

ASA Paper Formatting Checklist

Basic Document Setup

Margins and Spacing

- ☐ 1-inch margins on all sides (top, bottom, left, right)
- ☐ Double-spacing throughout entire document (no exceptions)
- ☐ No extra spacing between paragraphs or sections
- ☐ Left-aligned text (not justified)

Font and Text

- ☐ 12-point Times New Roman font
- ☐ Black text throughout
- ☐ First line of each paragraph indented 0.5 inches
- ☐ No extra indentation for block quotes

Page Setup

- ☐ Page numbers in top right corner
 - ☐ Page numbers on every page (including title page)
 - ☐ Running head on every page in header
 - ☐ Pages in correct order: Title page → Abstract → Main text → References
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Title Page (Page 1)

- ☐ Running head in header (abbreviated title, 50 characters max, uppercase)
- ☐ Full title centered and bolded
- ☐ Your name below title
- ☐ Institution/university name
- ☐ Course name and number
- ☐ Instructor's name
- ☐ Date of submission
- ☐ Word count at bottom (if required)
- ☐ All elements centered on page

Example Layout:

Running Head: SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND EDUCATION

[Center and bold]

Social Inequality and Educational Outcomes in Urban Schools

Your Name

University Name

SOC 301: Introduction to Sociology

Professor Smith

November 27, 2025

Word Count: 3,250

Abstract Page (Page 2)

- ☐ Running head continues in header
 - ☐ “Abstract” centered and bold at top of page
 - ☐ Single paragraph, 150-200 words
 - ☐ No paragraph indentation for abstract
 - ☐ Keywords listed below abstract (3-5 keywords)
 - ☐ Format: “Keywords: keyword1, keyword2, keyword3”
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Main Text (Starts Page 3)

Title and Introduction

- ☐ Full title repeated at top (centered, bold)
- ☐ Introduction begins immediately after title
- ☐ First paragraph indented
- ☐ No “Introduction” heading needed

Headings

- ☐ First-level headings: CENTERED, BOLD, UPPERCASE
- ☐ Second-level headings: Centered, Bold, Title Case
- ☐ Third-level headings: Flush Left, Bold, Title Case
- ☐ Fourth-level headings: Indented, bold, sentence case.
- ☐ Fifth-level headings: *Indented, italic, sentence case.*
- ☐ Consistent heading levels throughout

Body Text

- ☐ All paragraphs indented except after headings
 - ☐ Consistent paragraph spacing
 - ☐ Past tense for completed research
 - ☐ Present tense for general statements
 - ☐ Active voice preferred over passive
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Citations

In-Text Citations

- ☐ Author-date format used: (Smith 2020)
- ☐ No comma between author and year
- ☐ “and” used between authors (not “&”)
- ☐ “et al.” for three or more authors
- ☐ Page numbers with colon: (Smith 2020:45)
- ☐ Multiple citations separated by semicolon: (Brown 2021; Smith 2020)

Citation Accuracy

- ☐ Every in-text citation has matching reference entry
 - ☐ Every reference entry is cited in text
 - ☐ Author names spelled correctly and consistently
 - ☐ Years match between in-text and reference list
 - ☐ No citations in abstract
-

Tables and Figures

Tables

- ☐ Numbered consecutively (Table 1, Table 2, etc.)
- ☐ Title above table (Table 1. Descriptive Title)
- ☐ Simple, clear formatting
- ☐ Notes below table if needed
- ☐ Referenced in text before they appear
- ☐ Double-spaced

Figures

- ☐ Numbered consecutively (Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.)
 - ☐ Title below figure (Figure 1. Descriptive Title)
 - ☐ Clear and readable
 - ☐ Referenced in text before they appear
 - ☐ High quality images/graphs
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References Page

Basic Setup

- ☐ Starts on new page after main text
- ☐ “REFERENCES” centered, bold, uppercase at top
- ☐ All entries alphabetized by author’s last name
- ☐ Hanging indent (0.5 inches) for all entries
- ☐ Double-spaced with no extra spacing between entries
- ☐ Continues running head in header

Entry Formatting

- ☐ Full author names (first and last)
- ☐ Year after author (no parentheses)
- ☐ Book titles italicized
- ☐ Journal names italicized
- ☐ Article titles in quotation marks
- ☐ Publisher location included for books
- ☐ Retrieval date for all websites
- ☐ DOI or URL for online sources
- ☐ Page numbers use “Pp.” or “P.”

Common Elements

- ☐ Format: Author Last, First. Year. *Title*. Location: Publisher.
 - ☐ Journal format: Author. Year. “Title.” *Journal* Volume(Issue):Pages.
 - ☐ Website format: Author. Year. “Title.” *Site*. Retrieved Date (URL).
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Numbers and Statistics

- ☐ Numbers one through nine spelled out
- ☐ Numbers 10 and above as numerals
- ☐ Exceptions: Always use numerals for ages, dates, percentages, statistics
- ☐ Percentages: use “percent” in text, “%” in tables

- ☐ Statistical symbols italicized (*p*, *n*, *M*, *SD*)
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Quotations

Short Quotes (fewer than 40 words)

- ☐ Integrated into text with quotation marks
- ☐ Citation includes page number: (Smith 2020:45)
- ☐ Punctuation after citation

Long Quotes (40+ words)

- ☐ Block format: new line, indented 0.5 inches
 - ☐ No quotation marks for block quotes
 - ☐ Double-spaced
 - ☐ Citation after final punctuation
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Common Errors to Check

Formatting Errors

- ☐ No single spacing anywhere
- ☐ No use of bold for emphasis in text
- ☐ No underlining (use italics instead)
- ☐ No extra spaces between sections
- ☐ Consistent font throughout

Citation Errors

- ☐ No missing in-text citations
- ☐ No missing reference entries
- ☐ No “&” between authors (use “and”)
- ☐ No commas in citations: (Smith 2020) not (Smith, 2020)
- ☐ No “p.” or “pp.” in citations (use colon): (Smith 2020:45)

Reference Errors

- ☐ No incomplete entries
 - ☐ No incorrect alphabetization
 - ☐ No missing publisher locations
 - ☐ No missing retrieval dates for websites
 - ☐ No URLs without dates
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Before Submission Checklist

Final Review

- ☐ Spell check completed
- ☐ Grammar check completed
- ☐ All names and dates verified
- ☐ All citations checked against sources
- ☐ Running head correct on all pages

- ☐ Page numbers on all pages
- ☐ File saved in correct format (.doc, .docx, or .pdf)
- ☐ File named correctly per assignment requirements

Content Review

- ☐ Thesis statement clear and present
- ☐ Arguments supported with evidence
- ☐ Transitions between paragraphs smooth
- ☐ Conclusion summarizes main points
- ☐ No plagiarism (all sources cited)
- ☐ Meets minimum/maximum word count

Assignment-Specific

- ☐ Follows specific professor requirements
- ☐ Addresses all parts of assignment prompt
- ☐ Includes required sections
- ☐ Submitted by deadline
- ☐ Submitted to correct platform

Quick ASA Format Summary

Basic Rules: - 1-inch margins, 12pt Times New Roman, double-spaced - Author-date citations: (Smith 2020) - No commas in citations, use “and” not “&” - Hanging indents in references - Full author names in references - Italicize book/journal titles - Quote article/chapter titles - Include publisher location - Retrieval dates for websites

Page Order: 1. Title page (with running head, title, author info) 2. Abstract (150-200 words + keywords) 3. Main text (title repeated, then introduction) 4. References (new page, alphabetized) 5. Tables/Figures (if separate from text)

Last Updated: November 2024

Print this checklist and check off items as you review your paper!