
CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

1 Understand why the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual was published.

2 Implement the new changes related to manuscript formatting.

3 Implement the new changes related to manuscript style.

4 Understand the new rules for writing about numbers and numerals.

5 Explain the new rules for including p-values in statistical write-ups.

6 Understand the rules related to effect size and confidence interval reporting.

7 Utilize the new rules for citing information within a manuscript.

8 Utilize the new rules for referencing sources (especially digital sources).

Uh oh, here we go again. Just when you thought you’ve really gotten down the 5th edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association the APA goes and publishes a new one. Don’t Fret! The authors of the popular quantitative research methods book, Quantitative Research Methods for Communication: A Hands-On Approach, are here to help you adjust to the new demands of the 6th edition. While there is generally a period of time when both professors and academic journals will still accept the 5th edition, we’ve all got to adjust to the 6th edition sooner or later. The first edition of Quantitative Research Methods for Communication: A Hands-On Approach discusses a range of issues related to APA style, and this supplemental chapter will help you see what has changed in our book as a result of the 6th edition of the
Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, or APA Style Manual for short. This chapter is not intended to be a complete analysis of all of the changes to the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual, but rather update a range of specific issues that we discussed in Quantitative Research Methods for Communication: A Hands-On Approach related to APA style.

If you want to learn all the ins and outs of APA style, you really should purchase a copy of the complete style manual, which comes in three basic formats: hardcover (ISBN: 978-1-4338-0559-2), soft cover (ISBN: 978-1-4338-0561-5), and spiral bound (ISBN: 978-1-4338-0562-2). A little intimidated by the full version of the APA Style Manual, try the Concise Rules of APA Style (ISBN: 978-1-4338-0560-8), which is a shortened version of the APA Style Manual intended for quick use and for students. For our money, we prefer the full version that is spiral bound because it can lay flat in your lap when working on a research paper. The Concise Rules of APA Style is also spiral bound. Lastly, we recommend checking out the APA’s website for the style manual (http://www.apastyle.org). This website has lots of useful information including video tutorials on the basics of APA Style, a list of changes made to the 6th edition, and other learning aids.

So, Why a New Edition!?

One question that we constantly are asked by students is, “why are style manuals updated so often?” First, 2009 marks the 80th anniversary of the publication of the first set of instructions for preparing a manuscript for publication by the American Psychological Association (Betley et al., 1929). Second, the APA Style Manual hasn’t been updated for nine years, and a lot has changed since 2001. As more and more content has become digital, the need for accurate and consistent ways of dealing with that information has become a necessity. For example, in 2001 blogs were a new phenomena and wikis and podcasts didn’t even exist. Moreover, academic content has become increasingly digitized with the proliferation of electronic databases and libraries. When the authors of this book first started researching, we all had to go to the library to find and read journal articles because there were no electronic versions.

Another reason for the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual is that the APA has realized that most social and behavioral scientists now use the APA Style Manual, including communication researchers. The 6th edition has taken a broader approach to style, so issues that are specific to the APA journals’ publication program have been moved to the style manual’s website.

Lastly, as the writing and submission process for research articles has become electronic, new guidelines for preparing and submitting manuscripts have become a necessity. Not long ago, when someone was submitting a manuscript to a journal for possible publication, the authors would have to make five physical copies and snail-mail them to the editor. Most journals now use electronic submission, so making sure a file comes to an editor in a standard format has become essential.

Now that we’ve explained why the APA decided to release the 6th edition of the Style Manual, the rest of this section is going to examine the major changes that effect research papers. Please realize that we are not covering all of the changes made in the 6th edition, but we are covering those that directly contradict information we presented in Quantitative Research Methods for Communication: A Hands-On Approach. For this reason, we group the changes into three basic categories: 1) Format and Style, 2) Reporting Results, and 3) Source Citations.
Format and Style

Changes in the area of formatting and style have become very common place from edition to edition in the APA Style Manual. Unfortunately, this means that we all have to unlearn some of our previously held habits for formatting a paper or using specific language choices. In this section, we will explore the new issues related to formatting and style (both language use and grammar).

Formatting

There have been some major changes to the basic formatting process of manuscripts in the 6th Edition of the APA Style Manual. Here is a basic summary of the major changes to the layout of a manuscript:

1) Cover Page. From the very first line of the manuscript, the basic formatting of the cover page has changed. In Figure 1, you can see what a new cover page should look like according to the 6th edition. First, we are now typing the words “Running head:” as part of the actual header for the manuscript (1/2” down from the top of the page). The words “Running head:” should be justified on the left side of the page followed by a unique identifier for the manuscript that is typed in all capital letters (ex. “SAMPLE APA PAPER”). The page number is then justified on the same line on the right side of the page. This new version of the running head will exist only on the first page, the words “Running head” are not used in the header past the first page.

