

APA 7th Edition formatting and style guide:

Formatting Your APA Paper

The guidelines for paper format apply to both student assignments and manuscripts being submitted for publication to a journal. If you are using APA Style to create another kind of work (e.g., a website, conference poster, or PowerPoint presentation), you may need to format your work differently in order to optimize its presentation, for example, by using different line spacing and font size. Follow the guidelines of your institution or publisher to adapt APA Style formatting guidelines as needed.

<http://www.swinburne.edu.my/library>

| CONTENTS | PAGES |
|--|--------------|
| 1.0 Order of Pages | 1 |
| 2.0 Title Page Setup | 2 |
| 3.0 Font | 6 |
| 4.0 Page Header | 7 |
| 5.0 Line Spacing | 9 |
| 6.0 Margins | 10 |
| 7.0 Paragraph Alignment and Indentation | 11 |
| 8.0 Headings | 13 |
| | |
| Additional Pictorial Guide | |
| Hanging Indent in Microsoft Word | 16 |
| Format Painter Tool in Microsoft Word and Google Docs | 18 |
| Accessing Academic Writer Tool in The Library Database | 19 |

Paper Format

Consistency in the order, structure, and format of a paper allows reader to focus on a paper's content rather than its presentation.

To format a paper in APA Style, writers can typically use the default settings and automatic formatting tools of their word-processing program or make only minor adjustments. The guidelines for paper format apply to both student assignments and manuscripts being submitted for publication to a journal.

1.0 Order of Pages

Arrange the pages of an APA Style paper in this order:

- Title page
- Abstract
- Text
- References
- Footnotes
- Tables
- Figures
- Appendices

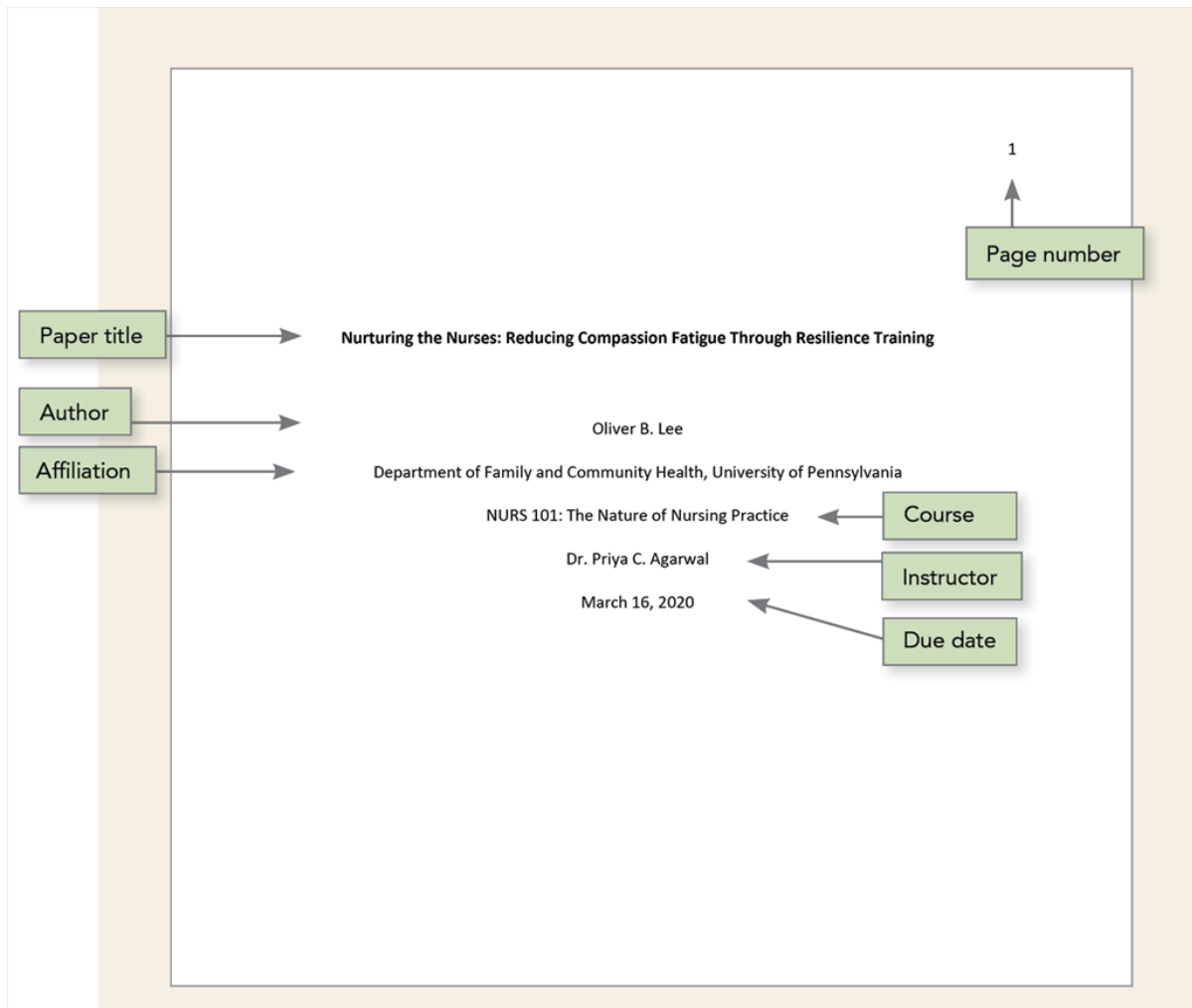
In general, start each section on a new page. However, the order of pages is [flexible in these cases](#):

