

*(The running head is what gets printed across the top of journal pages. The 50 characters include spaces. It usually contains as much as the title that you can meaningfully fit into 50 characters (including spaces). The words "Running head:" only appear on the title page.)*

The Title Goes Here and Should be Centered on the Page

Your Name

Your University

### Abstract

This is the abstract. Unlike the rest of the paper, it is not indented. It should be an interesting, short (150-250 words), accurate representation of your paper. Because conciseness is so important in the abstract, use digits for all numbers except at the beginning of sentences. Try to restructure sentences so that they do not begin with a number. Use abbreviations more liberally than you would in the body of the paper (less common abbreviations need to be explained, just as you would in the body of the paper). See the APA Style Manual for the content required in an abstract.

*Keywords:* five or six individual key words, separated by commas, in lower-case

## The Title Goes Here and Should be Centered

This is the first paragraph. Try not to start with such things as, “Recent research has shown.” The title of the article is not in bold and is centered, with the first letter of significant words capitalized. The example presented in this paper will walk you through how to write up an experiment. The same basic style issues can be applied to a literature review.

### **APA Style**

Some aspects of APA style have remained the same from the fifth to the sixth edition of the APA Style Manual. For example, every line is double-spaced, without exception. The first level of heading in a section is centered and not bolded, as shown for the title above. The second-level header is flush left and bolded, as shown for “APA Style” above.

**Third-level heading.** If you need to further divide those sections, the third-level header is indented, lower case after the first word, bolded, and followed by a period. The text begins immediately after the heading, as shown in this paragraph.

***Fourth-level heading.*** If you need any further divisions, this is what a fourth-level heading looks like.

***Fifth-level heading.*** This is what a fifth-level heading looks like.

### **APA Style Changes**

There are, however, important changes in the APA Publication Manual’s sixth edition (first printed in July 2009), which are all illustrated in this sample lab report. First, headings are now done quite differently, and the running head, rather than a short title, now appears on each page. Secondly, the References section has been significantly changed to reflect the growing dominance of electronic sources and online versus paper journal formats.

For an annotated example of an APA article, see the APA Style Manual (6th edition), p.

41. Note, however, that there are errors to the first printing of the 6th edition that should be corrected in subsequent printings. Corrections to the first printing are summarized at the UW Psychology Writing Center website (<http://web.psych.washington.edu/writingcenter/writingguides.html#swaf>). The corrections are also given on the APA Writing Style website ([www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org)), although they are not easy to find there.

## **Method**

### **Participants (use 'Subjects' if it is an animal study)**

“Sixty participants” is used instead of “60 participants” to begin this sentence because any number starting a sentence must be spelled out, no matter how large the number. Otherwise, as a general rule, spell out numbers of ten or less, and write numerals for numbers 11 or greater. Exceptions are units of measurement, where numerals are used, such as 5 ml.

### **Design**

This study used a 2 x 2 (sex x personality) between-subjects factorial design. The two independent variables were sex (male or female participant) and type of personality (introvert or extrovert). The dependent variable was musical ability as measured by the Musical Ability Test. Use the factorial structure (e.g., 2 x 2) only when you have at least two independent variables. Also note that each independent variable always has at least two levels, because you are manipulating or comparing at least two conditions of interest. Thus, you would never have a 2 x 1 design. If you have only one independent variable, you might say something like the following: "This study used a between-subjects design. There was one independent variable with two levels..."

### **Materials**

If the materials used in the study were not particularly unusual or detailed, this section is often combined with the Procedure section. The headers used in the Method section are somewhat flexible. They can vary depending on the needs of the type of experiment that you conducted.

**Stimuli.** This is a common third-level heading under the "Materials" sub-section.

## **Procedure**

All Method sections outline the procedure of the experiment. Include enough detail that a competent researcher could replicate your experiment and an interested scientist could evaluate its validity. However, don't give unnecessary details (e.g., you would not say, "The clock used to time the trials was 12 inches in diameter and white", unless the size or color of the clock were relevant variables). Write the Method section in the past tense, because you are referring to work that you have already done.

