

An APA *running head* is not needed for undergraduate or master's courses per the University Writing and Style Guidelines. **If you are a student in a doctoral program, or otherwise require a running head in your paper, consult the doctoral APA Sample Paper in the CWE > Doctoral Writing Resources.**

**Pagination:** Use the header feature in Microsoft® Word to set the page number (see [Appendix A](#)).

## Writing Style and Mechanics

Student Name

University of Phoenix

Course/Number

Date

Instructor Name

**The title:** Use upper- and lower-case letters, centered between the left and right margins, and positioned on the upper half of the page. Use black recommended fonts: 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode, 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or 10-point Computer Modern black, 12-point Times New Roman.

All lines are double-spaced throughout the entire document. Use black recommended fonts: 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode, 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or 10-point Computer Modern black, 12-point Times New Roman.

### **This APA Sample Paper is intended for undergraduate and master's level students.**

The University of Phoenix APA sample papers represent the consensus of key academic officials within the University. This particular sample reflects expectations outlined in the [University of Phoenix Writing and Style Guidelines](#) for undergraduate and master's courses, which correspond with the University's preferred style guide for most programs: *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Seventh Edition. If your course materials direct you to follow MLA style, please see the MLA resources in the Center for Writing Excellence (CWE) > MLA Information.

This sample paper is offered as a concise tool to help students with style, but it is not a definitive or binding representation of format for all courses. The CWE provides many tools to help students write and format effective papers; however, the faculty member determines the assignment grade in the course.

**Abstract:** Typically, an abstract is required only for publication. If your assignment instructions indicate a requirement to use an abstract, a sample can be found in the CWE.

## Writing Style and Mechanics

Use the paper title above your introduction, centered and bolded.

Indent the first line of each paragraph using the tab key, set at five to seven spaces or one-half inch.

The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) began as a journal article in 1929. Today, the *Publication Manual* is in its seventh edition and the APA style described in it is a widely recognized standard for scholarly or professional writing in the social sciences. Although the style guide is designed to prepare manuscripts for publication, many universities and health care journals have adopted its use as a guide to achieve uniformity and consistency (Cuddy, 2002). Writing in the style prescribed by the *Publication Manual* can be a daunting experience for students. As with any new skill, “practice makes perfect” (S. Proofreader, personal communication, June 28, 2004). Points of APA style most often used by undergraduate and graduate students are listed below. However, keep in mind that this sample paper is a guide and should not be considered as a replacement for the *Publication Manual*.

Use one space after a period at the end of a sentence.

**Personal communication:** No need to include on the reference page.

## Format Considerations

**Level one heading:** Centered, bolded, upper- and lower-case letters.

Some commonly used rules and formats from the seventh edition of the *Publication Manual* are listed below. Please note, however, that some assignments may require unique formatting, and you should consult your syllabus for clarification.

**Level two heading:** Left margin, bolded, upper- and lower-case

### Correct Margins

Margins are one inch on all sides. This rule is broken only to avoid placing a lone heading on the last line of the page or a single line of text on the top of the next page.

Writers should ensure that a line is **not** tab indented when centering a heading so as not to appear off center.

### Page Header

The page header contains the page number aligned with the right margin. The automatic header function in Microsoft® Word should be used to place the page numbers consecutively in the paper (see [Appendix A](#)). Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, and so on) are used to number each page, beginning with 1 on the title page.

**Margins** should be one inch on all sides of the document.

## Document Headings

Paragraph headings should be used in long documents to organize the essay, to break it up into readable portions, and to make it easy for readers to locate information. Using headings in a short document before every paragraph can make the writing appear choppy, and the paper may not flow smoothly from point to point. Use paragraph headings if your document is longer than three or four pages or if the assignment instructions require paragraph headings.

## Reference Page

Hanging indentation is used for the reference page. The proper format can be set in Microsoft® Word (see [Appendix B](#)). Creating the hanging indentation by using the tab key or space bar will not protect the formatting if changes are made to the reference page later. The reference page is alphabetized by author or by title of the work when no author is listed, and each entry contains the date of publication in parentheses directly after the author's name. The title, the name of the publisher follows the date of publication for a book entry. The proliferation of electronic materials has prompted APA to create formats designed specifically for Internet and web-based written material. Visit the [APA website](#) for additional information about formatting electronic references. You will also find frequently asked questions and helpful free tutorials about using APA style.