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| tables and figures: | Embed tables and figures within the text after they are first mentioned (or “called out”), or placed each table and then each figure on separate pages after the references. If an embedded table or figure appears on the same page as text, place it either the top or the bottom of the page, and insert a blank double-spaced line to separate the table or figure from the adjacent text. |
| footnotes: | Use the footnotes function of your word-processing program to insert a footnote at the bottom of the page of text on which the footnote appears, or list footnotes together on a separate page after the references. |

2.0 Title Page Setup

Student Title Page

The student title page includes the paper title, author names (the byline), author affiliation, course number and name for which the paper is being submitted, instructor name, assignment due date, and page number, as shown in this example.



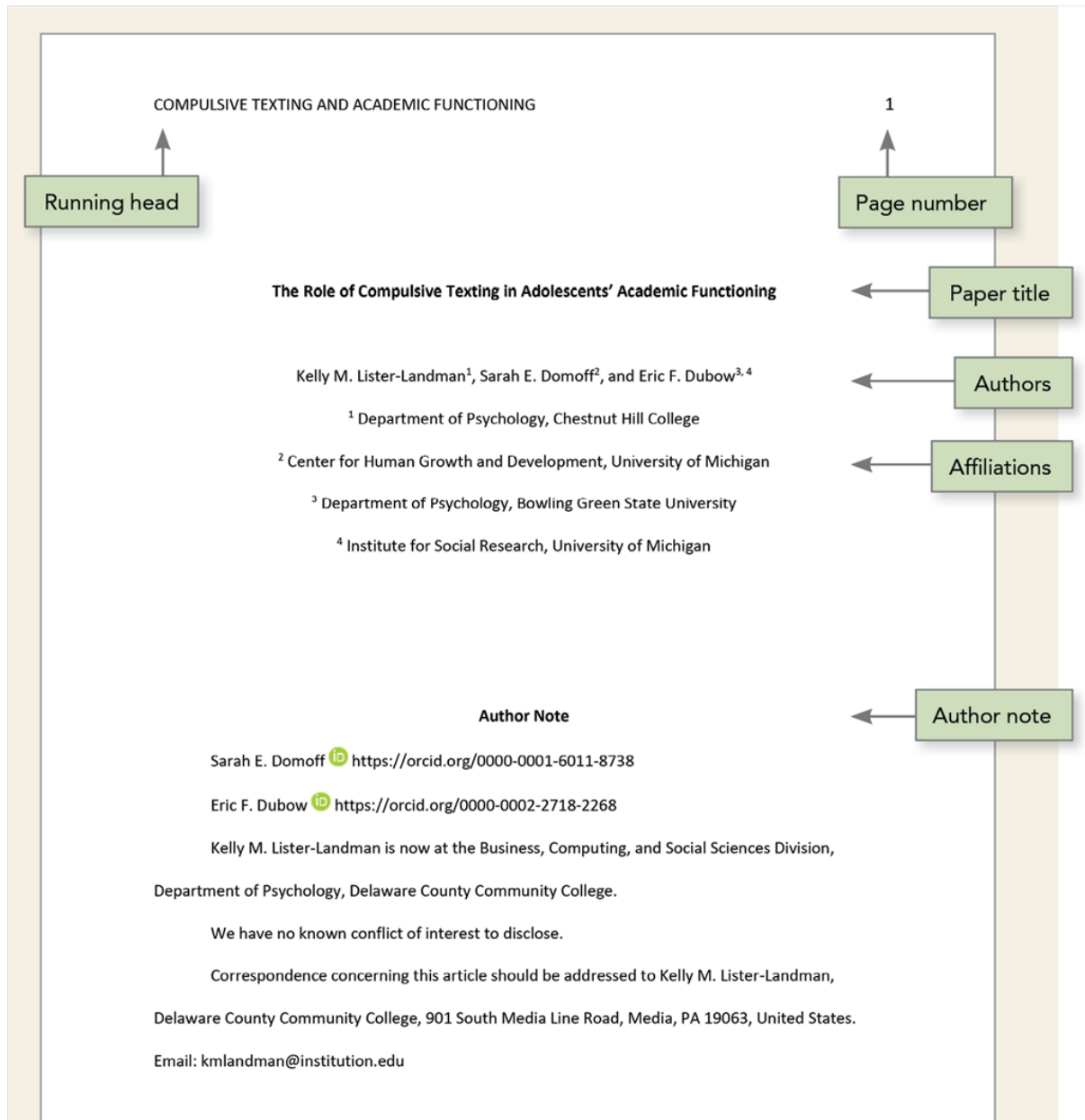
Student papers do not include a running head unless requested by the instructor or institution.

