Writing APA Style Papers
Papers should be typed, double-spaced, on standard sized paper (8.5 x 11), with 1” margins and size twelve font, Times New Roman throughout.

Directions:
- Open a new document
- Select “No Spacing” option under Styles
- Open the Font dialog box
  - **Font**: Times New Roman
  - **Font Style**: Regular
  - **Size**: 12
    - Click Default
- Open the Paragraph dialog box
  - **Line spacing**: Double
  - Check the Don’t add space between paragraphs of the same style box
    - Click Default
- Click Page Layout → Margins → Normal (1” all around)
Styles
Margins
Elements of APA Style Papers

- Title page
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Method
- Results
- Discussion
- References
- Supplemental materials: tables, figures, appendixes

- Purdue OWL (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)
Title Page

- All size 12 font!!
- Header: Running head: ABBREVIATED TITLE (all caps) flush left, page number flush right
  - Maximum 50 characters (letters, spaces, punctuation)
- Title: concise statement of the main topic, identifies the relationship between variables in the study
  - Avoid words like “method” and “results”
  - No more than 2 lines or 12 words
  - Centered, upper and lower case, upper half of page
- Author byline: First M. Last
  - No titles or degrees
- Institutional affiliation: location where the research was conducted
  - Hunter College, City University of New York
Notice formatting and punctuation!
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Abstract

- Starts on a new page, Abstract (NOT bold) centered on top
- Do not exceed the word limit! (250 words)
- A single paragraph (no indent) that describes:
  - The problem under investigation
  - Characteristics of participants (age, sex) or genus, species
  - Essential features of methods
  - Basic findings
  - Conclusions, implications, applications
- Keywords: listed under the abstract, centered
Abstract

Blah Blah Blah

...psychology.

Keywords: psychology, comparative, neuroscience
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Introduction

• Starts on a new page
  – The Title (not bold) is centered at the top, not “Introduction,” should be same as on title page!

• In its simplest form, can be only a couple of pages
  1. Introduction to the problem
     • Purpose: Why are you conducting it? What do you want to explore?
     • Rationale: What are the grounds for the study? Why this population/variable?
  2. Review relevant literature, cite in text, paraphrase DO NOT quote
     • What is the current understanding of the problem?
     • What are the gaps in the research?
     • How does your study relate to previous work done on this topic?
     • If other aspects of this study have been reported previously, how does this study differ from and build on previous work?
  3. Aims and hypotheses: Conclude the introduction with a statement of the goals and predictions of the study.
## Citations in Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of citation</th>
<th>First citation in text</th>
<th>Subsequent citations in text</th>
<th>Parenthetical format, first citation in text</th>
<th>Parenthetical format, subsequent citations in text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One work by three authors</td>
<td>Bradley, Ramirez, and Soo (1999)</td>
<td>Bradley et al. (1999)</td>
<td>(Bradley, Ramirez, &amp; Soo, 1999)</td>
<td>(Bradley et al., 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One work by four authors</td>
<td>Bradley, Ramirez, Soo, and Walsh (2006)</td>
<td>Bradley et al. (2006)</td>
<td>(Bradley, Ramirez, Soo, &amp; Walsh, 2006)</td>
<td>(Bradley et al., 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One work by six authors or more</td>
<td>Wasserstein et al. (2005)</td>
<td>Wasserstein et al. (2005)</td>
<td>(Wasserstein et al., 2005)</td>
<td>(Wasserstein et al., 2005)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://stwj.systemswiki.org/?page_id=1012
Full Title of Your Paper with Pertinent Variables and Same on Title Page and Introduction

Risk behavior is often displayed by commuters in New York City in Metro Transit Authority (MTA) train stations located throughout the five boroughs (Schafe, 1993). Men are more likely to engage in risk behavior than women (Burghardt & Briones, 2005). For this project, we explore if male commuters of NYC MTA are more likely to display risk behaviors than female commuters.

Burghardt and Briones (2005) found that…

We predict……….
Naming authors:

- The first time you cite a paper you must name ALL authors listed (up to 5)
- Once you’ve listed all the authors for a paper you can use “et al.” for papers with 3 or more authors.
- If there are 2 authors you must always name both.

