APA-Style Guidelines

Content

To enhance the reading comprehension of your article, PsychOpen journals require that all manuscripts comply with the Publication Style Guide of the American Psychological Association (APA). A uniform and consistent style allows readers to scan articles quickly for essential information such as key points and results. Generally, please ascertain that all citations and references are accurate and complete to allow readers to retrieve them quickly.

The following guideline covers the most common aspects authors have to deal with when writing scientific manuscripts. Authors who are not familiar with APA style are additionally recommended to watch this APA tutorial about the basics of APA style:
http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx

For a more comprehensive description of APA style, consult the official APA publication manual:
http://www.apastyle.org/manual/

A valuable free source for detailed information on specific APA style issues is the APA blog:
http://blog.apastyle.org

1. Capitalization

In titles (including table titles, headings, and subheadings), capitalize

- all major words. Major words are nouns, adjectives, verbs (including linking verbs), adverbs and pronouns.
- all words that have four or more letters, even if they are not major words.
- both elements in a hyphenated compound (e.g., Teacher-Rated).
- the first word after a colon or em dash.

Example:

School Anxiety: Teacher-Rated Stress Factors in Bulgarian School Children

Use lower-case letters for nonmajor words (conjunctions, articles, and short prepositions). To table and figure footnotes apply the capitalization rules for references (see below).

In the reference list, capitalize

- only the first word of book and article titles (exception: retain the capitalization and punctuation that is used by a journal in its title).
- proper nouns (and words used as those).
- the first constituent of a hyphenated compound at the beginning of a title or subtitle, or after a colon or em dash (e.g. Teacher-rated).
- the first word after a colon or em dash.

Example:

Richards, M. (2005). School anxiety: Teacher-rated stress factors in Bulgarian school children. *SchoolPSYCHOLOGY Journal*, *7*(1), 81-97.

In the text body, capitalize

- nouns followed by numerals in a numbered series (e.g. Table 4 shows that on Day 3 in Experiment 6).
- Titles of books and articles mentioned in the text (e.g. In his book, *The Psychology of Everyday Things* the author clarifies that).
- Titles of tests (e.g. Advanced Memory Test (AMT)).

For more detailed information regarding capitalization visit:

http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2012/03/title-case-and-sentence-case-capitalization-in-apa-style.html

2. Decimal Fractions

The decimal point should be preceded by a zero with numbers less than 1 when the statistic can exceed 1. (e.g., 0.81 cm).

Omit the zero before a decimal fraction, when the statistic cannot exceed 1 (for example, levels of significance, correlations, proportions; e.g.: $p = .028$).

3. Statistical Symbols

APA uses three different typefaces for preparing statistical symbols and mathematical copy in manuscripts: standard, **boldface**, and *italic*. These rules also apply to the contents of tables and figures.

Use a standard typeface for Greek letters, subscripts, superscripts, and abbreviations that are not variables, e.g.:

α, β_i, log, LSD, MSE, μ_{boys}

Set in boldface symbols for vectors and matrices, e.g.:

V, Σ

Use italic typeface for all other statistical symbols, e.g.:

p, N, M_x, d, df, t, F, SD

In equations, always leave a space before and after the equal sign, the greater-than sign, the greater-than-or-equal sign, the less-than sign, and the less-than-or-equal sign, e.g.

$t(75) = 2.14$, $n = 9$, $p < .001$

Note: Never insert statistical symbols or other special characters as images as this would cause processing errors during the copyediting and layout procedure.

For more detailed information on statistical symbols see this APA blog entry:

http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2011/08/the-grammar-of-mathematics-writing-about-variables-.html

4. In-Text Citations

APA requires authors to use an author-date citation system. Insert the surname of the author and the publication year in the text in the form below:

Name of the author is part of the narrative (nonparenthetical format):

Jackson (2012) found out that humor prolongs life.

Name is not part of the narrative (parenthetical format):

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson, 2012).