Follow the guidelines described next to format each element of the [student title page](#).

| Student title page element | Format |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Paper title | Place the title three to four lines down from the top of the title page. Center it and type it in bold font. Capitalize major words of the title. Place the main title and any subtitle on separate double-spaced lines if desired. There is no maximum length for titles; however, keep titles focused and include key terms. |
| Author names | Place one double-spaced blank line between the paper title and the author names. Center author names on their own line. If there are two authors, use the word “and” between authors; if there are three or more authors, place a comma between author names and use the word “and” before the final author name. |
| Author affiliation | For a student paper, the affiliation is the institution where the student attends school. Include both the name of any department and the name of the college, university, or other institution, separated by a comma. Center the affiliation on the next double-spaced line after the author name(s). |
| Course number and name | Provide the course number as shown on instructional materials, followed by a colon and the course name. Center the course number and name on the next double-spaced line after the author affiliation. |
| Instructor name | Provide the name of the instructor for the course using the format shown on instructional materials. Center the instructor name on the next double-spaced line after the course number and name. |
| Assignment due date | Provide the due date for the assignment. Center the due date on the next double-spaced line after the instructor name. Use the date format commonly used in your country. |
| Page number | Use the page number 1 on the title page. Use the automatic page-numbering function of your word processing program to insert page numbers in the top right corner of the page header. |

Professional Title Page

The professional title page includes the paper title, author names (the byline), author affiliation(s), author note, running head, and page number, as shown in the following example.



Follow the guidelines described next to format each element of the [professional title page](#).

| Professional title page element | Format |
|--|---|
| Paper title | Place the title three to four lines down from the top of the title page. Center it and type it in bold font. Capitalize major words of the title. Place the main title and any subtitle on separate double-spaced lines if desired. There is no maximum length for titles; however, keep titles focused and include key terms. |
| Author names | Place one double-spaced blank line between the paper title and the author names. Center author names on their own line. If there are two authors, use the word “and” between authors; if there are three or more authors, place a comma between author names and use the word “and” before the final author name. |
| | When different authors have different affiliations, use superscript numerals after author names to connect the names to the appropriate affiliation(s). If all authors have the same affiliation, superscript numerals are not used. |
| Author affiliation | For a professional paper, the affiliation is the institution at which the research was conducted. Include both the name of any department and the name of the college, university, or other institution, separated by a comma. Center the affiliation on the next double-spaced line after the author names; when there are multiple affiliations, center each affiliation on its own line. |
| | When different authors have different affiliations, use superscript numerals before affiliations to connect the affiliations to the appropriate author(s). Do not use superscript numerals if all authors share the same affiliations. |
| Author note | Place the author note in the bottom half of the title page. Center and bold the label “Author Note.” Align the paragraphs of the author note to the left. |
| Running head | The running head appears in all-capital letters in the page header of all pages, including the title page. Align the running head to the left margin. Do not use label “Running head:” before the running head. |
| Page number | The title page should be number 1, and the page numbers is on the top right corner of the page header. |

**Note: Please be advised to constitutently consult the APA Style Website for update and accurate information of guides; <https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/handouts-guides>

3.0 Font

A variety of fonts are permitted in APA Style papers. [Font options](#) include the following:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| sans serif fonts: | 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, or 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode |
| serif fonts: | 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or normal (10-point) Computer Modern (the default font for LaTeX) |

APA recommend these fonts because they are legible and widely available and because they include special characters such as math symbols and Greek letters. Historically, sans serif fonts have been preferred for online works and serif fonts for print works; however, modern screen resolutions can typically accommodate either type of font, and people who use assistive technologies can adjust font settings to their preferences.