The next section of the cover page still contains the title (centered and double spaced), followed by a list of the authors and their college/university affiliations. If everyone is from the same college/university, then you can just list all of authors on one line and the college/university affiliation on the next line. However, if you have multiple authors from multiple colleges or universities, then you need to clearly identify every coauthor by their college or university affiliations.

The next section of the cover page is a change from previous versions. The APA Style Manual is now recommending that we add an “Author Note” to the cover page. The author note contains four basic aspects: funding sources and contact information. The first part of the author note only concerns research that has been funded by some agency. For example, if you receive a grant to conduct research from the National Science Foundation, then you should list the information and the grant # for the specific research project. The second part of the author note contains contact information for the author who should be contacted about the manuscript. Generally speaking, the first author is the one who is listed as the contact author. However, this is not always the case. Quite often coauthors may take on the responsibility for submitting the manuscript and handling any pertinent revisions. In this case, the coauthor and not the lead author should be listed as the contactable author.

2) Abstract. The next major change in APA style related to the manuscript layout occurs on the second page of the manuscript, which is the abstract page. The major changes to the abstract are fairly simple. The word “Abstract” is still centered at the top of the page. The text of the abstract is still left justified and double spaced. Additionally, authors are encourage to submit a list of keywords. See Figure 2 for an example of the abstract layout.
3) **Headings.** The APA Style Manual uses a system of 5 possible headings. You do not need to incorporate all five headings into your manuscript unless you have five necessary subdivisions within your paper. If you only have three subdivisions in your paper, then you would use the first three heading styles. The heading system is designed to make manuscripts easier to read for both reviewers and editors. Figure 3 shows how a paper can be formatted to take into account all five possible headers. You’ll notice that Header One is centered, bold faced and contains both
lower and upper case letters, which is called toggle case (e.g., Toggle Case). Header Two, is left justified, bold faced, and is toggle cased. Header Three, is indented one tab, boldface, and sentence case (e.g., First letter is capitalized the others are lower case), followed by a period. Header Four is indented one tab, boldface, italicized, and sentence case. Header Five is indented one tab, italicized, and sentence case.

Figure 3 Headers

Style

For the purposes of this supplemental chapter, we are referring to “style” as the rules of writing or typography related to the APA Style Manual. For the most part, the style elements are easy to understand, so we won’t spend a lot of time expanding on the new rules of style.

1) When ending a sentence, follow the punctuation with two spaces (not one). Adding the second space makes it easier for people to read type written papers. However, use one space following punctuation in your reference section.

2) The text of your manuscript should be a serif font (e.g., Times New Roman), and the text used for labeling figures should be a sanserif font (e.g. Arial).

3) Your paper should be left-justified, so your right margin should not line up perfectly like you see in this chapter. Instead, the right margin should be uneven. When manuscripts go to print, the editor will justify the entire document, but the author should not when working with a draft.

Reporting Results

Numbers, numbers everywhere!! Obviously, a discussion of numbers goes with a book about quantitative research methods, so quantitative researchers deal with a lot of numbers. In the past, the APA guidance on numbers hasn’t been as consistent, but with the 6th edition of the APA Style manual this has changed. In this section, we will look at the new rules governing writing
about numbers in the 6th edition, the new rules for reporting $p$-values, and reporting effect sizes and confidence intervals.

**Writing about Numbers**

As quantitative researchers, we inevitably report and write about numbers within our research papers. Here are the basic rules espoused in the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual concerning writing with numbers. For the purposes of this section, we talk about two ways of counting or measuring: numerals and numbers. Numerals refer to the symbols or marks used to express a number (e.g., 10, 13, 1,999, etc.). Numbers, on the other hand, are the words used to express specific measurements (e.g., one, two twenty-five, one-third, etc.). The following guidelines will help you know when to use numbers and when to use numerals in your writing.

1) Use numbers when expressing counts or measurements under 10 (e.g., one, two, three, … nine), and use numerals when expressing counts or measurements 10 and above (10, 11, 25, 50, 100, 1,000, etc.). However, there are some exceptions:

   a) Always use numerals in your abstract.
   
   b) Always use numerals in a table.
   
   c) Always use numerals when discussing a unit of measurement (5 g, 13-lbs, 25°, etc.).
   
   d) Always use numerals when discussing mathematic or statistical functions.
   
   e) Always use numerals that “represent time, dates, ages, scores and points on a scale, exact sums of money, and numerals as numerals” (Concise Rules, 2010, p. 86).
   
   f) Use numbers when referring to approximations of time (twelve days ago, twenty years ago, etc.).
   
   g) Use numbers if the number is used to start a sentence.
   
   h) Use numbers for common fractions (e.g., one-half, two-thirds majority, etc.).

