

PsychOpen GOLD Style Guide

This guide contains the essential general information necessary for the preparation of your manuscript. Conforming to these requirements will help facilitate editorial workflow, thus making your research available to the scientific community more quickly. The following guidelines cover the most common issues that authors have to deal with when publishing in PsychOpen GOLD journals.

Please note that specific PsychOpen GOLD journals may have additional requirements, which can be looked up on the respective journal website.

The PsychOpen GOLD Style Guide is based largely on the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th Edition (APA 7). The following elements of APA 7 style are of especial importance for your manuscript:

- Capitalization (APA 7, Sections 6.13 – 6.21)
- Italics (APA 7, Section 6.22)
- Numbers (APA 7, Sections 6.32 – 6.39)
- Statistical and Mathematical Copy (APA 7, Sections 6.40 – 6.45)
- Tables and Figures (APA 7, Chapter 7)
- In-Text Citations (APA 7, Sections 8.10 – 8.22)
- Paraphrases and Quotations (APA 7, Sections 8.23 – 8.36)
- Reference List (APA 7, Chapters 9 and 10)

The APA blog is a valuable, free resource for detailed information on specific APA style issues:
<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog>

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Author Names (Byline)

In the byline, add your name in the format given below to reduce the chances of mistaken identity:

<First name> <middle initials> <last name>

Omit all titles/degrees (e.g., Dr., Prof. etc.).

Author Affiliations and Correspondence

Your affiliation should use the following pattern:

Department or Division, Name of Institution, City, Country

Add the name of the city and country in each case, even if it is already included in the name of the institution (deviating from APA 7). Include a dual affiliation **only if** two institutions contributed substantial support to the study. Include **no more than two affiliations** per author.

Link all the authors' names to their respective institutional affiliations by using superscript Arabic numbers after the surnames and before the institutions. Use only a single paragraph for all institutions, e.g.,

Thomas M. Miller¹, Verena Thiel^{*2}, Francesco S. Baldini³

¹Educational Testing Service, Harvard University, Cambridge, United States

²MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, Trier University, Trier, Germany

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Running Head

A running head is required and should contain a maximum of 50 characters. The running head does **not** have to appear on every page (deviating from APA 7).

Abstract

As abstracts are often separated from the article body (e.g., in literature databases), the abstract has to be a stand-alone entity which is intelligible in itself. Therefore:

1. **Do not** refer to tables or figures in abstract and do not use footnotes.
2. Avoid citations. If indispensable, provide citations so that the source can be identified without the reference list, e.g.,

- by using a DOI:

(Oppenheimer, 2005; <https://doi.org/10.1002/acp.1178>)

- or by providing basic bibliographic information:

(Galton, F. [1880]. Statistics of mental imagery. *Mind*, 5, 301-318)

Keywords

- All keywords should be in lowercase letters, except proper nouns.
- The keywords should be separated by commas.
- Do not use a period after the keyword sequence.

Example:

mathematics anxiety, children, Bulgarian schools

Title

The title of a manuscript should summarize the main idea of a contribution and should be self-explanatory. It should not be too long (the APA recommends a title length of no more than 12 words) and should allow for easy abbreviation into a running head.

- Use plain text only (no italic, bold, sup-/superscript, etc.; no links).

Formatting Styles

- Use only MS Word standard styles for formatting article elements such as paragraphs, words, characters, pages, sections, and tables (e.g., „Normal“, „Heading 1“, „Emphasis“, „Bold“). Do not use custom styles.
- Organize your manuscript by headings into an unambiguous hierarchy with at least two headings at each level. Note: Do not use more than four levels!
- The introduction does **not** need a heading “Introduction”.
- Avoid single-sentence paragraphs.

Text

Ensure that the grammar and spelling of your manuscript is accurate, as grammatical and orthographic errors distract the reader and impede clear and efficient communication. Ask a colleague to proofread your paper to detect mistakes and contradictions. If you write the paper in a language other than your mother tongue, ask a native speaker to proofread it.

Capitalization

(see APA 7, Sections 6.13 – 6.21)

In titles (including article title, section titles, table titles, figure titles), the following elements must be capitalized:

- all major words. Major words are nouns, adjectives, verbs (including linking verbs), adverbs and pronouns
- all words that have four or more letters, even if they are not major words
- both elements in a hyphenated compound, e.g., Teacher-Rated
- the first word after a colon (:) or em dash (–)

Use lower-case letters for minor words (conjunctions, articles, and short prepositions).

Example:

School Anxiety: Teacher-Rated Stress Factors in Bulgarian School Children

In the reference list, one must capitalize,

- only the first word of book and article titles (exception: retain the capitalization and punctuation that is used by a journal in its title)
- proper nouns (and words used as proper nouns)
- the first element of a hyphenated compound at the beginning of a title or subtitle, or after a colon or em dash (e.g. *Teacher-rated*)
- the first word after a colon or em dash

Example:

Richards, M. (2005). School anxiety: Teacher-rated stress factors in Bulgarian school children. *SchoolPSYCHOLOGY Journal*, 7(1), 81–97.

