APA Basic Format
(Rules from the APA Handbook, 6th edition)

Headings, Page Numbers, and Title:
Adjust the margins of your document to 1 inch from every side. Sometimes this is the standard for Microsoft Word, but always check just in case. Also change your font to Times New Roman, 12 point, the standard and accepted font. The entire document, including the title page, should be double spaced. To set this, you can click on the shortcut in the Home bar in Word that controls Line and Paragraph spacing, and then select “2.” You could also right click on the document, go to “Paragraph,” and adjust line spacing to “double.”

Most APA papers have a title page, which comes before the rest of the paper on a separate page. The title page begins the numbering for the paper and should, therefore, be page one. The title page lists the title, author’s name, the instructor’s name, the course title or number, and the date the assignment is due. This information is located in the center of the title page with each piece of information on a separate line.

If your professor has any special recommendations or formats, follow the professor’s guidelines.

APA format typically has a special header, called a running head. This is a shortened version of your title (or all of your title, if your title is shorter) and is placed in the header position, flushed left at the top of every page. Your page number should be on the same line, but flushed right. The running head is in ALL CAPS. Your title page is different than the subsequent pages, however. On the title page, you include the actual text, “running head.” Therefore, the header on your title page should look like this: Running head: TITLE. The other pages should only have: TITLE.

Sample Title Page:

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Running head: APA FORMAT

The Tricks to Writing in APA Format

Joe Peters
Professor Johnson
PSYC 1101
7 March 2012
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The Full Title of Your Paper Goes Here, not Bolded or Italicized

You should start your introductory paragraph on the line right beneath the title. Everything should be double spaced, but there are no EXTRA spaces between the title and the intro or between subsequent paragraphs. In the first paragraph, you typically start by introducing your topic or problem under study and establishing the context for the topic/problem. The last sentence in this paragraph should be your thesis statement or hypothesis. The rest of the paper is focused on proving that thesis true and/or walking us through the research methodologies you used to test your hypothesis.

In your body paragraphs, it is important to include outside research as supporting evidence to back your claims. According to Johnson, Smith and Fairchild (2001), any time you “quote another author’s words,” you must include the author’s last name(s), the year of publication, and the page number from which the quote comes (p. 19). You can either include the author and year in a signal phrase like in the previous sentence, or you can simply “include all of the information at the end in parenthesis with the page number” (Johnson, Smith & Fairchild, 2001, p. 20). If you are only paraphrasing, however, and do not use a direct quote, you do NOT need to include a page number, but you DO still need to include the authors and year (Smith, 1982). If you quote anything that is 40 words or longer, format it like this:

This is called a block quote. Whenever you use a block quote, you have to indent each of the lines under the appropriate paragraph and omit quotation marks. Be careful, though, because you want to use these long quotes sparingly. Too many big quotes will imply that you are overusing source material rather than making your own claims. Also, you put the period BEFORE the block quote’s parenthetical citation rather than after it. (Sheridan, 2011, p. 19)

Then you continue the paragraph as usual. Remember to include all citations in your reference page!

*If you have any questions or need more information, please consult our more extensive APA packet or make an appointment at owl.tulsacc.edu.*