**APA Style: General Guidelines**

***General Formatting***

1. Double-space entire document
2. Left Justify all of your text.
3. Indent each paragraph. You an either click a tab at the start of each paragraph, or use the ruler.
4. Word: Put the top slider ½ inch in and leave the second slider as is (see below)



1. Google docs: Move the top line (above the triangle) ½ inch to the right.  
   
2. Margins: Use 1-inch margins throughout (top, bottom, left, right)
3. Word: Click the ‘Layout’ tab and set the margins appropriately.
4. Google docs: Use the upside down arrows on the ruler (see figure above) to set the margins on the left and right side of the document.
5. *Header* - you need to have a consistent header on all pages. APA style is to use the first two or three words of the title, then a few spaces, then the page number. To create the header:
6. Word: Click the ‘Layout’ tab and set the margins appropriately.
7. Google docs:
8. Go to the View menu, and select *Header and Footer*.
9. Click on the right justification button in the main toolbar.
10. Type your header, then press the spacebar 5 times.
11. Click on the “page numbering” button in the Header and Footer toolbar. It is the little number sign (pound key on your cell phone).
12. Click on “Close” in the Header and Footer toolbar to return to the main body of your text.

Every page of the report will now have the same header as the title page (with different page numbers.

1. Use a single font type and font size (12 pt) throughout your paper.

***Section Formatting***

1. The first page of your paper should be the title page. Near the top of the Title page, type your title and press enter once.
2. Normally, you would type your name next, but I want to grade your paper anonymously, so please do not write your name on the title page;
   1. put it at the very end of your document, instead. If you want, you can use Jane Doe, or Wool E. Mammoth, or any other moderately amusing pen name.
   2. Press enter, then type your affiliation (Amherst College) and press enter.
3. ***Center*** the title, your pen name and your affiliation.
4. Skip to a new page by pressing ‘Control-Enter’ (‘Shift-**⌘-**Enter’ for Mac)
5. The second page is for your abstract. Center the word ‘Abstract’ at the top of the page. The first line of the abstract does not need to be indented.
6. Skip to a new page by pressing ‘Control-Enter’. (‘Shift-**⌘-**Enter’ for Mac)
7. Indent and start typing your Intro. No title for the intro section.
8. Your Intro should end with a brief overview of the experiment that you will present along with an explanation of what issues the experiment was designed to address.
9. Other section headings (Method; Results; Discussion; References) should be centered. No need to skip spaces before or after the heading.
10. Note that Method is **singular**, NOT plural; no ‘s’ at the end of Method.
    1. There should be three subsections within the method: Participants; Stimuli; Procedure.
    2. Each sub-section should be indented and underlined, with a period at the end.
    3. The text should start after the period on the same line as the subsection heading.
    4. Example:

Method

Participants. Text describing the participant population should start here. If you are using the class data, you would explain that the participants were all part of the same Cognitive Psychology class. If you use the global data, you would describe the subject population appropriately. You don’t have to provide demographic information.

Stimuli. Here is where you would describe the materials that were used to conduct the experiment.

Procedure. Describe exactly what the participants did in the experiment here.

1. At the end of the Method, hit the return key (multiple blank lines are not necessary). Center the word Results and hit return, again. Then type your results section.
   1. Your results section should include a graph of either the class data (can be downloaded from the course or CogLab website) or the global data (can be downloaded from the CogLab website).
   2. But please note that a graph alone is insufficient. You must also explain the important patterns/features of the data to the reader.
   3. If you have a graph, you don’t (and should not) cite specific means in the text. Either cite means in the text or include a graph. Not both!
2. At the end of the Results section, hit the return key, again. Center the word Discussion, and then write your discussion.
3. Finally, at the end of the discussion, skip to a new page (‘Control-Enter’ on the PC; ‘Shift-**⌘-**Enter’ for Mac).
   1. Type the word ‘References’; hit the return key.
   2. Enter the references using the information in the section labeled (References) below.

