Clear Title Conveying the Main Idea of the Essay

Your Name

Gaston College

Class 101

Ms. Instructor

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Abstract

An abstract is a summary of the key points of your research or essay. An abstract is one paragraph, double-spaced, and typically between 150 and 250 words. It is not indented. In a scientific paper, an abstract may include your research topic, research questions, participants, methods, results, data analysis, and conclusions. You may optionally list key words from your paper directly following the abstract by indenting a half inch and typing "Keywords:" (italicized), as shown below.

Keywords: format, documentation, college writing, running head, APA

Clear Title Conveying the Main Idea of the Essay

An introduction to your essay appears here after the essay's full title and before the body paragraphs. Formatting a document in American Psychological Association (APA) style is required in many college courses. Typically, courses in the social sciences require this particular style because of its emphasis on dates and current research. APA is the standard documentation style in the fields of psychology, human services, mathematics, sociology, education, and many other scholarly disciplines. For guidelines on APA documentation (in-text citations and references), please consult the APA section of your English handbook or visit the Gaston College Writing Center. While this handout does not cover documentation rules, it provides instructions for formatting a running head, cover page, abstract, body text, and reference page in APA using Microsoft Word.

Section Heading

The body of your essay begins after the introduction. Your body paragraphs are organized into sections with a bold, centered, and concise word or phrase for main section headings, as shown above. Each paragraph is indented a half inch using the Tab key, with the exception of the abstract, which is not indented, and the reference page, which has a hanging indent. The entire essay should be double-spaced, and the font should be Times New Roman, size 12. You may consider creating a template from the following step-by-step instructions for your future APA-style essays and research papers to save time and ensure accuracy. You may then simply open the template in the future, modify the content, and click "Save As" for each new paper you write.
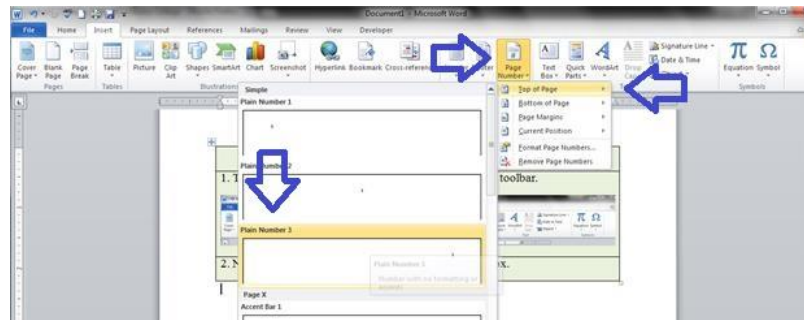
Formatting Instructions

The following pages contain step-by-step formatting instructions with pictures.
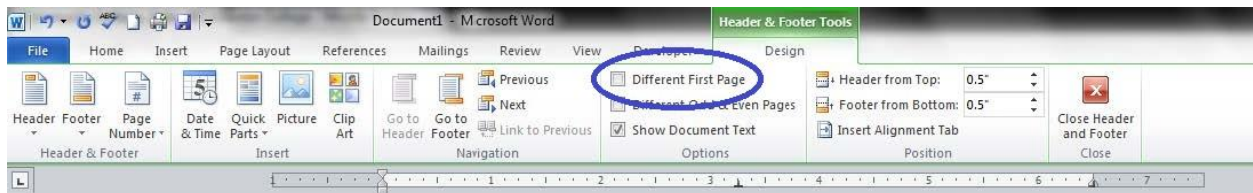
1. To create a running head, click on the **Insert** tab along the toolbar.

2. Next, click **Page Number** in the Header and Footer box. Choose **Top of Page** in the drop-

   down menu, and then select **Plain Number 3**.

3. Go to the box called Header and Footer Tools. In the Design box, check the box that says

   Different First Page.

4. Click inside the header and type the words "Running head" with a colon, followed by a

   shortened version of the essay's title in all capital letters, and then hit **Tab** twice to type the

   page number in the upper right corner. Type the number 1. Highlight all the text inside the

   header, and change the font to Times New Roman, size 12. Click **Close Header and Footer**.