In the text body, one must capitalize,

- nouns followed by numerals in a numbered series (e.g., ...and Table 4 shows that on Day 3 in Experiment 6...)
- Titles of books and articles mentioned in the text (e.g., In his book, *The Psychology of Everyday Things* the author clarifies that)
- Titles of tests (e.g. Advanced Memory Test (AMT))

Decimal Fractions

(see APA 7, Sections 6.36)

- The decimal point should be preceded by a zero, i.e., have a leading zero, with numbers less than 1 **when the statistic can exceed 1** (e.g., 0.81 cm).
- Omit the leading zero before a decimal fraction, only when the statistic cannot exceed 1 (for example, levels of significance, correlations, proportions; e.g.: $p = .028$).

Statistical Symbols

(see APA 7, Sections 6.40 – 6.45)

APA uses three different typefaces for preparing statistical symbols and mathematical copy in manuscripts: standard, **boldface**, and *italic*. These rules also apply to the contents of tables and figures.

- Use a standard typeface for Greek letters, subscripts, superscripts, and abbreviations that are not variables, e.g.:

α , β_i , log, LSD, MSE, μ_{boys}

- Set in **boldface** symbols for vectors and matrices, e.g.:

\mathbf{V} , $\mathbf{\Sigma}$

- Use *italic typeface* for all other statistical symbols, e.g.:

p , N , M_x , d , df , t , F , SD

- Note: Do not use images for statistical symbols or other special characters!

Presenting Statistics

(see APA 7, Sections 6.40 – 6.45)

- Report degrees of freedom (df) for all test statistics. For t , χ^2 , F values use the format as in the examples below:

$t(23) = 3.51$, $p = .002$
 $\chi^2(2, N = 50) = 3.45$, $p = .18$
 $F(3, 48) = 6.43$, $p < .001$

Note: Use commas (not semicolons!) between test statistics and p values, e.g.

$t(23) = 3.51$, $p = .002$, (**not**: $t(23) = 3.51$; $p = .002$)

- Generally, report exact p values. However, for p values less than .001 report,

$p < .001$ (**not** $p = .000$ and **not** $p = .001$)

- Replace brackets by commas when presenting statistics in parentheses.

was statistically significant, $F(1, 32) = 4.37$, $p = .045$.
not: was statistically significant ($F[1, 32] = 4.37$, $p = .045$).
not: was statistically significant [$F(1, 32) = 4.37$, $p = .045$].

- In equations, always leave a space before and after $=$ $<$ $>$ \leq \geq , e.g.,

$p = .002$ (**not** $p=.002$)

- Report confidence intervals in the format 95% CI [LL, UL], where LL is the lower and UL the upper limit of the confidence interval. Always include the confidence level (e.g., 95%).
- Please use “.” as the decimal mark and “,” as the thousands separator throughout your manuscript, e.g.,

$SD = 1.23$ (**not**: $SD = 1,23$); income $> 25,000$ (**not**: $income > 25.000$).

In-Text Citations

(see APA 7, Sections 8.10 – 8.22)

APA 7 requires an author-date citation system. Insert the **surname** of the author and the **publication year** in the text in the form below:

- When the name of the author is part of the narrative (non-parenthetical format):**

Jackson (2012) found out that humor prolongs life.

- **When the name is not part of the narrative (parenthetical format):**

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson, 2012).

The rules regulating the number of author names listed in the in-text citations are as follows:

- **One or Two Authors**

Authors are always named:

Jackson and Miller (2012) found out that humor prolongs life.

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson & Miller, 2012).

Note: When the citation is part of the narrative (non-parenthetical format), the word “and” precedes the second author, while in parenthetical format, an ampersand (&) is used.

- **Three or More Authors**

Include the name of only the first author and add ‘et al.’ in every citation, including the first mention:

Jackson et al. (2012) found out that humor prolongs life.

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson et al., 2012).

Note: If there are two or more references with three or more authors sharing the same surnames and the same publication year, you must add the necessary authors names before the ‘et al.’ in order to distinguish the respected truncated references from each other.

Example: If your reference list has

Jackson, F., Miller, A. F., Doe, A., B. V., & Silva, A. R. T. (2021) ...

Jackson, F., Miller, A. F., Doe, X., Hu, D., Glaveanu, Z. I., & Martinez, S. W. E. (2021) ...

You must avoid citing both works in the text body as Jackson et al. (2021). Instead, cite them as:

Jackson, Miller, Doe, Hu, et al. (2021) found out that humor prolongs life.

