

Suggested Checklist for APA Style Papers

By Dr. Tracy L. Griggs (GriggsT@winthrop.edu)

**This checklist is meant to serve as a general guide for APA style papers. It may not be sufficient to meet all APA style paper requirements set by other professors.*

1. APA Style Papers include all of the following sections: (in this order)

- a. Title page
- b. Abstract
- c. Introduction
- d. Methods
- e. Results
- f. Discussion
- g. References (in APA style of course!)
- h. Appendix (e.g. your survey, materials, etc)
- i. Tables
- j. Figure Captions page
- k. Figure (e.g. Graphs, Figures, Photos, Exhibits, or Scatterplots, etc.)

I. Follows APA Style

<i>General Formatting Throughout Paper</i>	Yes	No
• There are 1-inch margins on all four sides of each page of the manuscript		
• There is a .5 inch margin on the header		
• The font is the correct size (12 pt) and style (Times New Roman)		
• Double-spaced throughout		
• Words not hyphenated (broken) at end of a line		
• Numbers are expressed correctly (spelled out if at beginning of sentences!)		
• Page header and number are typed at the top of <i>each</i> manuscript page		
• use past tense in the abstract, introduction, and method (e.g. “Research suggested that,” “the aim of this study was to...”)		
• use present tense in the results and discussion (e.g. “results show that,” “the results of this study have major implications for industry/society because”)		
<i>APA Technical Writing Style</i>		
• Spelling is correct. Spell check was obviously used. (Watch words like “their” and “there” which spell check may not catch)		
• Personal pronouns (I, me, us, we) are appropriately NOT used		
• Contractions are appropriately NOT used		
• Slang is not used.		
• Sentences are complete. Each sentence stands alone and makes sense if the sentence before and after are removed. <i>Read aloud as you write to make sure.</i>		
• Is concise. Removes superfluous/extra wording from all sentences.		
• Avoids the use of excessive jargon or prose (fluff) unless absolutely necessary.		
• All paragraphs have more than 2 sentences.		
• Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence. All sentences in that paragraph pertain to the <u>same</u> subject. (This takes work, folks, but it is clearly what sets the good writers apart and makes a paper flow well.)		
• Logical continuity between sections & paragraphs		
• Gender-inclusive (non-biased) language is used throughout		
• Quotations are: few in #, <i>word-for-word</i> accurate, & page numbers are provided along		

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with the citation of a quote [e.g. (Smith, 1991, p. 4)]		
• All abbreviations are written out the first time they are used		
• “and” is used in citations outside of parentheses [e.g. “Ty and Smith, 1991 suggested that when dogs are happy, they wag their tail.”]		
• “&” is used in citations within parentheses [e.g. “Research suggests that dogs who are happy wag their tails (Ty & Smith, 1991)]		
• Two or more citations within same parentheses are in alphabetical order, separated by a semicolon. [e.g. “(Ty & Smith, 1991; Zenag, 1991)”]		
• When the same authors with 2 same-year publications are cited within a research paper, the article that is cited first in the paper is denoted with an “a” and the 2 nd with a “b” [e.g. “(Ty & Smith, 1991a; Ty & Smith, 1991b). This “a” “b” distinction is also noted on in the references page so that the citations can be appropriately matched with the article from which they came.		
• “et al.” is used only when there are three or more authors <i>and</i> it’s 2 nd or later occurrence of the citation. (spell everyone’s name out 1 st time)		

I. Title Page

	Yes	No
• Page header is first two or three words of the title		
• “Running head” is aligned with left margin and is < 50 characters and spaces		
• Appropriate title is included and formatted appropriately (Sentence Case)		
• Author and Affiliation are included, double spaced and centered on the page		

II. Abstract

<i>Make this last!</i>	Yes	No
• “Abstract” is typed at the top center of the abstract page		
• First line of abstract is even with left margin (block style, not indented)		
• Abstract is single spaced and between 100-120 words long		
• Content – (Includes 1 sentence summary of each section of the paper (purpose, design, methods, results, conclusion)		
• Quality – (Active voice, readable, concise, non-evaluative, accurate, no citations)		