Only references that have been cited in the paper are listed on the reference page. Personal communications are cited in the text but do not appear on the reference page because the reader cannot retrieve them. Additional reference examples are available in the Reference and Citation Examples in the Center for Writing Excellence (CWE).

## In-Text Citations

### *Direct Quotations*

#### Level three heading:

Left margin, bolded italic, upper- and lower-case. Text begins as a new paragraph

Level three heading usually only necessary in longer papers, most commonly in master's and doctoral papers.

Direct quotations must mirror the original source word for word, even if errors are contained in the original text. To alert the reader that errors are part of the original material, the word [*sic*], enclosed in brackets and italicized, must follow the erroneous material. The source of the quotation must be cited. The format of direct quotations may vary with the placement of the quoted material in the sentence. The following is an example of how you may use a direct quotation from a website with an author: “Diversity is emerging as one of the most serious issues in the workplace today, yet most employers are not prepared to deal with it” (Copeland, 2003, Erroneous Assumptions, para. 1). The author’s last name, the year of publication, the website title or section title, and the paragraph number, when no page number is available, are included in the citation.

The following is an example of how one may use a direct quotation from a book with one author: Venes (2001) stated, “The types of influenza doctors must prepare for fall into three categories” (p. 106). If the author’s name is stated prior to the quotation, include the date of publication (in parentheses) after the author’s name, and follow the quotation with the page or paragraph number. For a work with three or more authors, include the name of only the first author and the abbreviation “et al.” in every in-text citation, including the first time a citation appears. Refer to the Reference and Citation Examples resources in the CWE for more examples of in-text citations.

Quotations that contain fewer than 40 words are enclosed in double quotation marks within the text. Use single quotation marks for quotations contained within a direct quotation. Quotations of 40 words or more are indented in a block format without quotation marks. Use double quotation marks to indicate a quotation within the block quotation. The block quotation is

**Citation with a page number:**  
One space between the p. and the number.

started on a new line, and it is indented five to seven spaces or one-half inch. A sample block quotation appears on page 7 of this document.

### ***Paraphrased or summarized material***

Paraphrasing or summarizing allows the writer to present someone else's ideas or intellectual property and to supply proper credit to the original author or authors (Lawton, et al., 2001). When an author is paraphrased or summarized, the source must be cited in the text. If a source is mentioned more than once in a paragraph, a citation must be included each time. Page or paragraph numbers are not required for paraphrased material, but the *Publication Manual* recommends that writers include a page or paragraph number to help the reader easily locate the information (APA, 2020, p. 269). If a writer were to paraphrase information from an article located in an online database, the writer would format the citation as follows: Daniels (2004) included Darden Restaurants on her list of the 50 best companies for minorities. Here is an example where the author is not mentioned within the text: A list of companies has been singled out as best for minority employees (Daniels, 2004). Both examples include the author's last name and the date of publication. If the author's name is not provided with the paraphrased text, it must be included in the citation. Refer to the Reference and Citation resources in the CWE at for examples of citing paraphrased material.

For works with three or more authors, include the name of the first author and the abbreviation "et al."

Deciding to summarize, to paraphrase, or to provide a direct quotation is an important question one must consider when using sources in an academic paper. Summarizing and paraphrasing both consist of sharing a source author's ideas by phrasing them in one's own words. A writer should summarize or paraphrase source material when it is important to capture the basic idea but when the author's exact words are not essential to the paper. Conversely, a writer should quote directly when the source verbiage is crucial and stating it any other way

would cause it to lose its meaning. Usually writers will quote authors who are experts in their field and whose ideas support their own. However, excessive use of direct quotations should be avoided. Writers are encouraged to paraphrase when doing so will not change the meaning or the impact of a source (Ede, 2011).

### ***Plagiarism***

Plagiarism constitutes a serious academic concern. According to Lawton et al. (2001),

“Academic communities demand that writers credit others for their work and that the source of their material clearly be acknowledged” (para. 6). Internet access has resulted in an increase in plagiarism. McCabe noted (as cited in Sterngold, 2004), 41% of students said they engaged in *cut-and-paste* plagiarism from online sources. The sentences and phrases used in one’s paper must be original or cited and referenced accordingly. Although it may be easier for a writer to use someone else’s words, doing so discredits the writer. When in doubt, cite. See the plagiarism resources in the CWE for more information about avoiding plagiarism and about properly citing intellectual property.