Often, a reference has more than one author. The following rules determine how many author names have to be listed in in-text citations:

1-2 authors: Authors are always named:

Jackson and Miller (2012) found out that humor prolongs life. *[nonparenthetical]*

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson & Miller, 2012). *[parenthetical]*

3-5 authors: All author names are listed at the first occurrence in text. Afterwards, the list is shortened to et al.:

Jackson, Miller, and Stevens (2012) found out that humor prolongs life. *[1st citation, nonparenthetical]*

Jackson et al. (2012) found out that humor prolongs life. *[subsequent citations, nonparenthetical]*

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson, Miller, & Stevens, 2012). *[1st citation, parenthetical]*

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson et al., 2012). *[subsequent citations, parenthetical]*

Please note that in nonparenthetical format, the word "and" precedes the last author, while in parenthetical format, an ampersand (&) is used. A comma precedes "and"/"&" if an author list contains three or more names. Use a comma to set off the year in in-text citations in parenthetical format.

6 authors: et al. is used right from the beginning:

Jackson et al. (2012) found out that humor prolongs life. *[nonparenthetical]*

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded. (Jackson et al., 2012) *[parenthetical]*

If two or more reference entries with more than three surnames and the same publication year can be shortened to the same form, precede et al. with the number of names necessary to distinguish the ambiguous references, e.g., Jackson, Miller, Stevens, & Veith, 2012 and Jackson, Miller, Veith, & Armstrong, 2012 would both shorten to Jackson et al., 2012. To avoid ambiguity, cite:

Jackson, Miller, Stevens, et al. (2012) found out that humor prolongs life.

Jackson, Miller, Veith, et al. (2012) found out that humor prolongs life.

Please note that in this case, et al. is preceded by a comma.

If your reference list contains two or more publications authored by the same person(s) in the same order and the same year, use lowercase suffixes immediately after the year to distinguish them, e.g.:

Jackson & Miller (2012a, 2012b) found out that humor prolongs life.

Use the suffixes also in the respective reference entries. Order those types of entries alphabetically by title (excluding nonmajor words).

Works with no author

If the author of a publication cannot be identified, use the first few words of the publication title instead of the author name for your citation. Enclose title words of articles, chapters, or Web pages with double quotation marks. Italicize title words of books, brochures, reports, or periodicals, e.g.:

An increase of older people is expected ("Europe's population ages", 2012)

An increase of older people is expected (*Europe's seniors*, 2012)

Citing page numbers

When providing page numbers – which is required for word-by-word citations, but also encouraged for paraphrased citations – insert them behind the year, set off by a comma. Do not use a colon for setting off the page numbers.

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson, & Miller, 2012, pp. 120-121).

If you are referring to a single page, add p. instead of pp. before the page number:

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson, & Miller, 2012, p. 120).

5. Reference List

Take care that the reference list is accurate, valid, and complete. Each reference cited in the text must be contained in the reference list and vice versa. Make sure that the spelling of author names and the publication year are identical in both entries.

Author Names

Display all authors' names in an inverted format. Provide surnames and middle name initials for up to seven authors. Add an ampersand before the last author. Note: When referencing a book chapter, invert the chapter author's name but not the editor's name.

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., Stevens G. K., Veith, S. L., Dexter, W. S., Hu, M.-L., & Gregory, K. A. (2012).

If a work has more than seven authors, list the first six authors' names, insert a comma followed by three ellipsis points, then add the last author's name:

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., Stevens G. K., Veith, S. L., Dexter, W. S., Hu, M.-L., … Gregory, K. A. (2012).

In case the author is not known, move the title of the work to the author position, followed by a period, e.g.:

Europe's seniors. (2012).

Titles

Italicize the names of periodicals (journals, newsletters, magazines), as well as the titles of books, reports, and other separate, nonperiodical literature.

Include additional information (e.g., report number, edition) in parentheses immediately after the title without setting it off with a period. Do not italicize the additional information:

Marsten, Bill (2012): *Annual report on school psychology* (Report No. 12-2012). New York: American Association of School Psychologists.

Reference Format

In the following, the general reference format for the most common reference types is given along with examples:

Books

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (year). *Title of book*. Location: Publisher.

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., Stevens G. K., & Veith, S. L. (2012): *Psychology in universities*. Heidelberg, Germany: Springer.