Jackson, Miller, Doe, and Silva (2021) proposed a theoretical framework.

Note: 1) In this case, when several authors are named, “et al.” is preceded by a comma. 2) Do not use “et al.” for only one final author but spell out the name instead.

- **Works Without an Author**

If the author of a publication cannot be identified, use the first few words of the publication title instead of the author name for your citation. Enclose title words of articles, chapters, or Web pages with double quotation marks. Italicize title words of books, brochures, reports, or periodicals, e.g.:

An increase of older people is expected (“Europe’s population ages”, 2012)

An increase of older people is expected (*Europe’s seniors*, 2012)

- **Citations With Page Numbers**

When providing page numbers – which is required for word-by-word citations, but also encouraged for paraphrased citations – insert them behind the year, set off by a comma. Do not use a colon for setting off the page numbers.

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson & Miller, 2012, pp. 120–121).

If you are referring to a single page, add p. instead of pp. before the page number:

Humor prolongs life as a recent study concluded (Jackson & Miller, 2012, p. 120).

- **Multiple Sources**

List in-text citations in alphabetical order:

(Beck et al., 1979; Freud, 1901; Rogers, 1951; Shaver & Mikulincer, 2005)

Reference List

(see APA 7, Chapters 9 and 10)

Each citation in the text must be reflected in the reference list and vice-versa. Make sure that the spelling of author names and the publication year are identical in both entries.

- **Author Names**

Display all authors' names in an inverted format. Provide surnames and middle name initials for up to 20 authors. When there are between two to 20 authors, use an ampersand before the final author's name: Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C.

If there are 21 or more authors, use the ellipsis after the 19th, followed by the final author name (no ampersand).

Author, A., Author, B., Author, C., Author, D., Author, E., Author, F., Author, G., Author, H., Author, I., Author, J., Author, K., Author, L., Author, M., Author, N., Author, O., Author, P., White, Q., Author, R., Author, S., . . . Author, Z. (1996).

- **Titles**

Italicize the names of periodicals (journals, newsletters, magazines), as well as the titles of books, reports, and other separate, non-periodical literature. Include additional information (e.g., report number, edition) in parentheses immediately after the title without setting it off with a period. Do not italicize the additional information:

Marsten, B. (2012). *Annual report on school psychology* (Report No. 12-2012). American Association of School Psychologists. <https://aasp.org/reports/12-2012>

Common Reference Formats

(see APA 7, Chapters 9 and 10)

The following list shows the general reference format for the most common reference types along with pertinent examples:

- **Journal Articles**

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (year). Title of article. *Title of journal*, Volume(Issue), pp–pp. DOI/URL

Chalmers, D. J. (1995). Facing up to the problem of consciousness. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 2(3), 200–219. <https://doi.org/10.1086/341769>

In cases where no DOI is available, include the article's URL.

Gigerenzer, G. (2004). Mindless statistics. *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 33, 587–606. https://library.mpib-berlin.mpg.de/ft/gg/GG_Mindless_2004.pdf

- **Technical and Research Reports**

Technical and research reports are formatted like books. If a report has a report number or other ID assigned by the publishing organization, add the number in parenthetical format immediately following the title, e.g.:

Thompson, E., & Baldwin, G. (2010). *Psychological publishing report* (Report No. PPR-03/2010). Organization of Psychology Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.1234/5678>

- **Books**

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (year). *Title of book*. Publisher. DOI/URL

Jackson, A. J., Miller, J. T., Stevens G. K., & Veith, S. L. (2012). *Psychology in universities*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1234/5678>

Doe, J. (1999). *Introduction to developmental psychology*. Routledge.

For electronic books without a DOI add the exact landing page URL for the book that is on the publisher homepage. Use the format: [http\(s\)://...](http(s)://...)

Vakoch, D. A. (2012). *Psychology of space exploration*. National Aeronautics and Space Administration. https://www.nasa.gov/pdf/607107main_PsychologySpaceExploration-ebook.pdf

When author and publisher are identical, omit the publisher, e.g.,

Leibniz Institute for Psychology. (2012). *The official PsychOpen handbook*. <https://doi.org/10.1234/5678>

- **Book Chapters**

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (year). Title of chapter. In A. Editor, B. Editor, & C. Editor (Eds.), *Title of book* (pp. xxx–xxx). Publisher. DOI/URL

Green, S. A. (2008). The psychiatrist and the pharmaceutical industry. In S. Bloch & S. A. Green (Eds.), *Psychiatric Ethics* (4th ed., pp. 127–150). Oxford Academic. <https://doi.org/10.1093/med/9780199234318.001.0001>

If a book has a single editor, use (Ed.) instead of (Eds.). Place additional information (e.g., the page range, volume, or edition number) in parentheses immediately following the title.