#### **Electronic source and quotation:**

If the electronic source does not have page numbers, use the abbreviation *para.* for the paragraph number.

#### **Secondary Sources:**

Also called an indirect source. List only primary source in reference list and cite secondary source author only within the text. Secondary sources are not ideal in academic writing and should be avoided.

### **Other Format Issues**

The recommended typeface for APA style is one accessible to all users. Fonts such as black, 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode, 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or 10-point Computer Modern black, 12-point Times New Roman are acceptable. Avoid using any software settings that reduce spacing between words or letters or that add spacing between paragraphs. Use double-spacing throughout the document. Use one space after sentence-ending punctuation in the body of your essay.

Although the *Publication Manual* (2010) requires an abstract to precede the text, an abstract is not used in most student papers. Some assignments may require an abstract if students

are submitting lengthy papers or project proposals. In those cases, the direction to submit an abstract will be in the assignment guidelines. A sample abstract can be found in the CWE.

## Writing Mechanics

Correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure—in addition to formatting—are essential components of scholarly writing. Strunk (1918/1999) emphasized the

**Block quotation (40 or more words):** Indent to the tab margin and do not include quotation marks. The in-text citation occurs outside of the punctuation that ends the sentence.

Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts. This requires not that the writer make all his sentences short, or that he avoid all detail and treat his subjects only in outline, but that every word tell. (para. 1)

## Grammar

In addition to the provision of a standardized format for scientific writing, the *Publication Manual* (2010) emphasizes the importance of proper grammar. Important basic grammar principles are listed below. For further information, refer to the grammar resources in the CWE.

### *Subject and Verb Agreement*

A singular noun requires a singular verb and a plural noun requires a plural verb (APA, 2010). Words that intervene between the noun and the verb do not change this basic rule.

### *Noun and Pronoun Agreement*

APA recommends the use of “they” as a generic third-person pronoun to ensure that the writing is inclusive and bias-free. For example, the sentence “A *student* applying for a job must carefully proofread *his/her* application” may be reworded to read, “A *student* applying for jobs

must carefully proofread *their* application.” Use of the singular “they” helps writers reduce bias, avoid stereotypes, and refrain from making assumptions about gender.

### ***Passive Voice***

Passive voice obscures the actor in this sentence: “The house was painted,” because it omits who applied the paint. In contrast, the same sentence written in active voice would be something such as this: “Our company painted the house.” The passive voice, which is a form of “be” (is, was, were, will be, have been, etc.) and a participle (painted, etc.), is useful when the actor's identity is not important to the sentence or context. Overuse of the passive voice causes the document to read similarly to an instructional manual, dry and monotonous. According to Sigel (2009), it weakens the essay’s argument and prevents clear and concise writing. Occasional use of the passive voice is acceptable, but documents written primarily in the active voice are more enjoyable and more persuasive to read (Sigel, 2009).

### ***Punctuation***

Correct punctuation establishes the rhythm and readability of sentences. Use only one space after commas, colons, and semicolons. Use one space after a period at the end of a sentence. When a hyphen or a dash is used, no space appears before or after the hyphen or dash (APA, 2010). In academic writing, use a comma to separate all words in a series of three or more, as in the following example: Tasks included *reading*, *writing*, and *analyzing* the information in the text. Correct use of commas and semicolons can be challenging for students. Writers should consider using a proofreading tool to aid in checking proper comma use. Please check the CWE for a list of proofreading and grammar checking tools.

### ***Capitalization***

Capitalization is used to designate a proper noun or trade name as well as major words in titles and in headings. Instances where capitalization is not used include laws, theories, models, or hypotheses, such as ethical decision-making models and names of conditions or groups in an experiment, such as experimental or control groups (APA, 2010). A common error in capitalization is its use with the name of a job title or department. An example is human resources, which is not capitalized, versus the specific title of ACME Human Resources Department, which is capitalized.

### ***Seriation (Elements Written in a Series)***

Items contained in a list help to clarify the point being made or help to clarify components of a subject. Lettered, numbered, and bulleted lists may be used in academic writing according to APA standards (2020). To show seriation of separate paragraphs, however, number each paragraph with an Arabic numeral followed by a period that is not enclosed in or followed by parentheses. To show seriation within a paragraph or a sentence, use lowercase letters in parentheses (see [Appendix C](#)).

