GENERAL

apa 6th edition abstract page

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Understanding the APA 6th Edition Abstract Page: A Comprehensive Guide

When preparing a scholarly manuscript for publication or academic submission, the abstract is often the first section that readers encounter. In the APA 6th edition style, the abstract page carries a specific structure and formatting that not only showcases your research succinctly but also ensures that your paper meets the rigorous standards of the American Psychological Association. This guide dives deep into every element of the APA 6th edition abstract page—from layout and spacing to content guidelines—helping you craft an abstract that is clear, concise, and compliant with APA norms.

Why the APA 6th Edition Abstract Matters

Although the APA 7th edition has been released, many academic journals, institutions, and conferences still require the 6th edition format. An abstract written in APA 6th edition style is a critical component for several reasons:

- Standardization: It provides a uniform structure that facilitates quick assessment by reviewers and readers.
- Visibility: A well-crafted abstract increases the likelihood that your research will be discovered in databases and indexed properly.
- Clarity: The concise format forces authors to distill their study's purpose, methods, results, and implications into a few hundred words.

Below, we break down the essential elements of the APA 6th edition abstract page and provide actionable tips to help you create an abstract that stands out.

1. Setting Up the Page: Margins, Font, and Spacing

Before you write the content, establish the correct page layout. Adhering to the formatting rules is crucial for a polished final product.

1. Margins: Use 1 inch margins on all sides (top, bottom, left, right).
2. Font: Select a serif font such as Times New Roman, 12 point size. Some journals accept Arial or Calibri, but Times New Roman remains the default for APA 6th edition.
3. Line Spacing: Double line spacing throughout the abstract.
4. Paragraph Alignment: Left justified text; do not indent the first line of the abstract.
5. Page Header: Include a page header (running head) on the top left, followed by the page number on the top right. The running head should be in all caps, no more than 50 characters, and include the phrase "ABSTRACT."

Example of a header:

ABSTRACT 1\n\n2. Title and Author Information on the Abstract Page

The abstract page traditionally includes the paper's title and author details. However, APA 6th edition guidelines allow for a slightly simplified approach:

- Title: Centered, bold, and in title case (capitalize major words). Do not use all caps or underline.
- Author(s): List each author's name below the title, centered. If there are multiple authors, separate each name with a comma and place a period after the last name.
- Institutional Affiliation: Provide the institution(s) where the research was conducted, centered below the author

names.

- Corresponding Author Contact: Optional; you may include an email address or phone number in a footnote or in a separate line after the affiliation.

Example layout:

The Impact of Sleep Deprivation on Cognitive Performance \n Jane Doe, John Smith \n University of Example \n *Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Jane Doe, email: jane.doe@example.edu*\n\n3. Writing the Abstract: Length and Structure

In APA 6th edition, abstracts should be between 150 and 250 words—short enough to be concise but long enough to cover key points. The abstract must be a single paragraph, not separated into subheadings or bullet points.

While APA does not prescribe a strict outline, most abstracts follow a logical sequence that mirrors the main sections of the paper:

1. Background/Problem Statement: Briefly describe the research problem or question.
2. Purpose/Objective: State the study's main aim or hypothesis.
3. Method: Summarize the research design, sample, procedures, and measures.
4. Results: Highlight the most significant findings, including statistical values if appropriate.
5. Conclusion/Implications: Explain the significance of the results and potential future research directions.

Each element should be integrated smoothly, using transitions that maintain flow.

- Use active voice whenever possible.
- Avoid jargon that may confuse non specialist readers.
- Eliminate redundant phrases (e.g., "in order to" !' "to").
- Replace long words with shorter synonyms (e.g., "utilize" !' "use").
- Omit citations and references within the abstract; the abstract should stand alone.

4. Common Mistakes to Avoid

Even seasoned writers can slip into formatting or content errors. Here are frequent pitfalls and how to avoid them:

- Incorrect Page Header: Forgetting the running head or misplacing the page number.
- Wrong Font or Size: Using a non standard font or a size other than 12 point.
- Using italic or bold unnecessarily within the abstract.
- Inserting bullet points or numbered lists.
- Including citations or references.
- Exceeding the 250 word limit.
- Failing to center the title and author information.

5. Sample Abstracts in APA 6th Edition Format

Below are two example abstracts—one from a psychology study and another from a social sciences article—to illustrate how to structure content within the 150 250 word range.

Sleep deprivation has been linked to impaired cognitive function, yet the underlying neural mechanisms remain unclear. The present study examined how 24 hour wakefulness affects working memory performance in healthy adults. Thirty participants completed a dual task working memory test before and after a night of total sleep deprivation. Results indicated a significant decrease in accuracy (p

Digital communication has reshaped interpersonal relationships, but its impact on conflict resolution remains underexplored. This study surveyed 200 college students to assess how texting influences conflict strategies.

Participants reported increased use of avoidance tactics and decreased direct confrontation when communicating via text compared to face to face interactions. Logistic regression analysis revealed that higher text frequency predicted a 1.5 fold increase in avoidance behavior (OR = 1.5, 95% CI = 1.2–1.9). The findings highlight the need for educational programs that teach effective digital conflict resolution skills, potentially reducing interpersonal tension in online contexts.

6. Incorporating the Abstract into Your Manuscript

Once you have finalized the abstract, integrate it into the manuscript following these steps:

1. Insert a Blank Page: Place a new page after the title page if your manuscript includes one.
2. Add the Header: Include the running head and page number.
3. Center the Title and Author Information: As described earlier.
4. Write the Abstract: Paste the single paragraph abstract, ensuring double spacing and no indentation.
5. Double Check Word Count: Use a word processor's count feature to confirm you're within 150–250 words.
6. Proofread: Verify that formatting and content adhere to APA 6th edition guidelines.

7. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

While Times New Roman is the default, some journals accept Arial or Calibri. Always confirm with the journal's author guidelines before deviating.

APA 6th edition does not require a keyword list. Some journals add them, but it's best to follow the specific instructions of the target publication.

No. The abstract should be self contained. Any references to literature should be mentioned without in text citations.

While the recommended range is 150–250 words, some journals accept shorter abstracts. Check the journal's policy; if a minimum word count is specified, adjust accordingly.

Yes. The title should be bolded, centered, and in title case.

8. Tools and Resources for APA 6th Edition Formatting

Several software options can streamline the formatting process:

- Microsoft Word: Use the built in APA templates or create a custom style for the abstract.
- LaTeX: The apa6 document class automatically applies APA 6th edition formatting.
- Reference Managers: Zotero, EndNote, and Mendeley can export references in APA 6th edition style.
- Online Style Guides: The APA Publication Manual (6th edition) and Purdue OWL provide detailed instructions.

Conclusion

Crafting an abstract that meets APA 6th edition standards is a blend of precise formatting and concise content. By adhering to the guidelines—correct margins, font, spacing, and the structured sequence of background, purpose, method, results, and conclusion—you can produce an abstract that is not only compliant but also compelling to readers and reviewers. Remember, the abstract serves as the first impression of your research; a well crafted page can elevate the entire manuscript. Use this guide as a reference checklist, and you'll confidently navigate the APA 6th edition abstract page with clarity and professionalism.

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