When author and publisher are identical do not repeat the name; rather, add the word "Author" instead of the publisher name, e.g.

Leibniz Institute for Psychology Information. (2012). *The official PsychOpen handbook*. Trier, Germany: Author.

Book Chapters

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (year). Title of chapter. In A. Editor, B. Editor, & C. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pp. xxx-xxx). Location: Publisher.

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., & Stevens, G. K. (2012). School anxiety: Teacher-rated stress factors in Bulgarian school children. In M. Brunner, S. Page, & S. Gilbert (Eds.), *Psychology in Schools*. London: School Press.

If a book has a single editor, use (Ed.) instead of (Eds.). Place additional information (e.g., the page range, volume, or edition number) in parentheses immediately following the title.

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., & Stevens, G. K. (2012). School anxiety: Teacher-rated stress factors in Bulgarian school children. In M. Brunner (Ed.), *Psychology in Schools* (2nd ed., pp. 12-37). London: School Press.

Provide a DOI if one is assigned. If a DOI is available, omit the publishing information, e.g.:

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., & Stevens, G. K. (2012). School anxiety: Teacher-rated stress factors in Bulgarian school children. In M. Brunner (Ed.), *Psychology in Schools* (2nd ed., pp. 12-37). doi:10.5964/psis.v5i2.23

For electronic books without a DOI add the exact landing page URL for the book on the publisher homepage. Use the format: Retrieved from http://xxxxxxxxxx

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., & Stevens, G. K. (2012). School anxiety: Teacher-rated stress factors in Bulgarian school children. In M. Brunner, S. Page, & S. Gilbert (Eds.), *Psychology in Schools* (pp. 12-37). Retrieved from http://www.schoolpress.org/books/showitem.asp?itemID=664

Journal Articles

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (year). Title of article. *Title of journal, volume number*, pp-pp.

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., & Stevens, G. K. (2012). School anxiety: Teacher-rated stress factors in Bulgarian school children. *Psychology in Schools*, *53*, 12-37.

Provide a DOI if one is assigned:

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., & Stevens, G. K. (2012). School anxiety: Teacher-rated stress factors in Bulgarian school children. *Psychology in Schools*, *53*, 12-37. doi:10.5964/psis.v5i2.23

In cases where no DOI is available, include the homepage URL for the periodical. Use the format: Retrieved from http://xxxxxxxxxx

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., & Stevens, G. K. (2012). School anxiety: Teacher-rated stress factors in Bulgarian school children. *Psychology in Schools*, *53*, 12-37. Retrieved from http://www.pisc.org

If a journal is paginated separately by issue (i.e., each issue begins with Page 1), provide the issue number in parentheses immediately after the volume number, without italicizing it, e.g.:

Psychology in Schools, *53*(4), 12-37.

Magazine Articles

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (year, month). Title of article. *Title of Magazine, Volume number*, pp-pp.

Miller, T. M. (2012, September). Is college a lucrative investment? *College Magazine*, *58*(9), 64-78.

For an online magazine article provide the home page URL of the magazine by using the format: Retrieved from http://xxxxxxxxxx

Newspaper Articles

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (year, month, day). Title of article. *Title of Newspaper*, pp. pp-pp.

Beckstein, D., Mannbach, G. (2012, September 12): Increased air traffic backfires. *The Trier Express*, pp. A1, A3-4, A6.

Note that page numbers of newspaper articles are preceded with p. (for one-page articles) or pp. (for articles longer than one page).

Cite articles appearing on discontinuous pages by listing all page numbers (group continuous pages to page ranges, e.g. A3-4), set off by a comma.

Technical and Research Reports

Technical and research reports are formatted like books. If a report has a report number or other ID assigned by the publishing organization, add the number in parenthetical format immediately after the title, e.g.:

Thompson, E., & Baldwin, G. (2010): *Psychological publishing report* (Report No. PPR-03/2010). Los Angeles: Organization of Psychology Publishers.

When referencing an electronically available report where publisher and author are different entities, include the publisher name in the retrieval information, e.g.:

Thompson, E., & Baldwin, G. (2010): *Psychological publishing report* (Report No. PPR-03/2010). Retrieved from Organization of Psychology Publishers Website: http://opp.org/reports/113/ppr-03-2010.pdf

Proceedings

Paper presentations or contributions to meetings or symposia can be either formally or informally published.