### ***Numbers***

Spell out numbers one through nine that appear in the body text. Use Arabic numerals to express numbers 10 and above. Exceptions to this rule are discussed in the [APA Style 7<sup>th</sup> Edition Numbers and Statistics Quick Guide](#).

### ***Third Person Versus First Person***

Person refers to the point of view or the source of the writer's opinions. Use third person (they) in academic writing. When referring to yourself, however, stating "The writer instructed the patients" is ambiguous and may give the impression that you did not participate. Instead, use

a first-person personal pronoun: “I instructed the patients.” For the most part, reference to self in first person should be limited to personal reflection or opinion papers.

### **Conclusion**

Always include a conclusion that summarizes the main points of the paper.

By understanding mechanics and usage requirements and by referencing materials appropriately with in-text citations and reference entries, you will clearly communicate the content of your work. Use the information included in this paper to develop effective academic papers. You are also encouraged to refer to the resources in the CWE and the style information from [www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org) for additional information about academic writing.

## References

A book with a corporate author and an edition number.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037>

Italicize the titles of books and journals (including journal volume numbers).

Copeland, L. (2006). Managing a multicultural workforce. *California Job Journal*.

An online journal article.

Cuddy, C. M. (2002). Demystifying APA style. *Orthopaedic Nursing*, 21(5), 35-42.

Daniels, C. (2004, June 28). 50 Best companies for minorities. *Fortune*, 149(13), 136-146.

A print version of a book.

Ede, L. (2001). *The academic writer* (2nd ed.). Bedford/St. Martin's.

A source available on a university program or department website.

Lawton, K. A., Cousineau, L., & Hillard, V. E. (2001). *Plagiarism: Its nature and consequences*. Duke University <http://www.lib.duke.edu/libguide/plagarism.htm>

Sigel, T. (2009). How passive voice weakens your scholarly argument. *Journal of Management Development*, 28(5), 478-480. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02621710910955994>

A source with a digital object identifier (DOI).

Sterngold, A. (2004). Confronting plagiarism: How conventional teaching invites cyber-cheating. *Change*, 36(3), 16.

An electronic version of a republished book.

Strunk, W., Jr. (1999). Elementary principles of composition: Omit needless words. In *The elements of style*. <http://www.bartelby.com/141/strunk5.html#13> (Original work published 1918)

Venes, D. (2001). *Taber's cyclopedic medical dictionary* (19th ed.). F.A. Davis.

## Appendix A: Header Feature in Microsoft® Word

Identify each page with the page number placed at the right margin. Do not use your name to identify each page. Be sure the font type and size are the same in the header as that used throughout the document. To create a correct header with an automatic page number in Word, use the following guidelines.