2) When using decimals, some times we place a zero before the decimal point and some times we do not. Here are the reasons for and not:

   a) If the decimal fraction can be greater than 1, then we use a zero in front of the decimal (e.g., 0.25%, Cohen’s $d = 0.90$, $s = 0.75$).
   
   b) If the decimal fraction cannot be great than 1, then we do not use a zero in front of the decimal (e.g., $r = .39$, $R^2 = .54$, $p = .05$, etc.).
3) When reporting decimals that involve calculated statistics (e.g., *t* tests, *F* tests, correlations, etc.), round the conclusion to two decimal places (e.g., *t* = 1.79, *F* = 27.38, *r* = .31s, etc.).

**p-Values**

The rules for reporting *p*-values have changed in the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual. According to the new guidelines, report *p*-values as exact numbers out to two or three decimal places (*p* = .027). When a *p*-value is less than “<” .001, we now report that as *p* < .001. However, we can still use general *p*-value labels (e.g., *p* < .05, *p* < .01, *p* < .005) when reporting the *p*-values for an entire table because this makes it easier to read.

**Effect Sizes and Confidence Intervals**

While *Quantitative Research Methods for Communication: A Hands-On Approach* recommended that effect sizes get reported for all statistical tests, the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual has made that a requirement. You can follow the same guidelines we presented in our text for dealing with effect sizes.

The 6th edition of the APA Style Manual further recommends that you include the Confidence Intervals. Confidence intervals can be presented within the text or within a table about a statistical procedure. When reporting a confidence interval, you need to know three specific pieces of information: level of confidence, lower limit (LL), and upper limit (UL). So, if you were reporting the confidence interval for the mean of a group, you may present it like this:

95% CI [12.5, 19.7]

In this case, we are saying that the test was set at a 95% confidence interval and the lower limit was 12.5 and the upper limit was 19.7. If you are describing a series of confidence intervals, you can report the confidence interval level once followed by a series of bracketed lower and upper levels:

95% CIs [12.5, 19.7], [9.35, 15.87], and [10.23, 21.45], respectively.

For more information on Confidence Intervals, check out Chapter 15 (Hypothesis Testing) in *Quantitative Research Methods for Communication: A Hands-On Approach*.

**Source Citations & References**

Most people who think about the APA Style Manual immediately think about source citations. Whether it’s learning how to cite a source within one’s manuscript or learning how to reference a source at the end of the manuscript, source citations and references are an important part of the research process. One of the primary reasons for the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual is because of the influx of electronic sources. Whether you need to cite material from an electronic version of a research article or a blog, the internet has changed the way scholars conduct research. The 6th edition of the APA Style Manual gives new guidance on citing sources within
your manuscript and referencing sources at the end of the manuscript, so let’s look at each one separately.

Source Citations

For the most part, the citing of sources within the text has not changed with the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual. However, the manual added basic clarification for citing works. Figure 4 provides an overview of how to cite different types of information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Citation</th>
<th>Citation Listed in the Text</th>
<th>Parenthetical Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Time</td>
<td>Subsequent Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One work by six or more authors</td>
<td>Wrench et al. (2010)</td>
<td>Wrench et al. (2010)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4 Citing Sources**

Referencing Sources

As mentioned in *Quantitative Research Methods for Communication: A Hands-On Approach* we cite material for two purposes: to lead credence to our ideas and show where our ideas come from. We reference sources so others can more easily find the material we cite within our manuscripts. In the days prior to the influx of electronic content, citing material was fairly consistent because people’s access to materials was fairly consistent. For example, if I cited an article from the journal *Communication Education*, a colleague of mine could go to the library and find *Communication Education* and locate the article within the journal issue I specified in
my source citation. Because journal issues were being published in a physical form, all of the different copies of one issue would look identical. While the physical copies of a journal are still published in the same manner, electronic versions may not always be consistent. For example, if you locate a journal article using one electronic database and I use a different database, the content could be the same but the citing information can get altered. Furthermore, there are some sources that can be altered on an hourly basis. If you go and look at a Wiki for information and then I see your link and check it out a month later, the information could be very different. Most of the changes in the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual are designed to handle these basic issues. In this section, we will examine the changes that have been made by the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual to referencing. Please remember that this is not a complete list of all of the different types of sources you could run into while doing research. For a more thorough list check out page 66 in Quantitative Research Methods for Communication: A Hands-On Approach or the Concise Rules of APA Style or the full APA Style Manual for more information.

