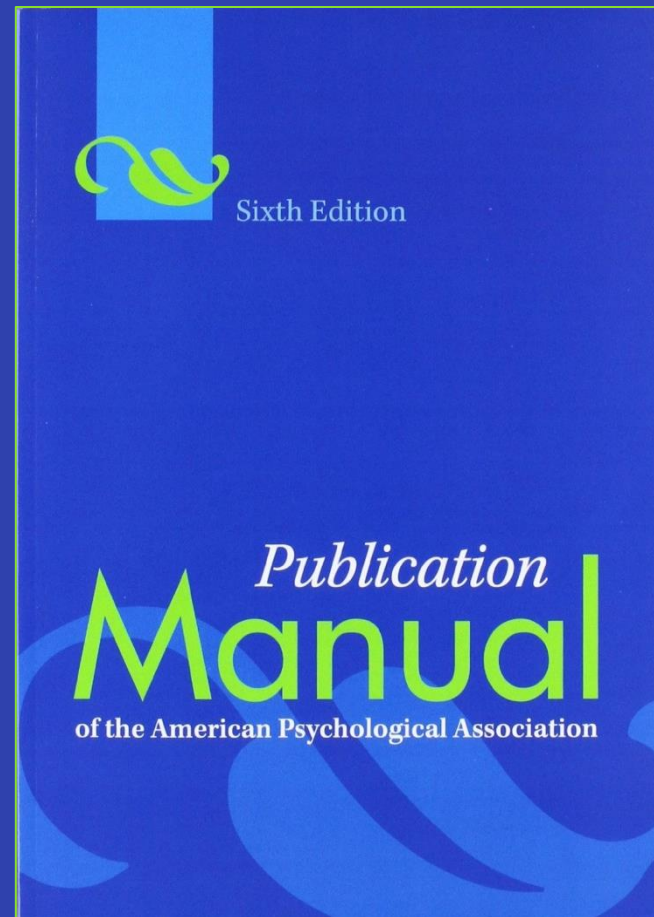# APA ESSENTIALS
Style and format

Carol H. Mack, RN, PhD, JD

The APA Publication Manual

- Journal article in 1929, Last revised 2009

- Sets standards for scientific communication

- Aims to enhance dissemination of knowledge

Sixth Edition

Publication
Manual

of the American Psychological Association

APA STYLE

Point of View

Use third person point of view rather than using first person or the passive voice

I found out that . . . (*first person*)

The study showed that . . . (*third person*)

Active Voice

Use active voice when possible

Heart disease is considered the leading cause of death in the United States. *(passive)*

Research points to heart disease as the leading cause of death in the United States. *(active)*

Researchers have concluded that heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. *(active)*

Language

- Clear: be specific in descriptions and explanations

- Concise: condense information when you can

- Plain: use simple, descriptive adjectives and minimize the figurative language

Precision

In a study of acupuncture, they found that . . .

Better:

In a study of acupuncture, researchers found that . . .

In a study of acupuncture, researchers at UCLA found that . . .

Reducing Bias

- Use preferred terms for race and ethnicity
- Put people first
  - Not: *Diabetics*
  - But: *People with diabetes*
- Use *sexual orientation* rather than *sexual preference*
- Age
  - *Girl, boy* for children
  - *Young man, young woman* for adolescents
  - *Older adults* instead of *elderly*

Improving Writing Style

- Outline first
- Put aside the first draft, then
- Check for:
  - An introduction, a body, and a conclusion
  - Thesis sentence and transition sentences
  - Clarity and conciseness
- Proofread aloud!

APA FORMAT

General APA Format

- Double-space throughout, include Reference section
- Use 1" margins on all sides
- Left justify only
- Use 12 pt. Times New Roman or similar font
- Use a page header on the upper left-hand of every page
- Number pages in upper right-hand of each page
  - Title page is page 1

Title Page

Page header: Title flush left
+ Page number flush right

Title upper half of the page, centered
Name (no title or degree)
+ Affiliation

Running head: THE PURDUE OWL'S AWESOME EXAMPLE OF AN APA PAPER   1

The Purdue OWL's Awesome Example

of an APA Paper

Purdue Pete

Purdue University

APA Headings

APA Headings	
Level	Format
1	**Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Headings**
2	**Left-aligned, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading**
3	**Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with period.**
4	***Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with period.***
5	*Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with period.*

Sample Headings

Acupuncture: Good for What Ails You ← **Title**

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History ← **Level 1 Heading**

Antiquity ← **Level 2 Heading**

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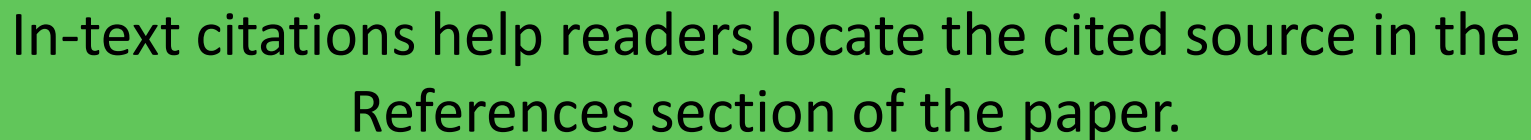
Middle History ← **Level 2 Heading**

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In-Text Citations

- Whenever you use a source, provide the author's name and date of publication in parentheses

- For direct quotations, provide a page number of paragraph number

In-text citations help readers locate the cited source in the References section of the paper.