### Word 2010 and Newer

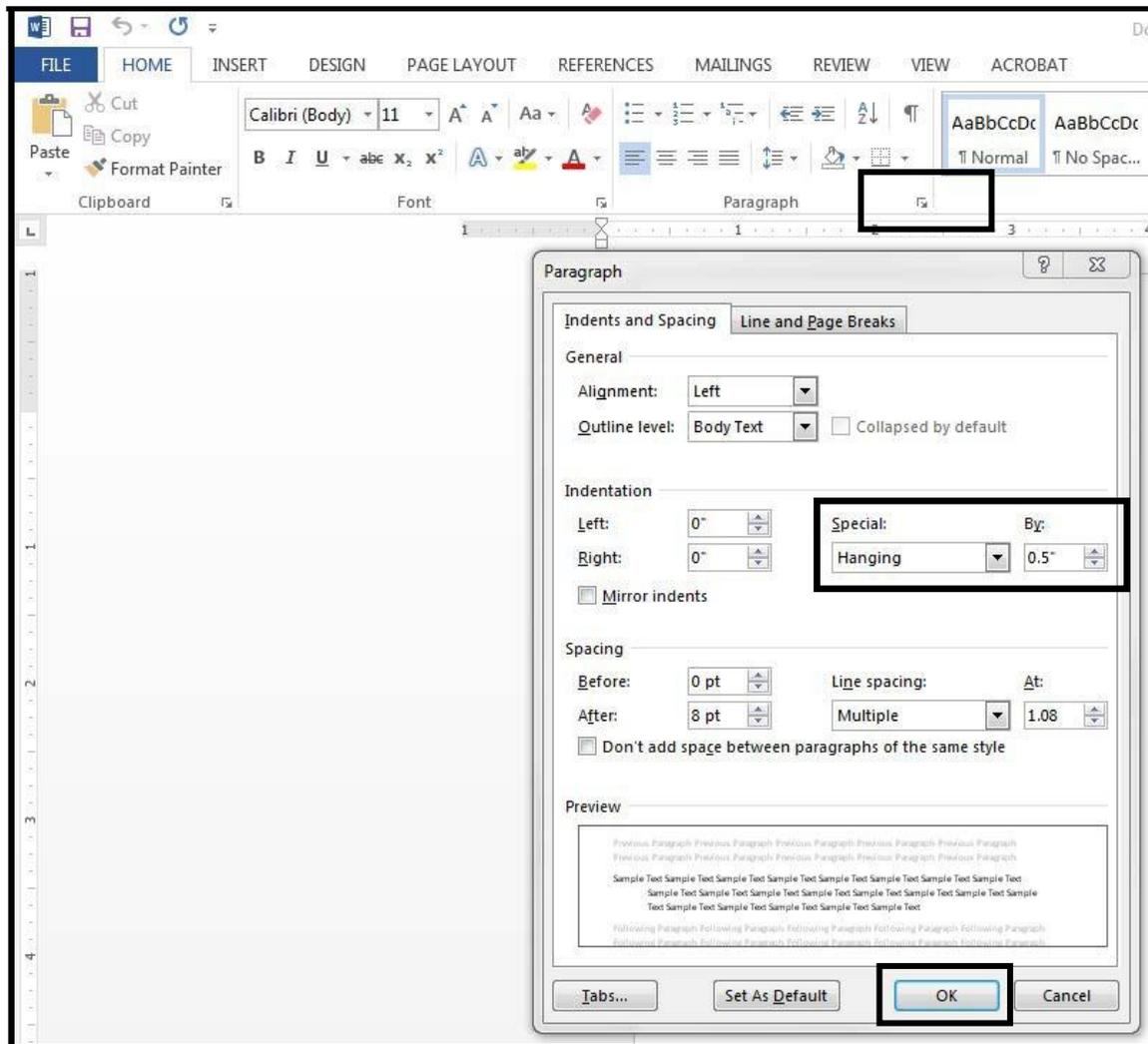
1. Select the **Insert** tab.
2. Select the **Header** icon.
3. Choose the **Blank** header tab from the drop-down menu.
4. Tab to the right margin and select the **Page Number** icon.
5. Place the cursor over **Current Position**. A drop-down menu should appear.
6. Select the **Plain Number** option. A number will appear at the right margin of your document.
7. Choose **Close Header and Footer** (the red X at the far right on the menu). Your cursor then appears at the beginning of the document, and automatic page numbers should be visible as you type each new page.

## Appendix B: Creating a Hanging Indent in Microsoft® Word

To create a hanging indent for your references page in Word, use the following guidelines.

### Word 2010 and newer

1. Select the text that requires a hanging indent or create a hanging indent at the top of the references page before typing the text.
2. From the Home menu, select the arrow in the Paragraph group seen below. This will bring up the Indents and Spacing tab.
3. Under Indentation, in the Special box, select on **Hanging** and select **OK**.



### Appendix C: Seriation

To show seriation (lists) within a paragraph or sentence, use lowercase letters, not italicized, in parentheses:

Job satisfaction is increased when nurses are provided with (a) therapeutic massage, (b) relaxation therapy, and (c) music therapy.

To show seriation of separate paragraphs, number each paragraph with an Arabic numeral, followed by a period but not enclosed in or followed by parentheses. A numbered list signifies that element 1 is more important than element 2 and so on. See the following examples to create a numbered or bulleted list.

Berk (2001) suggests that parents determine suitability of books for children by using the following criteria:

1. Books are made from durable material . . . [paragraph continues]
2. Books are action-oriented . . . [paragraph continues]

If all elements in the list are of equal importance, use bullets instead of numbers as shown below.

Berk (2001) suggests that parents determine suitability of books for children by using the following criteria:

- Books are made from durable material . . . [paragraph continues]
- Books are action-oriented . . . [paragraph continues]