***Citing authors' work***

When you talk about the work of other people, it is imperative that you cite their contribution to your paper, both in the text and in the reference section (see below). Use the following formatting information for citations in the text. Use the word “and” between author names in a sentence, but use the ampersand (“&”) when listing authors inside parentheses. Include the publication year. Follow these examples:

Smith and Jones (1998) surveyed men and found that....

Other researchers (Doe, Reddy, & Smits, 1970; Zucher & Bates, 1968) found...

When listing multiple citations in parentheses, list them in alphabetical order by 1st author. If you cite a paper with three or more authors on more than one occasion, list all of the authors in the first citation. In all subsequent citations, use the following: Doe, et al., (1970). **DO NOT INCLUDE ANY INFORMATION OTHER THAN THE AUTHOR’S LAST NAMES AND YEAR OF PUBLICATION IN THE TEXT.** The title, author’s affiliation, journal name, etc. should appear **ONLY** in the reference section.

#### References

The reference list always begins on a new page, after the last page of the discussion; skip to a new page by pressing ‘Control-Enter’. Center the word “References” at the top of the page. The full citations follow, double-spaced, in alphabetical order. Indent the first line of each reference. (see #2 under formatting above). When you have more than one article with the same first author, put them in alphabetical order by the second author. Multiple one-author citations by the same person appear in chronological order, earliest reference first.

* For a journal article: Give the last names, then initials, of all of the authors, then the publication date (in parentheses), then the article’s title. Then give the journal title (*italicized* or underlined), the volume of the journal (also italicized), and the page numbers for the article.

**EX**:

Peretz, I., Kolinsky, R., Tramo, M., Labrecque, R. Hublet, C., Demeurisse, G., & Belleville, S. (1994). Functional dissociation following bilateral lesion of auditory cortex. Brain, 117, 1283-1301.

* For a chapter in an edited book: After the authors’ names and the publication year, give the chapter title. Then, give the editors of the book the title of the book and ghe page numbers of the book chapter. The final information is the location (if a large city like London or New York, just give the city) and name of the book’s publisher.

**EX**:

Spence, J.T., Deaux, K., & Helmreich, R.L. (1985). Sex roles in contemporary American society. In G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Eds.), Handbook of Social Psychology (Vol. 2, pp. 149-178). New York: Random House.

* For a book: Give the authors’ names and the publication year, the title of the book and the publication information.

**EX**:

Willingham, W.W., & Cole, N.S. (1997). Gender and Fair Assessment. NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

* Electronic resources are varied in format, so it’s hard to summarize the ‘right’ way to format a reference to an electronic source, but this [website](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/10/) gives a lot of information that you should be able to adapt to your particular situation.

#### Other, useful tips

1. Do not use boldface anywhere (underline for emphasis).
2. Use only one font and only one font size (12) throughout the entire document.
3. Do not use contractions (e.g., “don’t,” “aren’t,” “I’ve”).
4. Only use abbreviations for long terms. The first time the term appears, give the abbreviation in parentheses, and use the abbreviation every time thereafter. For example: “The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) was used in all of the studies. When other measures of depression were used, they were used in conjunction with the BDI.”
5. (almost) No quotes!!! You will see very few quotes in journal articles. There are several reasons for this. First, we are not in the business of interpreting text like you might be for an English literature paper. Second, I am not interested in what some other researchers think about an issue, or how some other researcher describes their work or its significance. I’m interested in what you think and how you describe and interpret ideas in the literature.
6. Talk about experiments in the past tense. They have already happened.
7. ‘While’ and ‘since’ refer to time; substitute ‘although’ and ‘because’.
8. The word ‘the’ should ALWAYS precede words like ‘results’ and ‘subjects’ or ‘participants’. For example, never start a sentence with ‘Results indicated…’.
9. Eliminate phrases like ‘they found that’ or ‘it was found that’. Just go ahead and describe the data. Phrases like these are extraneous and should be eliminated.
10. Number is for countable things, e.g., ‘a number of trials’. Amount is for uncountable things, e.g., ‘the amount of rehearsal’, or ‘the amount of time’. Although, you would say ‘number of seconds’ because seconds are countable.
11. Avoid the first person (I, we) whenever possible. It is OK to use the first person if the alternative is to write something super complicated.

If you have any questions, PLEASE ASK!