Raaheim, K. (1988). Making intelligence relevant for task solutions in a strange situation. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Advances in the psychology of human intelligence* (Vol. 4, pp. 84–86). Erlbaum.

- **Proceedings**

Paper presentations or contributions to meetings or symposia can be either formally or informally published. Formally released proceedings are published in book or periodical format. In those cases, use the same format you would use for books, book chapters, or periodical contributions.

For informally published papers, provide the date as well as the name and location of the conference. If available, add a DOI or URL:

Stevens, G. K. (2012, September 3–5). *Distribution of open-access publications in Europe* [Paper presentation]. Third Open Access in Europe Conference, Trier, Germany. <https://www.oe-in-europe.com/3rdconf/paper12.pdf>

For symposium contributions, name the chair and the title of the symposium:

Stevens, G. K. (2012, September 3–5). Distribution of open-access publications in Europe. In S. B. Finley (Chair), *New developments in scholarly communication* [Symposium]. Third Open Access in Europe Conference, Trier, Germany.

Tables

(see APA 7, Chapter 7)

- **Creating Tables**

Please use the MS Word table editor to create tables (you will find it under “Insert > Table”). **Do not** create tables by any other means (e.g., by tabs or spaces, or by importing Excel tables).

- **Table Title**

- Provide a concise (short) and explanatory title for each table. If more detailed information about table content is needed, use a general table note for this purpose.
- The general table title should contain a table number and should be placed above the table.

- **Table Structure**

- Keep table structure simple! Each column should contain the same type of data. Each cell should have only one row containing one item.
- **Do not** 1) use tabs inside table cells, 2) use hard returns (line breaks) in table cells, 3) use nested tables.
- **Do not** 1) use colored backgrounds inside tables, 2) use bold typeface to highlight table values, 3) but **DO** use specific notes instead.
- **Do not** span row headings (item in the first cell of a row) over several rows.

- **Column Heads**

- Give every table column, including the leftmost, a heading (in the singular, e.g., ‘Variable’ instead of ‘Variables’).
- The column head titles should be as brief as possible – ideally not having more characters than the widest entry.

- **Decimal Values in Tables**

Please use the same number of decimal places for decimal values.

- **Table Referencing**

Reference every table in the text, e.g., (see Table 2), with the reference preceding the table itself.

- **Table Borders and Shading**

Only use horizontal borders at the top and the bottom of the whole table as well as the bottom of the table header. Avoid borders inside the table body. Do not use any shading.

- **Table Footnotes**

APA style uses three different kinds of footnotes. All of them must be placed below the table.

- **General notes** refer to the table as a whole (e.g., reproduction acknowledgements, explanations of abbreviations, symbols etc.). They are introduced with the italicized word “*Note*” followed by a period.

Note. CSESG = Children Self-Efficacy Scale – Girls; CSESB = Children Self-Efficacy Scale – Boys.

- **Specific notes** refer to a particular part of a table (column, row, cell). They are indicated by a superscript letter. The specific footnotes must be ordered from left to right and from top to bottom.

^aThe women sample was excluded from this measure. ^b $n = 90$. ^c $n = 70$.

- **Probability notes** are used to explain how asterisks and other symbols are used in a table to indicate p -values. P -values are ordered by increasing number of asterisks from left to right.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Place table footnotes (if any) below the table in the following order:

1. general note (*Note.* CSESG = ...)
2. specific notes (^aThe women sample was ...)
3. probability note (* $p < .05$)

End every footnote with a period. Each footnote type must begin on a new line, e.g.:

Note. $N = 250$. RO = Recall-Own task. GN = Generate-New task. All ratings were scored independently by three different raters.

^a The women sample was excluded from this measure. ^b $n = 90$. ^c $n = 70$.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figures

(see APA 7, Chapter 7)

- **Image Format**

- Figures and images must have a white or transparent background and no image borders.

- For accepted papers: Please supply all images or figures as separate files. Accepted bitmap formats are PNG or TIFF. For line drawings we prefer a vector format, e.g., SVG or editable office charts or drawings. Image widths (A4-page): full page width: 2480 pixels; half page: 1240 pixels; quarter page: 620 pixels. No embedded bitmaps in vector files please! For further details please see <https://psychopen.eu/support/#au-images-figures>.
- **Figure Captions and Footnotes**
 - Figure captions and footnotes must be situated in the text body, not as part of the figure.
 - In contrast, figure legends are an integral part of a figure and must be placed within it. Major words in legends should be capitalized.
- **Readability**
 - Make sure that any figure elements are clearly readable, are sufficiently explained, and do not overlap each other.
 - Text elements should be presented in a comfortably readable font size.
- **Figure Referencing**
 - All figures must be referred to in the text, e.g., (see Figure 1), with the reference preceding the figure itself.

Equations

Submit equations and formulas as equation objects created with MS Word's equation editor.