Use the same font throughout your paper, with the following [exceptions](#):

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| figures: | Within figure images, use a sans serif font with a type size between 8 and 14 points |
| computer code: | To present computer code, use a monospace font such as 10-point Lucida Console or 10-point Courier New |
| footnotes: | When inserting footnotes with the footnotes function of your word-processing program, use the default font settings. The footnote font might be smaller than the text font (and have different line spacing), and it is not necessary to change it. |

Instructor and publishers vary in how they specify length requirements. Different fonts take up different amounts of space on the page; thus, we recommend using word count rather than page count to gauge paper length if possible.

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4.0 Page Header

The page header appears within the top margin of every page of the paper.

For **student papers**, the page header consists of the **page number** only:

} **Page header**
2

Title of Paper

Begin your paper with the paper title at the top of the first page of text. The paper title acts as a de facto Level 1 heading: It is centered and in bold title case font. Do not use the heading "Introduction"; text at the beginning of the paper is assumed to be the introduction.

APA Style headings have five possible levels. Each main section starts with the highest level of heading, even if one section has fewer levels of subheading than another section. For example, in a paper with Level 1 Method, Results, and Discussion headings, the Method and Results sections may each have two levels of subheading (Levels 2 and 3), and the Discussion section may have only one level of subheading (Level 2).

Level 2 Heading in the Introduction

Use Level 2 headings for any headings within the introduction. Level 3 for subsections of

For **professional papers**, the page header consists of the **page number** and **running head**:

} **Page header**
3

PROFESSIONAL PAPER RUNNING HEAD

Title of Paper

Begin your paper with the paper title at the top of the first page of text. The paper title acts as a de facto Level 1 heading: It is centered and in bold title case font. Do not use the heading "Introduction"; text at the beginning of the paper is assumed to be the introduction.

APA Style headings have five possible levels. Each main section starts with the highest level of heading, even if one section has fewer levels of subheading than another section. For example, in a paper with Level 1 Method, Results, and Discussion headings, the Method and Results sections may each have two levels of subheading (Levels 2 and 3), and the Discussion section may have only one level of subheading (Level 2).

Level 2 Heading in the Introduction

Use Level 2 headings for any headings within the introduction, Level 3 for subsections of any Level 2 headings, and so on.

****Note:** Please be advised to constitutently consult the APA Style Website for update and accurate information of guides; <https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/handouts-guides>

Components of Page Header:

Page numbers (Student and professional papers)

- Use the page-numbering function of your word-processing program to insert page numbers.
- Insert page numbers in the top right corner. The page number should show on all pages.
- The title page carries page number 1.

Running head (Professional papers only)

The running head is an abbreviated version of the title of your paper (or the full title if the title is already short). The running head is not required for student papers unless the instructor or institution requests it. Thus, typically only professional papers include a running head.

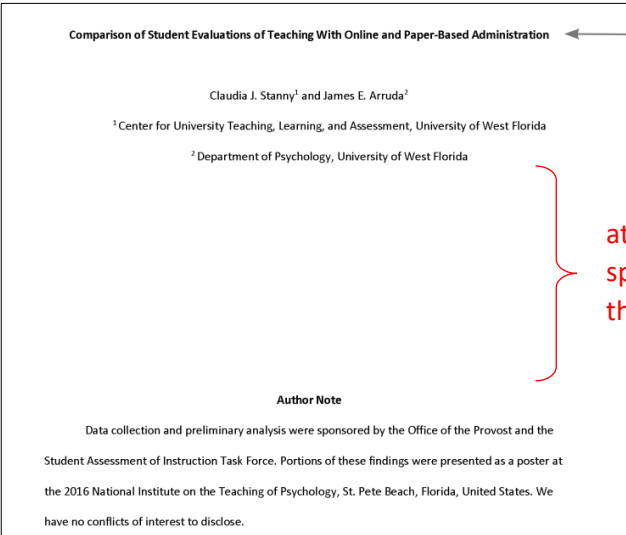
Follow these guidelines to include a running head in an APA Style paper:

- Type the running head in all-capital letters.
- Ensure the running head is no more than 50 characters, including spaces and punctuation.
- Avoid using abbreviations in the running head; however, the ampersand symbol (&) may be used rather than “and” if desired.
- The running head appears in the same format on every page, including the first page.
- Do not use the label “Running head:” before the running head.
- Align the running head to the left margin of the page header, across from the right-aligned page number.

5.0 Line Spacing

In general, double-space all parts of an APA Style paper, including the abstract; text; block quotations; table and figure numbers, titles, and notes; and reference list (including between and within entries). Do not add extra space before or after paragraphs.

