

APA Style

BEFORE You Write Your Paper: Research & Credibility

The American Psychological Association (APA) refers to the style guidelines and expectations for how you write, organize, and research academic work, especially within the social sciences.

Ask your professors what aspects of APA they prioritize. Not all professors have the same requirements! Especially when you do research, make sure you understand what sources may or may not be appropriate for your specific assignment and what the expectations are for how you integrate and reflect on that research.

Try an 'Advanced Search' to make sure you can access full-text articles and/or to include more focused key terms.

: Who is the writer or writers? What do you know about them from the article? Is there an author's note?

: Scholarly books & articles are written by and for experts within a particular field and are rigorously peer reviewed. Publishing scholarship is how academics share research, engage in dialogue and criticism, and broaden shared knowledge.

Non-scholarly or popular sources, intended for a general audience, may or may not be appropriate for your research. Check with your professor. Know that there is a range of different kinds of publications, both highly credible and less so.

: Does your professor require that your sources be published within a specific time frame, such as within the last ten years? If you are using older research, you'll want to introduce and contextualize it as such.

: Published APA articles will include an abstract that will help you decide if this specific article is relevant to your own main idea or investigation?