Citing Your Sources: APA

APA General Format

APA format requires:

- Times New Roman, 12 pt. font
- Double-spaced text
- 1 inch margins on all sides
- Indented first line of each paragraph, ½ inch from the left margin, using the Tab key

Header

Your page header should appear on every page, with a different header on the title page. Both will include your running head, a shortened version of your paper title on the left, and the page number on the right. On the title page, your header will say:

Running head: TITLE OF THE PAPER

On the next page, your header will read:

TITLE OF THE PAPER

To create an APA header in Microsoft Word:

1. Double click the top of the title page to edit the header.
2. At the top of the page, select Header & Footer Tools – Design.
3. Check the Different First Page box.
4. Type in “Running head:’” followed by your shortened title in all caps.
5. Press the Tab key until your cursor is all the way to the right.
6. On left side of the Design ribbon, click Page Number – Current Position, and click the first option. This will insert the page number.
7. Highlight the entire header, and change the font to 12 pt. Times New Roman.
8. Now, move to the second page of your paper. Follow steps 1 – 7, but omit the words “Running head:’” (see above).

Title Page & Abstract

Your title page should include the title of the paper, your full name, and the name of your school or institution, center-aligned in the upper half of the page and double-spaced. Example:

Marijuana as Treatment for Mental Illness

Jane Q. Smith

Great Bay Community College

Sometimes, your instructor will require an abstract, or a concise (150-250 word) summary of your research. This is typed on the second page, with the word Abstract center-aligned at the top of the page. The text of your paper will then begin on the third page.

In-Text Citations

The first step to citing your sources, in-text citations show your reader where a quote, fact, or idea originated with a short piece of information at the end of a sentence or paragraph. This will direct the reader to the reference list.

In-text citations are given in parentheses, with the punctuation coming after the parentheses. The information given in-text should exactly match the first word of the citation in your reference list. Generally, you will include the author's name (either in the sentence or the parentheses), followed by the year, and the page number. If there is no author, use the title of the work, abbreviated if necessary. If there is no page number, leave it out.

Examples:

Bellia (2012) states that “Justices accepted that in certain factual contexts, a court's assessment… could displace a publisher's” (p. 1453).
Exxon “had decided to invest close to $US 1 billion for a major expansion of this affiliate’s refinery” (Arbogast, 2013, p. 60).

Funding is important, however, as clinical trials help to identify effective drugs (“Diffuse Large B-Cell Lymphoma,” 2012).

**Reference List**

Your reference list should be in the same format as the rest of your paper: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced. Then, write “References” at the top of the page, center-aligned. In addition, the sources should be alphabetized by the first word (usually the author’s last name).

Lastly, within each entry, every line after the first is indented (see the examples below). This is called a **hanging indent**. To create a hanging indent in Microsoft Word:

1. Select the citation(s).
2. Under the **Home** tab at the top of the page, look at the **Paragraph** section.
3. Click the Line Spacing button £ and select **Line Spacing Options…**
4. In the **Indentation** section, click the dropdown menu **Special:** and select **Hanging**.

**Book or Electronic Book**

List the author, year, title, edition (if applicable), publishing location, and publisher. If it is an electronic book, add “Retrieved from” and the URL or resource. Example:


**Article**

List the author, year, title, publication, volume & issue (if applicable), pages, “Retrieved from” and the URL or resource. Example:


**Website**

List the author (if known), date (if known – if not, n.d. for no date), title of the page, “Retrieved from” and the URL. Example:

*Diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL).*


Adapted from the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL). For more examples and a sample paper, visit the OWL APA Formatting and Style guide at owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01.