

An APA Format Cheat Sheet

Demonstrating proper APA format for future reference

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## APA CHEAT SHEET

## Abstract

This paper describes some best practices for APA citation, style, and formatting. It is intended for use by Dr. Malesh's students at Florida International University, but no guarantees are made regarding its accuracy as Dr. Malesh has no control over what happens to this file once it's downloaded.

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APA formatted papers will start out with some sort of introduction before going into their normal sub-sections. Hello – this is an introduction. Here are a few basics about APA: It's very concise, it's very impersonal (much less "I" or "We,") and it's mostly used in the social sciences.

The second paragraph, just like the first, is indented by one half inch. The rest of the paper is going to do exactly this. This template should just let you type in whatever you have to say, and should do the following (which is all APA format stuff): Times New Roman 12 pt font, Double-spaced throughout, one-inch margins, headers include a shortened title aligned to the left and a page number on the right. No extra space between paragraphs. Title is centered and in "titular notation" meaning the first letter of all the important words is capitalized, like "*The Catcher in the Rye*" as opposed to "*The Catcher In The Rye*" or "*The catcher in the rye.*"

Speaking of *The Catcher in the Rye* - notice how the book title is in italics? The rule of thumb for APA is just like MLA: if it's a *container*, e.g. a book or website, it is presented in *italics*, and if it's an article or webpage, it is presented in quotes, like "Ten Great Makeup Tips" as seen in *Cosmo* magazine.

Now about *Catcher in the Rye* - it seems like this might be a good point to introduce a long block quote. Here's one from that book:

I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff—I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all.(Salinger, 1951, p.42)

The block quote is indented a half inch, and the author's last name, the year of publication, and the number on which the quote appears are presented in parentheses, at the end.

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That's it - that's the high points! For additional reference, check out owl.english.purdue.edu and look at the APA section. Don't forget to look at sample papers too - they are one of your best resources for learning academic style, especially the intangible stuff - the formatting is relatively easy, after all...but learning to write in a concise, meaningful way is a skill that will take you a lifetime to master.

Down below a bit you'll see a fake "References" page – note the *hanging indent* – that means the second and subsequent lines of each entry are indented, but *not* the first!

### **Remember, APA Style *May* Use Headings (Level 1)**

APA Formatted papers will often break into sub-sections. As they are scientific papers, this allows for easier skim-and-scan than an MLA formatted paper. As you can see, the first level of heading is shown above.

### **This is the Second Level of Heading (Level 2)**

It is done up like a regular book title, but bold and left-aligned. It uses Upper-Case and lower-case. Just for fun, let's make one section that is in turn subordinate to this section.

### **Ta-da, a third section (Level 3).**

Well, better get some citations in here. According to source X, the only way to learn how to write is by writing (1804). This is definitely reinforced by source Y (1865) who stated "Want to write? Then write." (p. 42)

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**References**

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