## **Results**

The Results section is where you present the statistical analyses conducted to evaluate your hypotheses. Sometimes the Results section is combined with the Discussion, especially if multiple experiments are reported in one paper. Although traditionally you would present only your statistical findings here and reserve discussion of these findings for the Discussion section, there is a recent trend towards more explanation of the results in the Results section, even if you have not combined the Results and Discussion sections. Ask your instructor if you're not sure what to do.

When reporting statistical analyses, follow the specific rules for reporting the statistics, including degrees of freedom and significance level. For example, "Males performed significantly better than females on the test of musical ability,  $F(1,286) = 6.06, p < .05$ ." You

might refer the reader to the means presented in Table 1, and you could also include Figure 1 to show readers some other aspect of the data (or of the procedure, if included in the "Methods" section). In this case you would write, "Males performed significantly better than females on the test of musical ability,  $F(1,286) = 6.06, p < .05$  (see Table 1 and Figure 1)." Do not include a table or figure if it is redundant with information in the text.

### **Discussion**

The Discussion section immediately follows the Results section. Here is where you discuss your findings, their implications and the extent to which they can be generalized. Typically, first state whether your main hypotheses were supported. Then discuss how your findings supported or failed to support the research that you cited in your introduction (i.e., the research that was the basis for your research question). Next, discuss the limitations of the present study, and give specific suggestions for future studies.

References<sup>1</sup>

*(Note: Unlike the sections in the body of the article, references begin on a new page. The first line of a reference is not indented, but all following lines are (hanging indent). Pay special attention to capitalization, underlining, and punctuation. These are all specific requirements of APA formatting. Below are examples of three types of citations: (1) an older journal article found via hard copy in the library, (2) a chapter in a hard-copy book, and (3) an article found as an online source from Science Direct).*

Abramson, L. Y., Seligman, M. E. P., & Teasdale, J. D. (1978). Learned helplessness in humans: Critique and reformulation. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 87*, 49-74.

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Bolling, M., Kohlenberg, R. J., & Parker, C. R. (2000). Depression: A radical behavioral analysis and treatment approach. In Dougher, M. (Ed.), *Clinical Behavior Analysis* (pp.127-152). Reno, NV: Context Press.

Rowland, C. F. (2007). Explaining errors in children's questions. *Cognition, 104*, 106-134.  
doi:10.1016/j.cognition.2006.05.011

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>There is now a major change to the references section, such that the "digital object identifier" number (doi) must be included with references retrieved from an online source (e.g. PsycInfo). The UW Psychology Writing Center has a separate handout to help with this (<http://web.psych.washington.edu/writingcenter/writingguides.html#swaf>). Footnotes are formatted like this. They appear on their own separate page, titled as such, and not within the body of the paper.



Table 1

*Mean +/- SD Music Test Scores for Men and Women*

Gender	<u>Classical</u> <sup>a</sup>		<u>Jazz</u>	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Male	8.45	0.98	5.72	1.38
Female	7.12	1.10	3.92	1.67

*Note.* This is where you would make a general note about some aspect of your table. Notes should be double-spaced, but the table itself can be single- or double-spaced, depending on what looks clearest for the data within the table. See also the UW Psychology Writing Center has a handout, “APA Table Guidelines”

(<http://web.psych.washington.edu/writingcenter/writingguides.html>).

<sup>a</sup>This is where you would put a specific note, such as, ‘ “Classical” refers to music composed between 1600 and 1800 AD’.



*Figure 1.* Insert the title of your figure here. Usually figures are graphs that illustrate experimental data, but they can also be diagrams or photos relevant to the research you are reporting (in this case, an illustration of the importance of proper citations). Unlike a Table legend, the figure label and caption come *below* the figure. Number each table and figure according to the order in which you first discuss them in the paper.