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## APA STYLE MANUSCRIPT STRUCTURE

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### GUIDE TO THE 6<sup>TH</sup> EDITION PUBLICATION MANUAL OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (American Psychological Association [APA], 2010) provides instructions for uniform manuscript preparation and citation. It is the only authoritative source of APA style, which is used mostly in the sciences and social sciences such as psychology, nursing, and social work. APA also published *APA Style Guide to Electronic References* (American Psychological Association [APA], 2012) to provide more guidance on the evolving area of online publishing. You will use APA in a variety of ways throughout your academic career: term papers, research reports, literature reviews, articles, etc. This guide is prepared by DYC librarians in collaboration with DYC faculty and is designed to assist you in formatting a paper in APA style.

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### Manuscript Structure and Headings

#### A. Structure

A research paper written in APA style can be broken down into the following basic elements:

**1. Title page.** (APA, 2010, pp. 23)

You may or may not be required to include all elements of the title page. The basic elements of the title page are the title of your paper, your name and the date. You may or may not be required to include your instructors and institution name. A running head may also be required. Directions for creating a running head can be found here:

<http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/running-head.aspx>

**2. Abstract.** (APA, 2010, pp. 25-27)

This is a summary of the paper which serves to inform the reader what content they might find in the article.

**3. The body.** (APA, 2010, pp. 25-37)

Dependent upon the situation and expectations of your instructor, the elements you include may vary. Specifics regarding the body of an APA styled paper can be found in parts 2.04 – 2.10. In general, the body includes these components:

**a. Introduction.** (APA, 2010, pp. 27-28)

This is where you will introduce the problem or hypothesis at the heart of your paper.

**b. Method.** (APA, 2010, pp 29-32)

In this section you will describe the design of your experiment/ hypothesis and any particulars (e.g.: sample size) of your experiment.

**c. Results.** (ALA, 2010 pp. 32-35)

This section is for recording any conclusions your study or literature review brought you to.

**d. Discussion.** (ALA, 2010, pp. 35-36)

In the discussion section you will interpret the results section and come to logical conclusions.

**4. References.** (APA, 2010, pp. 37)

Your reference page will contain information about each source cited in your paper, as opposed to a bibliography, which contains information regarding works cited and other works which may have been consulted for but not used directly in your paper. All citations in the References list are double-spaced and in a hanging indent format so the first line of each reference is flush left and subsequent lines are indented (APA, 2010, p. 37). This can be achieved by placing your cursor at the front of the second line in the entry and right-clicking the mouse. Choose “paragraph”, then look to the “indentation” section. Click the drop-down menu for

“special” and choose “hanging”. Check that the “by” option is set at 0.5”. They should be organized alphabetically.

## B. Heading Formats

APA suggests using headings to organize your writing (APA, 2010, p. 62). APA recommends five possible arrangements to format headings and subheadings:

<b>Level of heading</b>	<b>Format</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Centered, Bold, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Flush Left, Bold, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Indented, bold, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.</b>
<b>4</b>	<b><i>Indented, bold, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period</i></b>
<b>5</b>	<b><i>Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period</i></b>

## References

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: Author.