



MASTERING APA FORMAT

— WHAT EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW

DR. GINA A GLANC

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

WHY APA STYLE?

- “APA Style is used by writers in many disciplines around the world for concise, powerful, and persuasive scholarly communication.”

-- APA

APA FORMAT FOR A JOURNAL ARTICLE

- Structure of a journal article
 - Abstract
 - Introduction
 - Method
 - Results
 - Discussion

THE ABSTRACT

- A brief, comprehensive summary of the contents of the paper.
- Limited to 250 words
- May be in paragraph or structured format
- Qualities of a good abstract
 - Accurate
 - Nonevaluative
 - Coherent and Readable
 - Concise

THE INTRODUCTION

- Contains a succinct description of the issues being reported, their historical antecedents, and the study objectives.
 - Frame the importance of the problem (research question)
 - Historical antecedents (literature review)
 - Articulate study goals (hypotheses)

THE METHOD SECTION

- Provides most of the information that readers need to fully comprehend what was done in the execution of an empirical study.
 - Participants
 - Study Design
 - Instruments
 - Procedure

THE RESULTS SECTION

- Summarize the collected data and results of any analyses performed relevant to the discussion that is to follow.
 - Participants (N)
 - Statistics
 - Data Analysis

THE DISCUSSION SECTION

- Evaluates and interprets the results with respect to the original hypotheses
 - Broad statement of support or nonsupport
 - Similarities and differences with previous research
 - Interpretation
 - Generalizability
 - Implications for future research

ORGANIZING YOUR PAPER

- Start with an outline!
 - Helps to collect and refine your thoughts as you shape the paper
 - If a logical, ordered form does not emerge, the weak spots will become apparent and you can fix them
 - Think about how you can explain the following:
 - What you did
 - Why you did it
 - What you found out
 - What your results mean
 - What you have concluded
- Makes sure your paper has a “good gestalt” (a coherent, psychologically pleasing form)

ORGANIZING THE ABSTRACT

- Make sure to answer the following questions:
 - What was the objective or purpose of my research study?
 - What principle method did I use?
 - Who were the research participants?
 - What were my major findings?
 - What did I conclude from these findings?

ORGANIZING THE INTRODUCTION

- Ask yourself the following questions as you plan your introduction
 - What was the purpose of my study, and why did it seem important to choose this particular problem?
 - How did my study derive from other studies, and also how does it build on those studies?
 - What were my hypotheses, predictions, or expectations, and what was the logical (evidential) basis of my ideas?
 - If there was more than one hypothesis, how are they interrelated so they don't seem fragmented and unconnected?
 - When I turn to the method section afterward, will it be clear that the empirical procedures I used were a natural consequence of the questions I wanted to answer?

ORGANIZING THE RESULTS SECTION

- Make sure to consider the following questions
 - What did I find?
 - How can I report the findings in a careful, detailed way?
 - Is what I am planning to say precise and to the point?
 - Will what I have to say be clear to the reader?
 - Have I left anything out that may be of importance?

ORGANIZING THE DISCUSSION SECTION

- Consider the following questions
 - What was the purpose of my study?
 - How do my results relate to that purpose?
 - Were there any serendipitous findings of interest?
 - How valid and generalizable are my findings?
 - Are there larger implications in these findings?
 - Is there an alternative way to interpret my results?
 - Do my results raise new questions?

EVALUATE YOUR OUTLINE

- After you have completed your outline ask yourself:
 - Is my discussion focused, and do the ideas flow from or build on one another?
 - Have I satisfactorily developed each idea?
 - Have I provided supporting details for each main idea discussed?
 - Are the ideas balanced?
- This will make sure your writing is to the point!

