APA Format Cheat Sheet

PURPOSE OF APA

Originally created for psychologists, the American Psychological Association (APA) style is commonly used by a variety of social and behavioral sciences as well as business fields. APA style is intended for scientific and business research.

GENERAL RULES

As with most writing formats, APA requires all text to be double-spaced, all pages to have a 1-inch margin, all pages to be numbered in the top right corner of the header, and all text to be in 12-point Times New Roman font. All sections of your paper (including the Abstract, Literature Review, Method, Results, Discussion, and References) should be labeled with headings.

TITLE PAGE

The title page is the first page of your paper, and its purpose is to clearly show readers what your paper is called, who wrote it, when it was written, and for what institution (if applicable). The main body of your paper should not start until page 3.

♦ In the top left corner of the header, put “Running head:” followed by a shortened title of the paper in all caps. (This capitalized, shortened title should appear without the “Running head:” at the top of all subsequent pages.)

♦ Center the full title (in normal upper and lowercase) three double-spaced lines from the top of the page.

♦ On the next line, center your first and last name.

♦ On the next line, center the name of your institution.

♦ If instructed by your professor, also include the course number, professor’s name, and due date each centered on their own lines.

ABSTRACT

An abstract is a brief summary of your paper, usually ranging from 150-250 words. The purpose of the abstract is to hook potential readers by giving them a sneak peek into what your paper is about.

♦ Center “Abstract” at the top of the second page.

♦ Start the text of the abstract on the next line.

♦ Unlike the rest of the paragraphs in your paper, do not indent the first line of the abstract.

♦ Include details about the main points and conclusions from your paper.

♦ It is easiest to write the abstract after finishing your paper.
The purpose of a lit review is to summarize and analyze the existing research on your paper's specific topic. Lit reviews give an overview of the major scholarship on your topic to introduce the necessity and relevance of your paper's contribution to the overall academic discussion. A lit review is not the same as an annotated bibliography.

**TITLE PAGE EXAMPLE:**

- Running head with all caps, shortened title
- Your first and last name
- Name of institution
- Sample of an APA Format Title Page
- John Doe
- LeTourneau University
- Page number
- Full title, upper and lowercase

For specific questions not addressed in this handout, please visit the LETU Writing Center, email WritingCenter@letu.edu, or consult the PurdueOWL APA formatting and style guide: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html)