APA Sample Paper: Commonly Asked Questions About APA Style

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The format and structure are key aspects of any style paper. For APA, the paper needs to be typed in Times New Roman 12 point font and double spaced, aligned to the left with single indentations for new paragraphs. The structured sections for an average APA paper, depending on the assignment and purpose, are as follows: title page, abstract, introduction, method, results, discussion, and references. These are discussed in greater detail in *APA Sample Paper: Commonly Addressed Questions on Structure of APA Style Papers*. For additional information and questions, good sources would be the most current edition of the APA *Publication Manual* (2012) or the *Purdue OWL* website.

While writing the APA paper, something critical to keep in mind is citation, both in-text and in the reference section. Example citations for common sources, such as books, online articles, and scholarly journals, are located in the "References" section at the end of this paper. List the sources used in alphabetical order with a hanging indent. Only capitalize the first letter of the first word and proper nouns in article and book titles. There are online sources that can automatically generate citations; however, these are not always accurate, so it is usually best to do it manually. Citations can seem tedious and complicated at first, but with practice and by learning to follow the formulas, it all becomes less intimidating.

In-text citations are used throughout the text of the paper. They are used any time a source's information is applied, whether paraphrased or directly quoted. Conveniently, in-text citations tend to be simple, often located at the end of the sentence in parentheses (Author's last name, year). An example of this would be "Dogs that received the belly rub treatment three times daily were shown to have higher levels of contentment" (Bark, 2016, p. 43). Note that the

period goes at the very end of it all, outside of the quote and parentheses. If the citation came

from a book, add the page numbers (Author last name, year, pp.) If there are two authors, use

the ampersand symbol (Bark & Woofer, 2015, p. 56). For three authors, use comma and then

ampersand (Woofer, Rover & Tail, 2016), and in subsequent references, use the first author then

et al. (Woofer et al., 2016). In cases where there are six or more authors, cite only the first

author's name followed by et al. (Rover et al., 2016). Alternatively, introduce the authors within

the sentence and then cite the year: Bark and Woofer (2016) conducted a study to investigate the

effects of eating kibble versus eating grain free dog food. In some instances, there may be no

author. If this is the case, then just use the first few words of the reference entry, usually the title

of the article ("Dog Treats", 2016). In the case of directly quoting material, include the specific

page number within the citation (Biscuit & Flea, 2016, pp. 66-67).

> If directly quoting material and the quoted word count exceeds 40, it will need to be
>
> placed in a block quotation. Begin the quote on a new line, still double spaced. For word
>
> processors like Word and Google Docs, hit Tab twice, then backspace the indent to set
>
> the block quote. State the quote, then give the citation after the final punctuation mark.
>
> (Last name, year, pp.)

Another commonly encountered mechanics issue with APA is the dilemma whether to

use numerals to denote numbers. The rule of thumb with APA is that numbers less than 10

should be spelled out, such as two or nine, but there are exceptions. Numerals are used to

represent units of measurement and mathematical functions, such as 5 mg or 45%. Time, dates,

age, scores, and points are also expressed by numerals, like 8:15 pm, 6 years old, 2 hours. If the

number is at the beginning of the sentence, spell it out. Fifteen dogs went outside, while 12

stayed in. Graphs and charts are numbered as figures such as Figure 2 or Figure 6.

At the end of this paper, a sample References section is provided to give a visual aid for

structuring the citations. References should be listed in alphabetical order by author's last name,

or if there is no author, by the title of the source. If there is more than one author with the same

last name, order those sources chronologically by year. Use a hanging indent. This can be

created in Word by highlighting the reference, going to Paragraph Settings, then changing the

indent to hanging. In Google Docs, it can be a little more tedious. Go to the end of the first line,

then hit Enter and Tab.

Please note that this sample paper, while addressing the main issues concerning APA

style, is not an all-encompassing article. For further, more specific guidelines, consult the APA

Publication Manual (2012) or visit the *Purdue OWL* website.

References

Author last name, Initials. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, *volume*(issue), page range.

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Bark, D. G., & Woofer, M. N. (2016). Choosing the best nutrition. In T. Z. Barker & N. A. Chew

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