PREPARING POSTERS

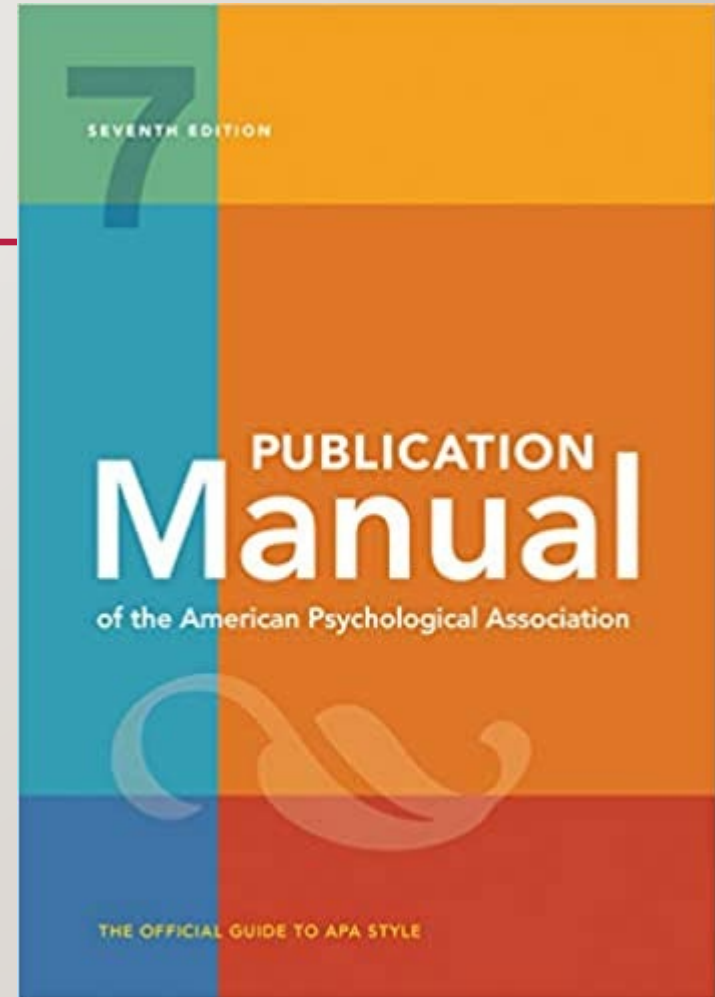
- The poster is a visual display used to convey the nature and major findings of your research in a public forum
 - Boils the research down to its most important components without sacrificing vital details
- Some tips:
 - Choose a font size that is large enough to be visible from a distance
 - Keep tables and figures simple
 - Be straightforward and concise
 - Organize and label the sequence of information in a way that leads your viewers through the poster

PREPARING CONCISE REPORTS

- To supplement the information in the poster, a concise handout may be prepared
- Can be structured like a mini-article, only including the information in your poster

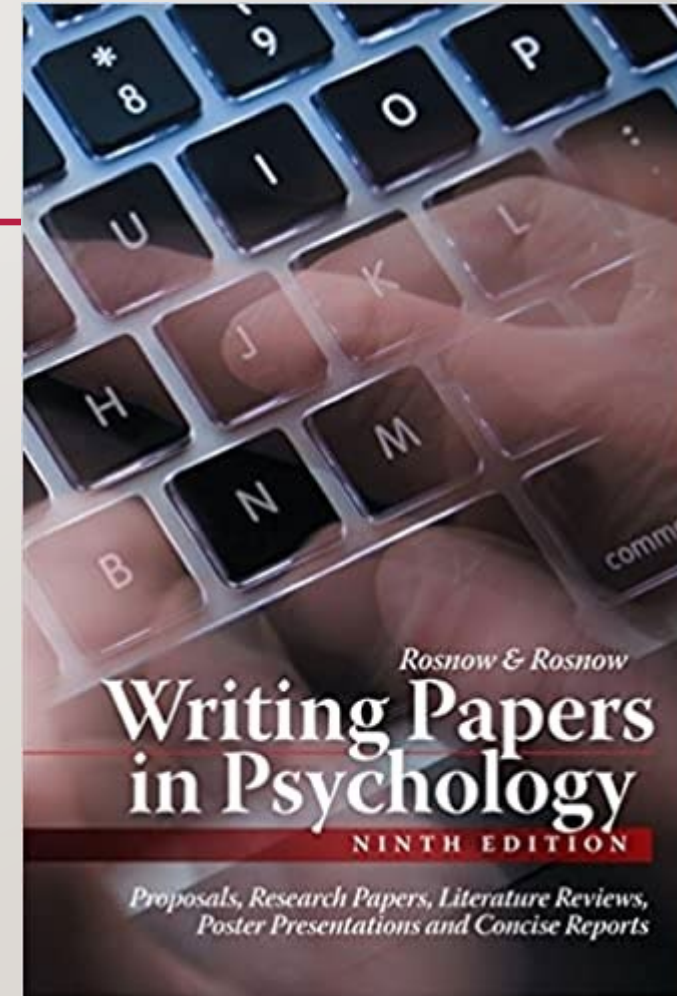
YOU MUST GET THIS BOOK

- Official Source For APA Style
- Known for its authoritative, easy-to-use reference and citation system, the *Publication Manual* also offers guidance on choosing the headings, tables, figures, language, and tone that will result in powerful, concise, and elegant scholarly communication. It guides users through the scholarly writing process—from the ethics of authorship to reporting research through publication. The seventh edition is an indispensable resource for students and professionals to achieve excellence in writing and make an impact with their work.



YOU MUST GET THIS BOOK!

- **WRITING PAPERS IN PSYCHOLOGY** offers you frameworks, tips, guidelines, and sample illustrations for writing research reports or literature reviews that must conform to style recommendations of the American Psychological Association. It also is designed to cultivate your organizing, literature retrieval, critical reasoning, and communication skills under deadlines. For more than a decade, this brief, inexpensive, and easy-to-use manual has helped thousands of students in psychology and related fields with the task of writing term papers and reports.



HELPFUL WEBSITES

- Purdue online writing lab

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html

- American Psychological Association

<https://apastyle.apa.org/>