Listing several works:

- Alphabetically by first author’s last name as found on reference list
- Separate with semicolons

Several studies show that cats prefer catnip to oregano (Anderson, 1998; Jones & Stevenson, 2002; Sylvester, 2000).
Note all the kinds of citations and how many citations in just one paragraph.

well as in such situations as car driving (Chen, Baker, Braver, & Li, 2000; Flisher, Ziervogel, Charlton, Leger, & Robertson, 1993; Harre, Field, & Kirkwood, 1996), accident risk (Fetchenhauer & Rohde, 2002)... In this context, risk-taking by males may be a form of mating display (Hawkes, 1990; 1991).

Bruce and Johnson (1994) also report similar sex differences in gambling and financial decisions...

Chen et al. (2000) further that male driving patterns...
When citing a paper you should focus on the **RESULTS** **NOT** the **HYPOTHESES**

**GOOD EXAMPLE:** While younger adults show greater facilitation for positive stimuli, facilitated attention to emotional stimuli is not valence-specific for older adults (Leclerc & Kensinger, 2008).
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Methods

- Immediately follows Introduction section, with no page break in between.
- Starts with Method (in bold) centered
- Sub-headings – (Participants/Subjects, Materials, Procedure) flush left, in bold (see pg. 44)
  - Participants (humans) or Subjects (animals): Describe how many were involved and how they were obtained. Provide any relevant demographic information (age, sex, species, etc; pg. 30)
  - Materials: What did the researchers use/what were participants given? DO NOT LIST!!! Write in complete sentences. Operationally define variables. Describe any data collection worksheets used
  - Procedures: Explain how the experiment was conducted, step-by-step. Should be detailed enough that someone else can repeat it.
We predict........

**Method**

**Participants OR Subjects**

Twenty male and twenty female Hunter College students… ([participants](#))

We used 20 male zebra finch (*Taeniopygia guttata*) in… ([subjects](#))

**Materials**

For our study we used a stopwatch to measure time; a handout with fields for participants to write down their gender, age, and grade level as well as 20 blank spaces for their responses; and a word list sourced from Thinker for the verbal memory task. Data were analyzed on SPSS (v. 4).

**Procedures**

…participants were given the handout and asked to write down their gender, age, and grade level… after 30 seconds, we removed the word list and asked participants to write down as many of the words as they remembered… We ran a two-tailed independent samples t-test between mean performance by males and mean performance by females.
For an experiment, you visited your local hospital to determine the wait time for people with emergencies in the ER. You wanted to see how long wait time and satisfaction of care were correlated. After each patient was finally treated and released, you offered each person that agreed to fill out a survey.

What should be included in the methods section?

(Hint: What would readers want to know about how the research was done?)
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Results

- Starts with **Results** (in bold) centered
  - No page break between Method and this section

- Descriptive statistics
  - Frequency, percent: \( f = 23, 69\% \)
  - Mean, standard deviation: \( M = 42.56, SD = 3.42 \)

- Inferential statistics
  - Chi-square: \( \chi^2(1) = 74.62, p < .05 \)
  - Correlation: \( r(14) = .61, p = .051 \)
  - t-tests: \( t(21) = 0.28, p = .062 \)
  - ANOVA: \( F(2, 23) = 11.32, p < .001 \)

- Punctuation
  - Always put a space around operators (= < >)
  - No space between \( r t F \) and (df)
  - Use the same number of decimals (even if it means writing 8.00 for a mean)
Results in Numbers and Words

• Correlation
  - Group A and Group B’s scores were significantly correlated, 
    \( r(##) = .##, p < .05. \)

• t-test
  - Group A (\( M = \#.##, SD = \#.## \)) scored significantly higher than Group B (\( M = \#.##, SD = \#.## \)), \( t(##) = \#.##, p < .05. \)

• ANOVA
  - Reported like t-tests, may include main effects and interactions

• Means and standard deviations should be included either in the text or in tables.
• Before presenting the stats, re-state your research question at the beginning of results section.
t-test between mean performance by males and mean performance by females.

