Formatting a Paper to APA 6th Edition Specifications

Overview

- **Font.** Times New Roman 12 pt. is preferred (required by some instructors).
- **Margins.** At least 1" on all sides.
- **Line spacing.** Double spaced.
- **Line alignment**. Do *not* justify text with the right margin. Most of the text is aligned left; the title of the paper, your name, and institution are centered on the title page, and the words "Abstract" and "References" are centered on the abstract and references pages. Do not use hyphens to break words at the end of lines.
- **Indentation.** Indent the first word of a paragraph ½" from the left margin. Indent long quotations (40 words or more) 1" from the left margin. Citations on the references page use a ½" hanging indention; that is, the first line starts at the left margin, and subsequent lines are indented ½".
- **Character spacing.** Double-spacing after the end of a sentence is suggested. In general, use a single space after punctuation elsewhere, including initials in personal names (example: D. H. Lawrence). Do not put any space after periods within abbreviations (examples: a.m., p.m., U.S., i.e.).
- **Capitalization.** For titles used in the paper, capitalize the first word and all significant words (i.e., not articles, prepositions, or conjunctions that are less than 4 letters long). For titles in the reference list, capitalize only the first word, the first word after a colon or dash, and proper nouns.
- **Page header**. Each page, including the title page, has a header that consists of a "running head" that is aligned left and a page number that is aligned right. The running head is all caps and is a version of the title, shortened to no more than the first 50 characters.
- **Title page.** The title of your paper should be centered and typed on 1 or 2 lines in the regular style (not bold, italicized, or all capitals) in the top half of the title page, followed by your name and affiliation on the next two lines. The title page is numbered as page 1.
- **Abstract.** The abstract is page 2; the title "Abstract" is centered on the first line, and the abstract itself is left justified without any indentation.
- **Text.** The body of your paper begins on page 3. The first line is the title of the paper, centered.
- **References.** Start the references on a separate page. Center "References" on the first line; citations use a ½" hanging indention.

The following detailed instructions assume you are using Microsoft Word 2007 to write your paper.

The Title and Abstract Pages and the Text of the Paper

1. Click the **View** tab and select "Print Layout" and make sure there is a checkmark next to "Ruler." This is optional but can be helpful in checking your layout.
2. Click the **Home** tab.
3. Select all the text by pressing CTRL+A; even if you haven't typed anything yet, this can ensure that your changes will affect the entire document.
4. Set the font you will use throughout your paper; it should be a standard serif font with a distinctive italics style; the preferred font/size is Times New Roman, 12 pts.
5. Open the Paragraph dialog box by clicking the tiny arrow at the lower right corner of the **Paragraph** section.
   a. Set the **Spacing Before** and **After** to "0 pt" and the **Line Spacing** to "Double."
   b. Set the **Indention Left** and **Right** to 0".
   c. On the "Line and Page Breaks" tab check "Don't hyphenate."
6. Click the **Page Layout** tab.
7. Set the **Margins** (in the **Page Setup** group of the ribbon) to a 1" margin on all sides.
8. Press the Enter key a few times to prepare to type the title somewhere in the top half of the page.
9. Center the next lines by using the **Center** icon on the **Home** tab or by pressing CTRL+E, and type the paper's title, capitalizing the first word and all significant words (that is, words other than articles, conjunctions and prepositions that are shorter than 4 letters). A long title can be broken to continue on a second line.
10. Press Enter to move to the next line.
11. Type your name.
12. Press Enter to move to the next line.
13. Type the name of the institution (Scottsdale Community College) or whatever your instructor specifies and press Enter.
14. Create a header with a running head and page number:
   a. Click the **Insert** tab.
   b. Click on **Header** in the **Header & Footer** group and choose "Edit Header."
   c. Type a running head in all capital letters that contains no more than the first 50 characters of your title.
   d. Press the tab key once or twice to move to the right margin.
   e. Click on **Page Number** in the **Header & Footer** group of the **Insert** tab and choose "Current Position" and then "Plain Number."
15. Double-click the blank line after the name of your institution to close the header.
16. Press CTRL+Enter to insert a page break.
17. If your instruct requires you to include an abstract:
   a. Type the word "Abstract" on the first line.
   b. Hit Enter to move to the next line.
   c. Left align the next lines by using the **Align Text Left** icon on the **Home** tab or by pressing CTRL+L.
   d. Type an abstract (summary) of your paper.
   e. Press CTRL+Enter to insert a page break.

18. Center the title of your paper on the first line.
19. Left align the text of your paper.
20. You can press the tab key to indent the first line of each paragraph or set the **Indentation Special** to "First Line" **By** 0.5" in the Paragraph dialog box.
21. At the end of your paper, press CTRL+Enter to insert a new page for your References page.

The References Page

22. Center the word "References" (without the quotation marks) on the first line. (Your instructor may prefer you to use "Bibliography" or "Annotated Bibliography.")
23. Hit Enter to move to the next line for your first citation.
24. Open the Paragraph dialog box by clicking the tiny arrow at the lower right corner of the **Paragraph** section.
    a. Set the **Alignment** to "Left."
    b. Set the **Indention Special** to "Hanging" **By** 0.5".
25. If you are doing an annotated bibliography, your instructor may give you specific instructions for how to format the annotations. A popular format is to single-space the annotation with no first-line indention.
    a. Position your insertion point (cursor) at the end of a citation and hit Enter.
    b. Set the **Line Spacing** to "Single" and the **Indention Special** to "(none)."
    c. Type your annotation and hit Enter when you are done to create the proper space before the next entry.
    d. Reset the **Line Spacing** to "Double" and the **Indention Special** to "hanging" for the next citation.