Exceptions to double line spacing are as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <p>Title page:</p> | <p>Insert a double-spaced blank line between the title and the byline on the title page. For professional papers, also include at least one double-spaced blank line above the author note (student papers do not include author notes). Double-space the rest of the title page.</p>  |
| <p>Tables:</p> | <p>The table body (cells) may be single-spaced, one-and-a-half-spaced, or double-spaced, depending on which is the most effective layout for the information. Double-space the table number, title, and notes.</p> |
| <p>Figures:</p> | <p>Words within the image part of a figure may be single-spaced, one-and-a-half-spaced, or double-spaced, depending on which is the most effective layout for the information. Double-space the figure number, title, and notes.</p> |
| <p>Footnotes:</p> | <p>When inserting footnotes with the footnotes function of your word-processing program, use the default font settings (usually single-spaced and a slightly smaller font than the text).</p> |
| <p>Displayed equations:</p> | <p>It is permissible to apply triple- or quadruple-spacing in special circumstances, such as before and after a displayed equation.</p> |

These guidelines apply to APA Style student papers and to manuscripts being submitted for publication. If you are using APA Style in another context (e.g., on a website or in a formal publication), different line spacing and other formatting specifications may be appropriate.

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6.0 Margins

Use 1-inch margins on every side of the page for an APA Style paper.

However, if you are writing a dissertation or thesis, your advisor or institution may specify different margins (e.g., a 1.5-inch left margin to accommodate binding).

Title of Paper

Begin your paper with the paper title at the top of the first page of text. The paper title acts as a de facto Level 1 heading: It is centered and in bold title case font. Do not use the heading "Introduction"; text at the beginning of the paper is assumed to be the introduction.

APA Style headings have five possible levels. Each main section starts with the highest level of heading, even if one section has fewer levels of subheading than another section. For example, in a paper with Level 1 Method, Results, and Discussion headings, the Method and Results sections may each have two levels of subheading (Levels 2 and 3), and the Discussion section may have only one level of subheading (Level 2).

Level 2 Heading in the Introduction

Use Level 2 headings for any headings within the introduction, Level 3 for subsections of any Level 2 headings, and so on.

Level 2 Heading in the Introduction

Avoid having only one subsection heading within a section, just like in an outline. Use at least two subsection headings within a section or use no subsection headings at all (e.g., in an outline, a section numbered with a Roman numeral would be divided into either a minimum of A and B subsections or no subsections; an A subsection would not stand alone).

Level 1 Heading for First Main Section After the Introduction

After the introduction (regardless of whether it includes headings), use a Level 1 heading for the next main section of the paper (e.g., Method).

Level 2 Heading

Use Level 2 headings for subsections of Level 1 headings. Do not label headings with numbers or letters.

Level 2 Heading

All topics of equal importance should have the same level of heading. For example, in a multiexperiment paper, the headings for the Method and Results sections for Experiment 1 should be the same level as the headings for the Method and Results sections for Experiment 2, with parallel wording. In a single-experiment paper, the Method, Results, and Discussion

7.0 Paragraph Alignment and Indentation

APA Style includes guidelines for paragraph alignment and indentation to ensure that papers are formatted in a consistent and readable manner. All writers should follow these guidelines.

Paragraph alignment

Align the text of an APA Style paper to the left margin. Leave the right margin uneven, or “ragged.” Do not use full justification for student papers or manuscripts being submitted for publication.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Align to the left | Begin your paper with the paper title at the top of the first page of text. The paper title acts as a de facto Level 1 heading: It is centered and in bold title case font. Do not use the heading “Introduction”; text at the beginning of the paper is assumed to be the introduction. |
| | APA Style headings have five possible levels. Each main section starts with the highest level of heading, even if one section has fewer levels of subheading than another section. For example, in a paper with Level 1 Method, Results, and Discussion headings, the Method and Results sections may each have two levels of subheading (Levels 2 and 3), and the Discussion section may have only one level of subheading (Level 2). |
| | Leave it uneven |

Do not insert hyphens (manual breaks) in words at the end of line. However, it is acceptable if your word-processing program automatically inserts breaks in long hyperlinks (such as in a DOI or URL in a reference list entry).

Paragraph indentation

Indent the first line of each paragraph of text 0.5 in. from the left margin. Use the tab key or the automatic paragraph-formatting function of your word-processing program to achieve the indentation (the default setting is likely already 0.5 in.). Do not use the space bar to create indentation.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Indent 0.5 in. | → Begin your paper with the paper title at the top of the first page of text. The paper title acts as a de facto Level 1 heading: It is centered and in bold title case font. Do not use the heading “Introduction”; text at the beginning of the paper is assumed to be the introduction. |
| Indent 0.5 in. | → APA Style headings have five possible levels. Each main section starts with the highest level of heading, even if one section has fewer levels of subheading than another section. For example, in a paper with Level 1 Method, Results, and Discussion headings, the Method and Results sections may each have two levels of subheading (Levels 2 and 3), and the Discussion section may have only one level of subheading (Level 2). |