Results

We wanted to test if there was a difference in the number of risky behaviors performed by males and females on NYC MTA subway platforms. On average, we found that males ($M = 5.67, SD = 0.84$) perform more risky behaviors than females ($M = 3.24, SD = 0.30$) at subway platforms, $t (21) = 4.28, p < .05$. 

DO NOT add any discussion in this section!
Elements of APA Style Papers

- Title page
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- Results
- Discussion
- References
- Supplemental materials: tables, figures, appendixes
• Starts with **Discussion** (in bold) centered (no page break after Results)

• Goes from specific results to general interpretations

  1. Summarize the results. Do the results support your hypothesis?
  2. “Unpack” your results for each hypothesis. What do your findings mean? How do your results compare with the results of other studies? Do they clarify or complicate things? Why do you think they are the same or different from previous studies?
  3. What are the limitations of the current study? How can the study be modified to overcome these problems?
  4. What are the implications of your study? Propose future research ideas to follow up on your study – what is the next step? End with a brief summary of your effects – what is the “take-home” message?

*End the discussion with a commentary on the importance of your findings.*
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References

- Starts on a new page, with References (NOT in bold) centered at the top
- Listed alphabetically by first author’s last name, by year if using multiple papers by the same author(s)
- Double-spaced like the rest of the paper, but uses a hanging indentation (set through paragraph dialogue box)
  - First line is flush left and subsequent lines are indented
VARYING DEFINITIONS OF ONLINE COMMUNICATION

References


Elements of APA Style Papers

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- Results
- Discussion
- References
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Supplemental Materials

- Each starts on its own page after the references, in this order:

- **Tables**: should *supplement not duplicate* (can be included within paper, but preferably place at end of paper for this class) – caption ABOVE table
  
  Table 1
  
  *Descriptive Table Caption*

- **Figures**: graphs that display relationships, charts that display flow of a procedure, etc. – caption BELOW figure
  
  *Figure 1. Concise explanation of the figure.*
Table 2

*Raw Response Time (RT) Scores for Young and Older Adults*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Young Group</th>
<th>Older Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive high arousal</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>1,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive low arousal</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>1,636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>1,797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative high arousal</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>1,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative low arousal</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>1,625</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. Mean difference values (ms) representing detection speed for each target category subtracted from the mean detection speed for neutral targets. No age differences were found in the arousal-mediated effects on detection speed. Standard errors are represented in the figure by the error bars attached to each column.
General Notes

- “Data” is plural! (Data were collected; the datum [singular] point was excluded; datum points)
- “Criteria” is plural; “criterion” is singular! (Criteria of age and sex; a 40-hour workload criterion)
- “Hypotheses” is plural; “hypothesis” is singular! (Of our four hypotheses… our first hypothesis)
- Affect = verb/action; Effect = Noun/result (time affected our results; the effect of time on our results; but search online for usage of effect as a verb)
- Full-time is adjectival (e.g., full-time students); full time is adverbial (e.g., students work full time)
- Talk about your “study” not your “paper” within your paper
- “Amount” for mass nouns (e.g., the amount of sand) and uncountable quantities (e.g., the amount of faith). “Number” for count(able) nouns (e.g., number of hours)
Numbers under ten are spelled out [one, nine]. Use numerals for numbers 10 or greater [10, ∞). NOTE: would normally confine a range in brackets, so [10, 12]. If number is at beginning of sentence, spell it out (e.g., Nineteen students…). Be consistent throughout sentence; when mixed, use numerals (e.g., Of 19 students, 5 were males).

Report studies/procedures in past tense and results in present tense (we sampled… participants reported… a two-sample t-test was performed; our results suggest).

Abbreviations: must identify full term first and present abbreviation to be used thereafter in parentheses. Use only if word repeated a lot throughout paper. Example: The Institute for Laboratory Animal Care (ILAC)…

Exercise prudence in word choice; ESPECIALLY avoid making claims that would require statistical support (e.g., to say a participant was excluded do not say he was an outlier).

When giving statistics, do not qualify the results. Do NOT say “mean was about M = 14”; instead, can say “on average students took about 14 (M = 14.32, SD = 1.34)” OR “credits taken ranged from 13 to 17 (M = 14.32, SD = 1.34; range = 4.0).”