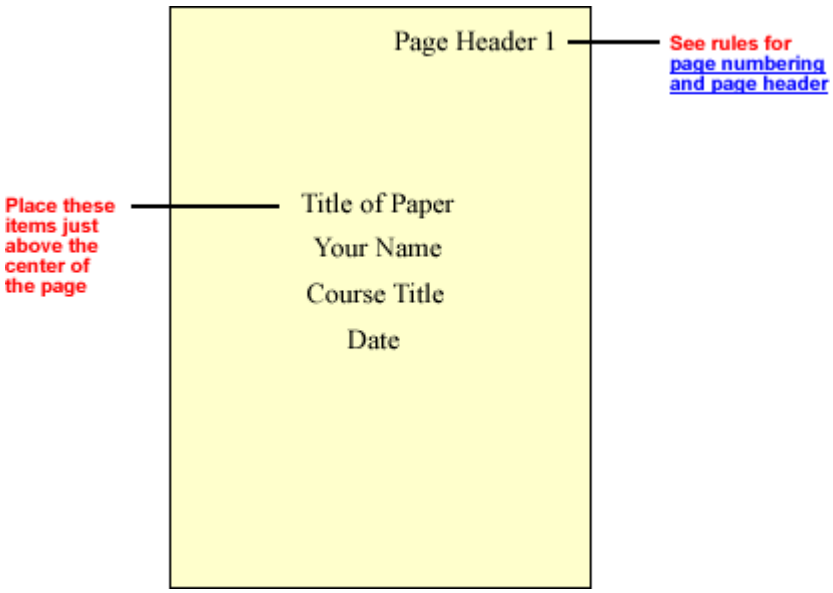
Formatting a Paper Using APA Guidelines

From *The Writing Center* @ The University of Wisconsin – Madison (http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocAPA.html)

Based on the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th Edition (2010) - *Refer to page numbers and sections for more detailed information*

TITLE PAGE: Unless you receive other instructions, make the first page of your paper a title page. The APA Manual doesn't give instructions for the title page of a class paper; the contents and placement of items on the sample title page below are adapted from APA instructions for the title page of a paper to be submitted for publication *(see page 229, section 8.03).*



PAGE NUMBERS AND HEADERS: Starting with the title page, place consecutive page numbers at the upper right-hand corner of the page, at least 1 inch (whatever your margin is) from the right edge of the page, between the top of the page and the first line of text (the default setting on most word-processing programs, ½ inch from the top of the page, is acceptable).

Use the first two or three words of your title as a page heading on every page, including the title page and reference pages. Place it five spaces to the left of the page number, using the header function of your word-processing software to place it automatically on every page *(see page 230, section 8.03).*

MARGINS: Use uniform margins at least 1 inch from the top, bottom, and sides of every page *(see page 229, section 8.03).*

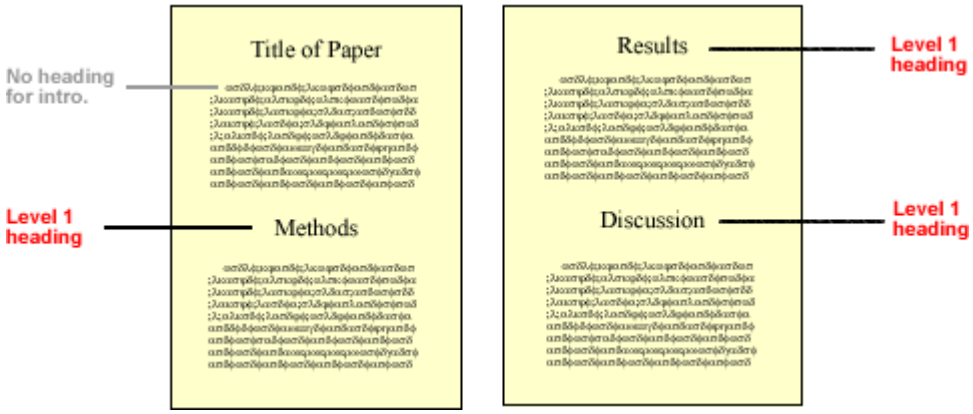
LINE SPACING: Double-space all text throughout the manuscript, including the title page and reference page. For student papers, the APA allows some exceptions, for instance, wider spaces between text and headings, and single-spacing within reference list items and long quotations. Check with your instructor before making these exceptions *(see page 229, section 8.03).*

HEADINGS: All APA formatted documents use headings that show your readers how your paper is organized by labeling the parts and by indicating which parts are equally important and which are subordinate to others *(see pages 62-63, section 3.03).*

Most undergraduate papers often use only **Level 1** headings, which are:

- centered
- uppercase and lowercase letters
- the same font size as the regular text

The diagram below illustrates **Level 1** headings.



(Note that heading font sizes are enlarged for illustration purposes.
In an actual paper, headings are the same font size as regular text.)

INDENTATION: Use the tab key to indent the first lines of paragraphs and all lines of block quotes five to seven spaces or ½ inch *(see page 229, section 8.03).*

TYPEFACE: Use a serif typeface of 12 points, such as 12-point *Times New Roman* or 12-point *Courier* - Serifs are the "tails" that you see at the top and bottom of the letters that help readers to follow a line of text *(see pages 228-229, section 8.03).*

LONG QUOTATIONS: Place quotations of 40 or more words in block form. Indent the entire quotation five to seven spaces or ½ inch, the same distance you indent the first line of a paragraph *(see pages 170-1, section 6.03).*

TABLES AND FIGURES: If your paper requires *tables*, specific formatting guidelines can be found on pages 128-50 (*sections 5.07-5.19*) of the *Publication Manual*. For assistance with *figures*, please consult pages 150-67 (*sections 5.20-5.30*).