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Exceptions to these paragraph-formatting requirements are as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Title page: | For professional papers, the title (in bold), byline, and affiliations should be centered on the title page. For student papers, the title (in bold), byline, affiliations, course number and name, instructor, and assignment due date should be centered on the title page. |
| Section labels: | Section labels (e.g., “Abstract,” “References”) should be centered (and bold). |
| Abstract: | The first line of the abstract should be flush left (not indented). |
| Block quotations: | Indent a whole block quotation 0.5 in. from the left margin. If the block quotation spans more than one paragraph, the first line of the second and any subsequent paragraphs of the block quotation should be indented another 0.5 in., such that those first lines are indented a total of 1 in. |
| Headings: | Level 1 headings should be centered (and in bold), and Level 2 and 3 headings should be left-aligned (and in bold or bold italic, respectively). Level 4 and 5 headings are indented like regular paragraphs. |
| Tables and figures: | Table and figure numbers (in bold), titles (in italics), and notes should be flush left. |
| Reference list: | Reference list entries should have a hanging indent of 0.5 in. |
| Appendices: | Appendix labels and titles should be centered (and bold). |

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8.0 Headings

Heading identify the content within sections of a paper.

Make your headings descriptive and concise. Headings that are well formatted and clearly worded aid both visual and nonvisual readers of all abilities.

Levels of heading

There are five levels of heading in APA Style. Level 1 is the highest or main level of heading, Level 2 is a subheading of Level 1, Level 3 is a subheading of Level 2, and so on through Levels 4 and 5. The number of headings to use in a paper depends on the length and complexity of the work.

Use only the number of headings necessary to differentiate distinct sections in your paper; short student papers may not require any headings. Furthermore, avoid these common errors related to headings:

- Avoid having only one subsection heading within a section, just like in an outline.
- Do not label headings with numbers or letters.
- Double-space heading; do not switch to single spacing within headings.
- Do not add blank lines above or below headings, even if a heading falls at the end of a page.

Format of headings

The following table demonstrates how to format headings in APA Style.

| Level | Format |
|-------|---|
| 1 | <p style="text-align: center;">Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Text begins as a new paragraph.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Text begins as a new paragraph.</p> |

****Note:** Please be advised to constitutently consult the APA Style Website for update and accurate information of guides; <https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/handouts-guides>

| | |
|---|--|
| 3 | <p><i>Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading</i></p> <p>Text begins as a new paragraph.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Indented, Bold, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period. Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.</p> |
| 5 | <p><i>Indented, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period.</i> Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.</p> |

Note. In title case, most words are capitalized.

Headings in the introduction

Because the first paragraphs of a paper are understood to be introductory, the heading “Introduction” is not needed. Do not begin a paper with an “Introduction” heading; the paper title at the top of the first page of text acts as a de facto Level 1 heading.

It is possible (but not required) to use headings within the introduction. For subsections within the introduction, use Level 2 headings for the first level of subsection, Level 3 for subsections of any Level 2 headings, and so on. After the introduction (regardless of whether it includes headings), use a Level 1 heading for the next main section of the paper (e.g., Method).

Creating accessible headings

Writers who use APA Style may use the automatic headings function of their word-processing program to create headings. This not only simplifies the task of formatting headings but also ensures that headings are coded appropriately in any electronic version of the paper, which aids readers who use navigation tools and assistive technologies such as screen readers.

**Note: Please be advised to constitutently consult the APA Style Website for update and accurate information of guides; <https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/handouts-guides>

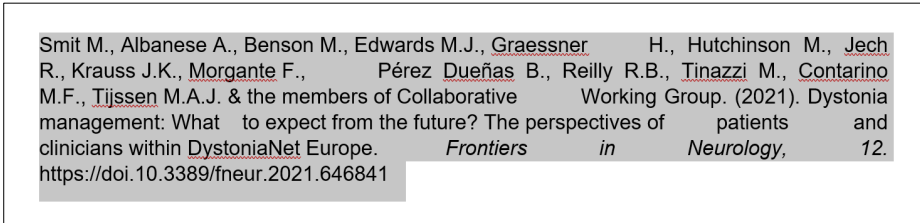
Additional Pictorial Guide

- Hanging Indent in Microsoft Word
- Format Painter Tool in Microsoft Word and Google Docs
- Accessing Academic Writer Tool in The Library Database

