xx.

Schwartz, J. (1993, September 30). Obesity affects economic, social status. *The Washington Post*, pp. A1, A4.

7) Article in Newspaper — Online

Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Article title. *Newspaper Title*. Retrieved from <http://www.homepage.com>

Brody, J. E. (2007, December 11). Mental reserves keep brain agile. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com>

8) Report from University or Government Organization, Corporate Author

Organization name. (Year). *Title of report* (Publication No. xx). Retrieved from <http://www.xxxx>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. (2003). *Managing asthma: A guide for schools* (NIH Publication No. 02-2650). Retrieved from [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/asthma/asth\\_sch.pdf](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/asthma/asth_sch.pdf)

9) Authored Report from Nongovernmental Organization

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). *Title of report* (Research Report No. xxx). Retrieved from Agency name website: <http://www.xxxxxxxxx>

Kessy, S. S. A., & Urio, F. M. (2006). *The contribution of microfinance institutions to poverty reduction in Tanzania* (Research Report No. 06.3). Retrieved from Research on Poverty Alleviation website: [http://www.repoa.or.tz/documents\\_storage/Publications/Reports/06.3\\_Kessy\\_and\\_Urio.pdf](http://www.repoa.or.tz/documents_storage/Publications/Reports/06.3_Kessy_and_Urio.pdf)

## 10) Informally Published Work

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). *Title of work*. Retrieved from

<http://www.xxxxxxxxx>

Black, C. (2011). *Women and addiction: From Betty Ford to Amy Winehouse*.

Retrieved from <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-many-faces-addiction/201107/women-and-addiction-betty-ford-amy-winehouse>