Example Paper Illustrating Some Conventions Employed
by the American Psychological Association Style
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This is a mock paper designed to show several conventions of the American Psychological Association (APA) style. Conventions such as level headings, the reference page and list, and within text citations are used in this paper. In addition, how to treat the titles of books, book chapters, journals and journal articles, when referred to within a document are illustrated, as are other conventions.

The introduction goes here and does not require a level heading, because the level heading “introduction” is implied.

Please note to double space the entire paper because you are creating a manuscript, rather than a published article. Infrequently, the APA style allows for single spacing such as in tables, and these deviations are explained in the APA manual; but generally, everything, that is, everything, is double spaced.

APA Level Headings: Centered, Boldface,
Uppercase and Lowercase Heading (1st)

APA style provides five levels of level headings. Five levels of level headings are infrequently used, but may be necessary.

Flush Left, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading (2nd)

Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period. (3rd)

Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period. (4th)

Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period. (5th)
Within Text Citations

This section provides examples and explanations illustrating how to paraphrase, quote directly from a reference, and cite books and journal articles within the text.

**Paraphrase**

To paraphrase, use only the authors’ last names followed by the year of the publication. For example: Palmer and Poppink (2012) indicated that students and faculty should enjoy their time at Western Michigan University (WMU) by living life to the fullest.

**Direct Quote**

To quote directly, a page number must be included. An example is: Palmer and Poppink (2012), referring to attending graduate school at WMU, stated, “Students can make the most of their time at Western Michigan University” (p. 214). Please note there is a space after the abbreviation for page, which is indicated with a “p.”

Another way to quote this is, “Students can make the most of their time at Western Michigan University” (Palmer & Poppink, 2012, p. 214).

If a quote is less than 40 words, place it within quotation marks, as illustrated above. If a quote is more than 40 words, indent the entire quote on the left hand side with no quotation marks, as illustrated below.

For example, pretend this paragraph is a direct quote from the American Psychological Association manual. Because it is more than 40 words long, the entire quote is indented on the left hand side with no quotation marks. The right hand side does not change at all. (American Psychological Association, 2010, pp. 170-171)

Please note that the word pretend is italicized. APA style uses italics for emphasis. It does not use bolding or underlining for emphasis.
Cite Books and Journal Articles Within the Text

This section illustrates not only how to cite books and journal articles within texts, but also how to refer to a book, a book chapter, a periodical, and an article, within the text of the document. Please note that books, chapters, articles, and periodicals are treated differently in the reference section than they are within the text. Within the document, books and periodicals are capitalized and italicized; while those documents inside them, that is chapters and articles, are capitalized and in quotation marks.


Poppink and Palmer (2013) published a condensed version of their book chapter on teaching as an article titled “Joyful Teaching at Western Michigan University” [article] in the periodical *Michigan Collegiate Living* [periodical]. In this article they continued to elaborate on living life to the fullest, particularly while teaching at WMU in the graduate college.

Seriation and Numbering

Two writing conventions that are often used in academic writing and fall under stylistic conventions are (a) seriation and (b) numbering. By seriation, I mean putting items in a list, as I have done in the prior sentence. There are several ways that APA uses seriation including (a) numbering paragraphs, (b) bulleted paragraphs, (c) using letters to order ideas in a sentence, as I have done in this sentence. Please refer to page 63 of the APA manual for more specific instructions.
As to numbering the most important thing to remember is that numbers below 10 are written out, while number 10 and above and expressed in numerals. This paper is six pages long, and has 18 paragraphs, for example. However, when the number 10 or greater begins a sentence, that number is written out. Ten people will read this paper today, for example. Please refer to page 111 in the APA manual for more instructions.

Summary

This paper illustrated some of the APA writing style conventions. I have a hard copy of this paper in my notebook for my classes at WMU, and use it to help me examine students’ papers. It has most, but not all, of the conventions that are required in class papers.

Please note that when referring to myself in this mock paper, I use the word “I,” and not “the researcher” or “the author.” APA does not use the third person when referring to oneself. If you don’t believe me, please see page 69 of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.
References [Examples]


Palmer, L. B., & Poppink, S. (2012). *The joy of graduate studies at Western Michigan University*. Kalamazoo, MI: Western Michigan University Press. [Book, which is fabricated]