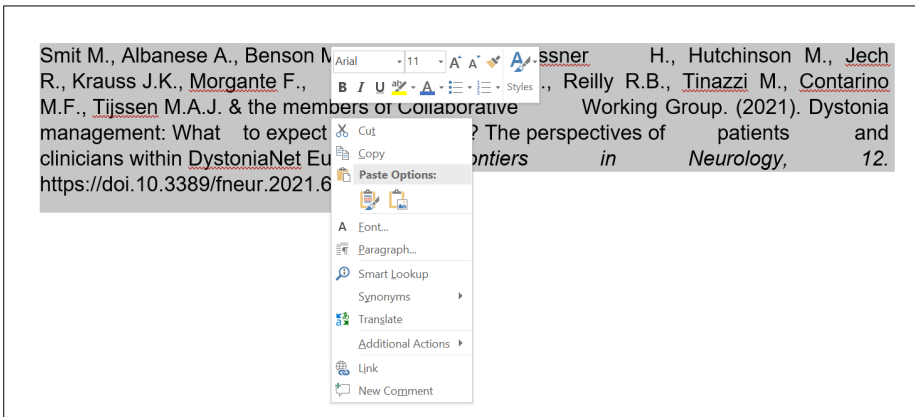
Hanging indent in Microsoft Word

Microsoft Word and Google Docs have a Format Painter tool that will copy and apply basic formatting to any text! Below are the steps:

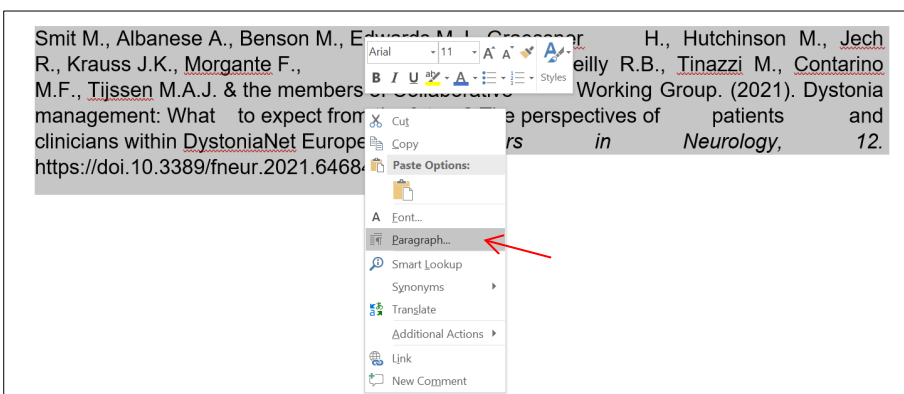
1. Highlight the citation with your cursor.



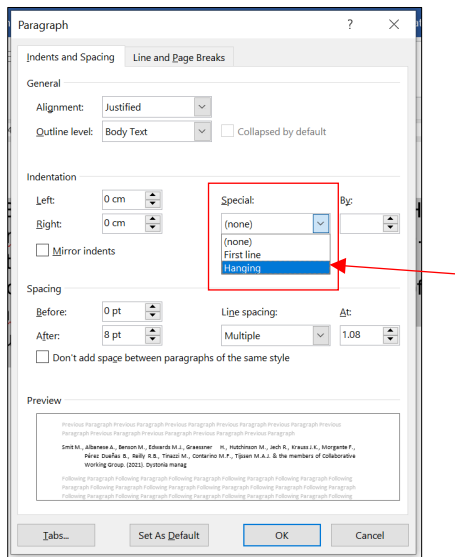
2. Right click.



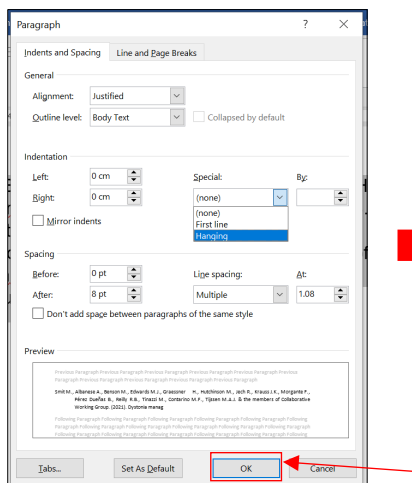
3. Select 'Paragraph...'. A red arrow points to the 'Paragraph...' option in the context menu.