Formally released proceedings are published in book or periodical format. In those cases, use the same format you would use for books, book chapters, or periodical contributions.

For informally published papers, provide the year and the month as well as the organization's name and the location of the conference. If available, add the URL:

Stevens, G. K. (2012, September): *Distribution of open-access publications in Europe*. Paper presented at the Third Open Access in Europe Conference, Trier, Germany. Retrieved from http://www.oa-in-europe.com/3rdconf/paper12.pdf

For symposium contributions, name the chair and the title of the symposium:

Stevens, G. K. (2012, September): Distribution of open-access publications in Europe. In S. B. Finley (Chair), *Open access in Europe*. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the European Open Access Organization, Trier, Germany.

See also this APA blog post on citing materials from meetings and symposia:
http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2012/08/how-to-cite-materials-from-meetings-and-symposia.html

Doctoral Dissertations and Master's Theses

Doctoral dissertations and master's theses can be retrieved from institutional repositories, personal Websites, or subscription databases (such as ProQuest).

For a dissertation retrieved from a commercial database use the following scheme:

Author, A. A. (year). *Title of dissertation or thesis* (Doctoral dissertation or master's thesis). Available from Name of Database. (Accession or order number).

Finsley, M. A. (2012). *Open access in psychology: A user analysis with a special focus on European countries* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 1234567).

For dissertations and theses from universities outside the U.S. additionally name the institution where the work was submitted to, the city, and the country. For noncommercial electronic sources use "Retrieved from" instead of "Available from":

Finsley, M. A. (2012). *Open access in psychology: A user analysis with a special focus on European countries*. (Doctoral dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany). Retrieved from http://www.mafinsley.com/dissertation.pdf

For dissertations and theses from the U.S., provide only the name of the institution, and omit the name of the city and country. If a dissertation or thesis is published in a repository belonging to the university where it was submitted to, the institution may also be omitted, e.g.:

Finsley, M. A. (2012). *Open access in psychology: A user analysis with a special focus on the U.S*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from http://www.standford-edocs.edu/dissertations/2356178

Cite an unpublished doctoral or master's thesis by using this format:

Author, A. A. (year). *Title of dissertation or thesis* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation or master's thesis). Name of Institution, Location.

Finsley, M. A. (2012). *Open access in psychology: A user analysis with a special focus on European countries* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany.

6. Tables

Table Title
Provide a concise and explanatory title for each table. Table titles should contain a table number and should be placed above the table.

Table Structure
To avoid any disorganization of content during the partially automated copyediting procedure, provide a cell for each content item (instead of using tabs or returns within a cell).
The content of a table should be placed into a single Microsoft Word table. Do not split it into separate tables.

Column Heads
The column heads should be as brief as possible – ideally they do not have more characters than the widest entry.

Decimal Values
Whenever possible, use the same number of decimal places for decimal values.

Table Referencing
Reference every table in the text.

Table Borders and Shading
Only use horizontal borders at the top and the bottom of the whole table as well as the bottom of the header row. Eliminate all vertical borders. Do not use any shading.

Table Footnotes

APA style uses three different kinds of footnotes. All of them are placed below a table:

General Notes

General notes refer to the table as a whole (e.g. reproduction acknowledgements, explanations of abbreviations, symbols etc.). They are introduced with the italicized word "Note" followed by a period.

Specific Notes

Specific notes refer to a particular part of a table (column, row, cell). They are indicated by a superscript letter. Order specific footnotes from left to right and from top to bottom.

Probability Notes

Probability notes are used to explain how asterisks and other symbols are used in a table to indicate *p* values.

Below the table, order the footnotes beginning with general notes followed by specific notes and ending with probability notes. End every footnote with a period. Begin each footnote type on a new line, e.g.:

Note. UP (RO) = unconscious plagiarism during the recall-own task. UP (GN) = unconscious plagiarism during the generate-new task.
[a]The women sample was excluded from this measure. [b]n = 90. [c]n = 70.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.