Formatting APA Papers in Microsoft Word 2013

This handout explains the step-by-step process of typing a paper in APA format using Microsoft Word. Should there be differences between this handout and your instructor’s requirements, always do as your instructor asks.

A. Page Margins
There should be one inch margins on all four sides of the page. Word typically applies this standard automatically, but if you need to manually change it, here’s how:

1. Click on the Page Layout tab near the top of the screen, then click on Margins. A drop down menu will appear. Click on the first selection, “Normal,” which makes the margins one-inch all-around.

B. Spacing
Your essay should be double-spaced with no extra spaces between paragraphs. To make this happen, follow these instructions:

1. Select the Home tab near the top of the screen, then click on the small diagonal arrow pointing right in the Paragraph pane.
3. Click the box next to the option “Don’t add space between paragraphs of the same style,” then click “OK.”

C. Font Type and Size
The font for your paper should be Times New Roman size 12. To set that font, follow these steps:

1. Select the Home tab near the top of the screen. Next, in the Font pane, click the diagonal arrow pointing right.
3. Under Size, choose “12.”
4. Click the button that says Set as Default. Choose the selection “This Document Only?” (Following this step ensures that your font will never change as you work on the document.)
D. Headers

The headers required in APA format are different than those required in MLA. Be sure you follow these instructions carefully! To create the headers, do the following:

1. Click on the Insert tab near the top of the screen.
2. Click on the Page Number icon.
3. A dropdown menu will appear. In it, click “Top of Page.”
4. A second dropdown menu will appear. In it, select “Plain Number 3.”
5. Once you see the header appear in your document, check the box next to “Different First Page” under the Design tab.
6. Place your cursor in the header box on the first page of your document and type this (without the quotation marks): “Running head: SHORTENED VERSION OF YOUR TITLE”
7. Without moving your cursor, hit “tab” on your keyboard twice to move over to the upper right corner of your document. There, type the number 1.
8. Without closing the header, scroll down to the second page of your document. There, you should see a number 2 in the upper right corner. Place your cursor on the left side of that number and hit “tab” on your keyboard twice to move over to the upper left corner of your document.
9. Here, type the shortened version of your title again in all caps. This will differ from the way you typed it on the first page, however, because you will leave off the words “Running head.”
10. Double click on any part of the document outside the header to finish it.

E. References Page

1. Begin your Reference Page on the first line of the last blank page in your document.
2. Center-align your cursor by clicking the Center Align Button in the Home tab.
3. Type “References” (don’t bold, underline, or italicize this!) and hit “Enter” on your keyboard to start a new line.
4. Left align your cursor by using the Left Align Button in the Home tab.
5. Still in the Home tab, click on the small diagonal arrow pointing right in the Paragraph pane.
6. A new window will appear. In it, under the “Indentation” label, find the drop down menu under the word “Special.”
7. Click on the dropdown menu and select “Hanging,” then click “OK.”
8. Begin typing your references in alphabetical order. (See a complete APA guide for more specific information on citing individual sources).