4. Under 'Indentation', select 'Special' and 'Hanging'.



5. Click 'OK'

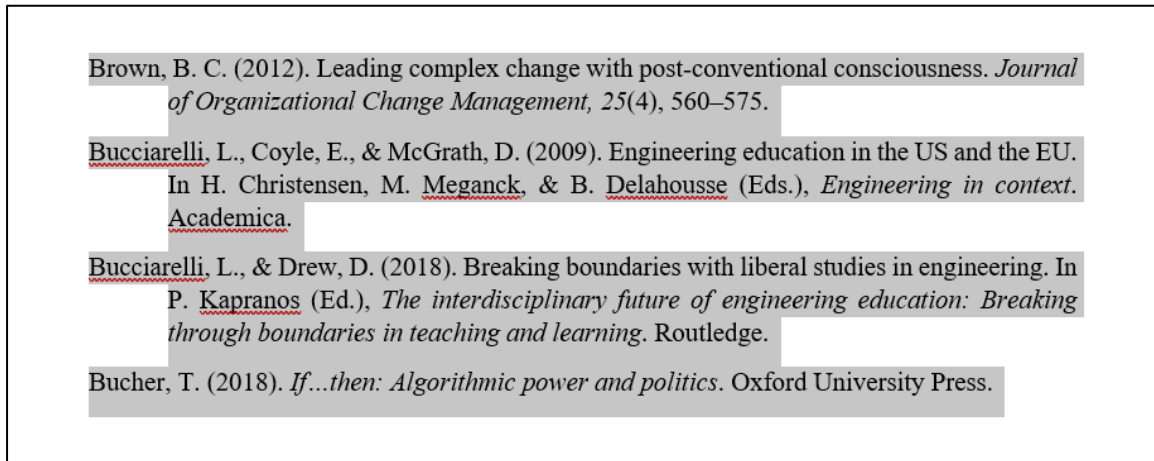


Smit M., Albanese A., Benson M., Edwards M.J., Graessner H., Hutchinson M., Jech R., Krauss J.K., Morgante F., Pérez Dueñas B., Reilly R.B., Tinazzi M., Contarino M.F., Tijssen M.A.J. & the members of Collaborative Working Group. (2021). Dystonia management: What to expect from the future? The perspectives of patients and clinicians within DystoniaNet Europe. *Frontiers in Neurology*, 12. <https://doi.10.3389/fneur.2021.646841>

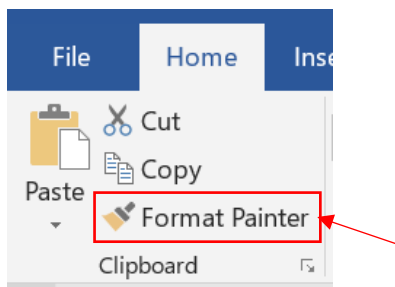
Format Painter Tool in Microsoft Word and Google Docs


Microsoft Word and Google Docs have a Format Painter tool that will copy and apply basic formatting to any text!

1. Highlight the formatting you want to apply.



2. Select 'Format Painter'.



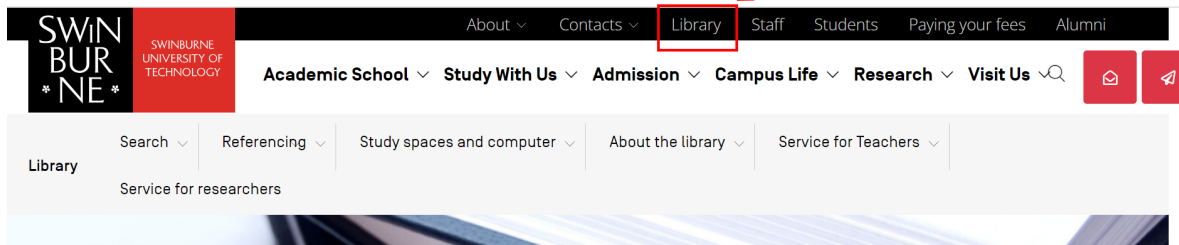
The cursor changes to a  paintbrush icon.

3. Highlight the text you want to change, and release.

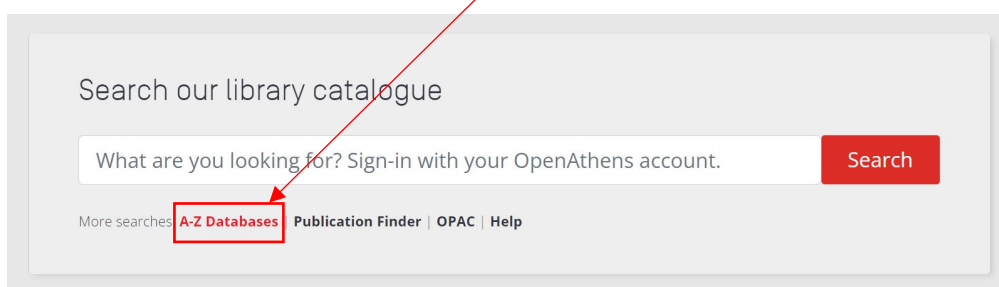
Note: If using the Format Painter on the Reference List, you'll need to go back and add italics.

Accessing Academic Writer Tool in the Library Database

1. Open Swinburne Sarawak Official Website at swinburne.edu.my. Click 'Library' at the top of the website.



2. Scroll down and click on the 'A-Z Databases'.



3. After clicking the 'A-Z Databases', you will be prompted to alphabet 'A' List of Databases. Scroll down and click at the 'Academic Writer'.

