Formatting a Paper for APA 6th Edition

This guide outlines formatting a paper to follow APA style including setting the margins, font type and size, line spacing, title page, and references page using Microsoft Word 2007 and 2010.

Margins, Font, and Line Spacing Settings

Margins should be 1 inch. Go to the Page Layout tab > click on Margins > Normal. This is the default setting, but double check that this is selected.

The font should be Times New Roman at 12 points. Go to the Home tab > choose the Font dialog box in the corner > select Times New Roman and 12 points.
In Word 2007, you will see the Default button (shown here) and in Word 2010, the button says Set as Default. You can use this option to make the Times New Roman font at 12 points the default for every time you use Word. Or just click OK to only change the font for your current paper.

The entire paper should be double spaced. On the Home tab > Right click on Normal in Styles. After right-clicking, choose Modify. Under Formatting, click the Double Space button and then OK.
The Title Page, Running Head, and Page Numbers

To create the header, on the **Insert** tab > click the **Header** button > choose **Blank**.

In the **Header** area, you will type the running head in the following format:

Running head: SHORTENED TITLE OF YOUR PAPER IN ALL CAPS

The title in the running head should be no more than 50 characters (including spaces). On your title page, you will provide the full title of your paper. If your title is under 50 characters, you will not need to worry about shortening it for the running head. To quickly calculate the number of characters in your title, **highlight your title** > click on **Word Count** box at the bottom of the page > the Word Count dialog box will open and provide the character count with spaces.

After typing the title in the header, press the tab key to place your cursor in the right margin. In the **Header & Footer** group, click on the **Page Number** button > choose **Current Position** > click on **Plain Number**.
Close the Header by double clicking under the dotted line or clicking on the Close Header and Footer button.

Press the Enter button six times to get to the upper middle of the page. Choose the **Center Text** button on the Home tab in the Paragraph group.

Type your title page information. You will include your essay title, your name, and university. Your instructor may also require you to include the course code and name.
After you type in your title page information, with your cursor still on the title page (and below your title page text), go to the Page Layout tab > Page Setup Group > click on Breaks > under Section Breaks, click on Next Page. You will then be on page 2.

On page 2, you will modify the header so that the phrase “Running head” only appears on the title page header. Go to the Insert tab > Header & Footer group > click on the Header button > click on Edit Header. On the Header Design tab in the Navigation group, click on Link to Previous button to turn off this option.

Be sure to first turn off Link to Previous before deleting “Running head:” After deleting “Running head:” close the Header & Footer window. The remainder of your pages will now only contain your essay title and page number. You can now type the body of your essay.

[TITLE OF YOUR PAPER]
The First Page of the Essay

After editing the header to remove “Running head:,” you will need to type in your full essay title once more. You will center this title at the top of the first page of the essay (numbered page 2 because the title page is page 1).

After your essay title, click the Enter button and go to the Paragraph group on the Home tab > select the Align Text Left button. Then open the Paragraph dialog box. Under Indentation, select First line under Special. Click OK. Now every paragraph will be indented a half inch automatically and you are ready to type the body of your essay.
The References Page

After you complete the final paragraph of your essay, you will insert a page break. For APA style, the References list always starts on a separate page after the essay text. Go to the Insert tab, in the Pages group, and click on Page Break.

Enter the word References and center it at the top of the page. Do not use bold or underlined text. Click the Enter key once and then align the text left again (as you had done for the body of your essay). Type your list of references. Press the Enter key only at the end of each reference. Before setting the hanging indent, the References page will appear like this:

Once you have typed all of your references, you will need to highlight all of them. Only highlight the references—not the title of the page References. Go to the Home tab > chose the Paragraph dialog box > choose Hanging from the dropdown under Special for Indentation.
Now your references will be formatted with the hanging indent. Your essay now follows APA style for formatting.

References


Beck, A. N., Cooper, C. E., McLanahan, S., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2010). Partnership transitions...
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