Running head: SHORTENED TITLE   1

5. Move to the second page of the document. Click inside the header on the second page, and

    move the cursor to the left of the page number. Hit the space bar one time. Next, type only

    the shortened title of the paper in all capital letters that you listed as your running head. Hit

    the **Tab** key twice. Select the header text with your cursor, and change the font to Times

    New Roman, size 12, if your default is not set to this font and size.

SHORTENED TITLE   2

6. You may now double-click in the body of your document to close the header and begin

    typing the cover page, abstract, and body text. Make sure to set the font to Times New

    Romans, size 12, on the cover page. You have already set it for the header, but the program

    treats the body of the document separately and needs this setting to be applied a second time.

    Next, set the document's double spacing prior to typing the essay itself. Click the tiny arrow

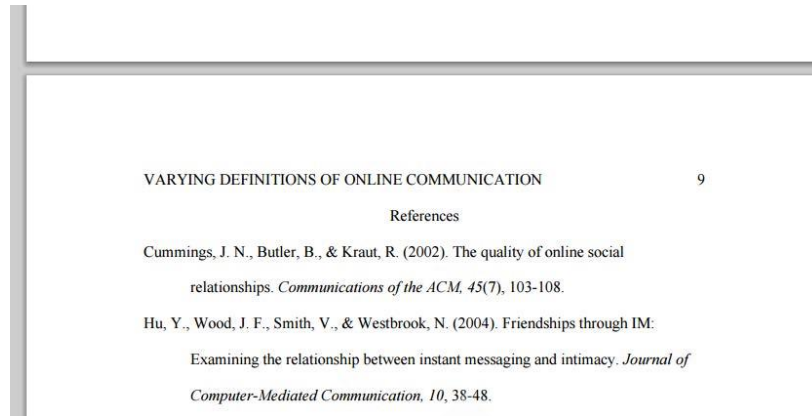   to the right of the word **Paragraph** under the **Home** tab on the toolbar.

7. The screen shown below will appear. Set the **Spacing** to **Double** using the drop-down menu. Make sure to check **Do not add space between paragraphs of the same style**, and set the **Spacing** to **0 pt** in the drop-down menu beside the words **Before** and **After**. Select **OK**.
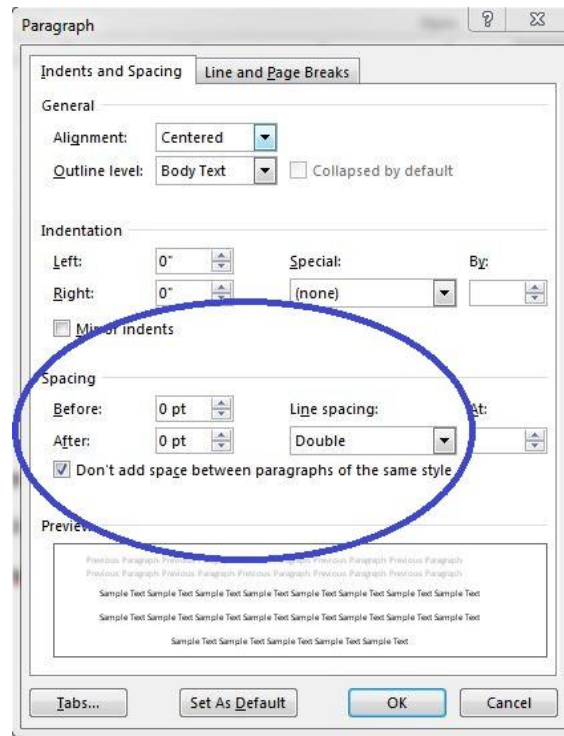
8. You may now type the information needed for your cover page following the example on the first page of this handout.

9. To create a References page, you may use the **Ctrl** + **Enter** shortcut to create a page break after the last page of the document following the essay's conclusion.

10. After typing the word "References" at the top of this final page, click on the tiny arrow to the right of the word **Paragraph** under the **Home** tab to set a hanging indent, which indents the second and subsequent lines of each reference entry. As shown below, under **Indentation**, select the dropdown box under **Special** and click **Hanging**. Click **OK**.