Understanding and Using DOIs. Probably the most significant change from the 5th to the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual is the inclusion of Digital Object Identifiers (DOI). The DOI system was developed by the International DOI Foundation as a tool for identifying content in the electronic environment. Think of the DOI as the equivalent to a barcode for a product purchased or the ISBN number for a book. The basic purpose of a DOI is to provide a steady link to information when the information moves. For a physical world example, imagine going to a book store to purchase a book you had seen there two days before. Unfortunately, you get to the book store and the only copy of the book has already been purchased. Does this mean that the book no longer exists? Of course not. However, when finding information on the internet, people quite often discover that information that at one point existed at a specific hyperlink is no longer there (e.g., “404 not found” or “linkrot”). The DOI is designed to help people find content even though the hyperlink to that content has changed. So do all pages have DOIs? No. As of right now, there are a little over 3,000 authorities who can assign DOIs, and most of these authorities (2,600) are publishers. Currently, the 40 million plus DOIs that have been assigned represent published versions of content. Some of this content is published in both a physical capacity and an electronic capacity. The 6th edition of the APA Style Manual has decided that sources containing a DOI should be cited differently to aid in the retrieval of this material.

Figure 5 contains an example of what an article may look like that contains a DOI. Please realize that articles published since 2000 are more likely to have a DOI than articles published prior to 2000. Some articles may not print the DOI clearly on the title page of the article as seen in Figure 5. However, most research databases will also list the DOI as part of the basic information about the article. Figure 6 is an image of how a DOI may be listed by a research database. In both Figure 5 and 6, we highlighted the DOI to help you clearly see the DOI.

When citing an article that has a DOI, you reference the article like you normally would if you were reading the physical article in a published journal. However, you add the DOI at the end of the reference:

Research articles are not the only materials that may have a corresponding DOI. Often electronic book chapters will also have a DOI, so the DOI should also be reported for these materials as well.

Referencing Non-Periodical Electronic Sources. The next major change in the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual examines how to reference non-periodical electronic sources (e.g., websites, blogs, wikis, podcasts, etc.). The most important change for referencing non-periodical electronic sources involves the reporting of the URL address (e.g., http://www.website.com). In the 5th edition, the APA recommended that the date a website was looked at for a research project be included in the citation (e.g., Retrieved July 25, 2005 from:). Unfortunately, URL addresses can often be very lengthy and difficult to type exactly, so the APA 6th edition has provided further guidance on this issue.

1) When material consistently changes, it becomes important to distinguish when the material was written and accessed. When possible, include the exact date the wiki, blog, or discussion post was written. If there is no clear date, include the date you retrieved the website.
2) If referencing a pre-publication version of an “in-press” paper, blog, wiki, vlog, or discussion board, provide the complete URL to the material.

3) If referencing the published version of an electronic article, provide the URL to the magazine, newspaper, or journal’s website.

4) When citing a podcast, include the homepage for the podcast series.

5) When citing an electronic book, provide the URL to the book.

Figure 7 contains examples of how these electronic sources should be cited according the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Type</th>
<th>Source Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
As you can see in the above list of references, there have been quite a few changes made to the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual.

**Conclusion**

Hopefully, this short chapter has helped you see some of the basic changes that have been made to the 6th edition of the APA Style Manual. We haven’t covered all of the new changes in this chapter, just the ones that directly contradict what we wrote in *Quantitative Research Methods for Communication: A Hands-On Approach*. Again, this short guide is not a replacement for either the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* or the *Concise Rules of APA Style: The Official Pocket Style Guide from the American Psychological Association*. In fact, here are some of the other major changes in the 6th edition that we recommend you read:

► New Definition of Self-Plagiarism  
► Expanded Discussion of Piecemeal Publishing  
► Expanded Information on Protecting the Rights of Research Participants  
► New Guidance on Handling and Reporting Conflicts of Interests  
► New Guidance for Explaining how Participants were Manipulated in an Experiment  
► New Information on Conducting a Meta-Analysis  
► Greatly Expanded Section on Avoiding Biased Language  
► New Guidance for Reporting Confidence Intervals in Tables  
► New Discussion of the Ethics of Photo Manipulation  
► New Information on Electrophysiological, Radiological, and Biological Data Reporting  
► New Discussion of the Peer Review Process  
► New Discussion on how Editors Make Decisions  

And many other topics!!!
References


This Chapter was prepared by Jason S. Wrench, Candice Thomas-Maddox, Virginia Peck Richmond, and James C. McCroskey (2009).