In-Text Citations (cont'd)

Caffeine is one of the fastest acting drugs known to man. When we drink it, almost every cell in the body, including the brain, absorbs it within minutes….Caffeine intercepts adenosine, turning [its] "I'm tired" message into "I'm wide awake." The result is an invigorating buzz coffee drinkers crave NOT (*Sunday Morning,* 2002) BUT ("Caffeine Nation," 2002).

The parenthetical citation and reference list entry for a source should begin with the same word

References

Brain, M. (2007). Caffeine. Retrieved September 2, 2007, from How Stuff Works Web site: http://health.howstuffworks.com/caffeine.htm

Caffeine nation. (2002, November 14). Retrieved September 2, 2007, from *Sunday Morning* Web site: http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2002/11/14/sunday/main529388.shtml

Owen, D. (2006). Coffee and caffeine FAQs. Retrieved September 2, 2007, from http://coffeefaq.com/site/node/25

References Page

Center References at the top of the page

- Double-space reference entries

- Flush left the first line of the entry and indent subsequent lines

- Order entries alphabetically by the author's surname

References

Cummings, J.N., Butler, B., & Kraut, R. (2002). The quality of online social relationships. *Communications of the ACM, 45*(7), 103-108.

Hu, Y., Wood, J.F., Smith, V., & Westbrook, N. (2004). Friendships through IM: Examining the relationship between instant messaging and intimacy. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 10*(1).

Tidwell, L.C., & Walther, J.B. (2002). Computer-mediated communication effects on disclosure, impressions, and interpersonal evaluations: Getting to know one another a bit at a time. *Human Communication Research, 28*(3), 317-348.

Underwood, H., & Findlay, B. (2004). Internet relationships and their impact on primary relationships. *Behaviour Change, 21*(2), 127-140.

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(owl.english.purdue.edu

APA Reference Examples

- Wegener, D. T., & Petty, R. E. (1994). Mood management across affective states: The hedonic contingency hypothesis. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 66,* 1034-1048.

- Senior, B., & Swailes, S. (2007). Inside management teams: Developing a teamwork survey instrument. *British Journal of Management, 18,* 138-153. doi:10.1111/j. 1467-8551.2006.00507.x

- Koo, D. J., Chitwoode, D. D., & Sanchez, J. (2008). Violent victimization and the routine activities/lifestyle of active drug users. *Journal of Drug Issues, 38,* 1105-1137. Retrieved from http://www2.criminology.fsu.edu/~jdi/

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If you need help with APA

- OWL website: http://owl.english.purdue.edu

- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association,* 6th ed.

- http://www.apastyle.org

PLAGIARISM

Original Passage

In order to communicate effectively with other people, one must have a reasonably accurate idea of what they do and do not know that is pertinent to the communication. Treating people as though they have knowledge that they do not have can result in miscommunication and perhaps embarrassment. On the other hand, a fundamental rule of conversation, at least according to a Gricean view, is that one generally does not convey to others information that one can assume they already have.

From Raymond S. Nickerson's "How We Know-and Sometimes Misjudge-What Others Know: Imputing One's Own Knowledge to Others." *Psychological Bulletin* 125.6 (1999): p737.

Acceptable summary

Nickerson (1999) argues that clear communication hinges upon what an audience does and does not know. It is crucial to assume the audience has neither too much nor too little knowledge of the subject, or the communication may be inhibited by either confusion or offense (p. 737).

Acceptable Paraphrasing

Nickerson (1999) suggests that effective communication depends on a generally accurate knowledge of what the audience knows. If a speaker assumes too much knowledge about the subject, the audience will either misunderstand or be bewildered; however, assuming too little knowledge among those in the audience may cause them to feel patronized (p.737).

Summary or Plagiarism?

For effective communication, it is necessary to have a fairly accurate idea of what our listeners know or do not know that is pertinent to the communication. If we assume that people know something they do not, then miscommunication and perhaps embarrassment may result (Nickerson, 1999).

Plagiarism

In order to communicate effectively with other people, one must have a reasonably accurate idea of what they do and do not know that is pertinent to the communication. Treating people as though they have knowledge that they do not have can result in miscommunication and perhaps embarrassment.

For effective communication, it is necessary to have a fairly accurate idea of what our listeners know or do not know that is pertinent to the communication. If we assume that people know something they do not, then miscommunication and perhaps embarrassment may result (Nickerson, 1999).

Strategies for Avoiding Plagiarism

- Put in quotations everything that comes directly from the text—especially when taking notes

- Paraphrase, being sure not to just rearrange or replace a few words

  – Write out the idea in your own words

- Check your paraphrase against the original text

  – Be sure you have not accidentally used the same phrases or words and that the information is accurate

Indiana University

Writing Guide

CSU Channel Islands

Campus Writing Guide

Fall 2012

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