IV. Introduction

<i>Writing for Flow and Logic</i>	Yes	No
• Your title is centered at top of the first page of the introduction		
• The problem is well defined (why do we care about this issue? Can you cite recent events, popular press articles, or evidence of current trends that support why we should care about your topic?)		
• Discussion of relevant literature (empirical articles) as it supports rationale for the current study hypothesis/es. May include “sub-sections” with labels if it helps. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quality studies are cited (Does not discuss irrelevant pieces of literature) ○ Quality of discussion (Does not include <i>irrelevant</i> details about other studies) ○ Makes clear how results from each study cited are relevant to <i>this</i> study. 		
• All constructs (IVs and DVs) are <i>operationally</i> defined		
• Hypothesis(es) are formally stated and they are clear. (Does not use the word “relationship” if doing a group comparison study) (Does not use the word “difference” if doing a correlational study)		

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• States the gap in the literature on this topic, or acknowledges this as a replication study		
• Purpose and goals of the study clearly stated (usually at the conclusion of the intro)		

IV. Methods

	Yes	No
• Labels all subsections (may combine 2): <i>Participants, Procedure, Materials, Design</i>		
• <i>Participants</i> : Indicates who participated in the study, how many, and how were they selected. Response rate statistics are included if relevant. Sufficient demographic information is supplied so that conclusions about external validity can be determined. (<i>Demographics may be included in the results section instead</i>)		
• <i>Procedure</i> : Describes the chronological sequence of events and is articulated clearly enough that someone could replicate it entirely if they chose to do so.		
• <i>Materials</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Materials described in detail and ○ The Appendix with the materials used are referenced by saying “See Appendix A for a copy of the [survey] materials” ○ Describe the instructions given to the participants regarding the use of the materials if you have not already done so in the procedure. 		
• <i>Design</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Indicates what type of design was used (correlational, experimental, quasi-experimental) ○ Describe how participants were assigned to groups/conditions if applicable ○ Describe any control procedures used 		

V. Results

<i>(Do not discuss the results here)</i>	Yes	No
• “Results” is typed at the top of the section (no new page)		
• Includes descriptive statistics (% , average, ranges) related to the participants (demographics like age, race, gender and anything else relevant to the study)		
• Includes descriptive statistics on IV and DV, including <i>SDs</i> when means are reported		
• Hypotheses are re-stated and the main findings for each hypothesis are presented including whether the hypothesis was supported, partially supported or not supported		
• <i>Correct statistical test was used</i> and was noted (e.g. “A t-test was conducted”)		
• Correctly interprets results (hint: $p < .05$ is significant!)		
• All test statistics notations (<i>t</i> , <i>F</i> , <i>p</i> , <i>M</i> , <i>SD</i> , etc) are italicized in text (do <i>not</i> italicize the results themselves. Example: ($M=4.30$, $SD=1.20$)) Use <u>2 decimal places</u> when reporting all results unless higher scrutiny is required to note statistical differences. This is rare in social science research.		
• Makes reference table and figure in the results. (“See Table 1 for t-test results”)		

VI. Discussion

	Yes	No
• “Discussion” is typed at the top of the section (no new page)		
• Briefly summarizes results, including whether hypotheses were confirmed or not		
• Tie results back to literature review & purpose/hypotheses		
• Does not use the word “prove” when talking about results of this or any other study that uses statistics. Statistics by definition, are used to make statements of probability, not proof!		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes at least a paragraph on the limitations of the study, including those presented by the selection method, materials, design, issues of control, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What can future researchers do to improve this study? 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a section on the implications for future studies (including ideas for future research in this area), and the implications of your results for organizational theory and organizational practice. 		

VII. Reference Page

	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “References” is typed at the top of this new page 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sources included, most of which are probably from <i>empirical</i> peer-reviewed journal articles 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All references on this page have been used/cited within body of paper 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Likewise, each and every</i> citation in manuscript is in the reference section of paper 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All references on this page are listed in alphabetical order, by 1st author’s last name 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct format for individual references <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Author’s names are separated by commas in reference section ○ Uses hanging indent throughout reference section ○ Capitalization is correct ○ Italicized the journal title and the volume number. 		

VIII. Appendices

	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Appendix” is typed at the top of this new page. (Appendix is literally just pasted here) 		

IX. Tables

	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Table 1” is typed at the top of this new page, left justified. If >1 table, then type “Table 1” etc. on following pages, so that each table has its own page. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tables are in APA format, including the use of italics for the title & stats, double spacing, APA-style notes, etc. 		

X. Figures (includes Graphs or Scatterplots)

	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Figure Caption” is typed at the top of a new page, and describes <i>all</i> study figures (use multiple pages if you run over, but these may be typed on one page if they fit) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The figures are on the following pages • They must appropriately includes a title, axes labels, appropriate graphing techniques, etc. 		