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How to Format a Paper (APA)

This handout focuses on matters of simple format: specifically, the order of pages and the arrangements of margins or headers in a paper. The information provided is taken from *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Fifth edition.

Order of Manuscript Pages

- Title page: The title should be centered about 1/3 of the way down on the page. Formal APA manuscripts include a running head or abbreviated title placed in the top left corner of the title page. All pages of the manuscript have a page header with a shortened version of the title and the page number in the top right hand corner. The first page will be the title page.
- Abstract (on a new page with the word “Abstract” typed in uppercase and lower case letters, centered, at the top of the page and as a single paragraph not to exceed 120 words)
- Body or text of paper
- References (on a new page, with the word “References” centered at the top of the page, with hanging indent format—first line of reference set flush left, all subsequent lines indented)
- Appendices
- Tables
- Figures

Spacing, Pagination, and Margins

- Double-space between lines of the manuscript
- Leave margins of at least one inch at the top, bottom, left, and right of every page
- Number all pages; place the number at least one inch from the right-hand edge of the page

SAMPLE PAPER →

Page Header 1

Running Head

Title Centered
Name
**Other information
required by instructor**

Page Header 2

Abstract

Page Header 3

Title
Begin the body of the paper
next.

Page Header 4

References