Step by Step Instructions for Formatting your APA Style Research Paper

1. Open a new Microsoft Word document
2. Click INSERT-HEADER-BLANK
3. Under DESIGN, place a checkmark in the box next to DIFFERENT FIRST PAGE
4. Click HOME and change your Font to TIMES NEW ROMAN and 12
5. Type the words, Running head: and then your title all in capital letters, see example below for proper capitalization. Your title in the header can be a shortened title, but the title needs to make sense to the reader. Do not just pick the first few words for your shortened title. A full title should be no more than 12 words.

Running head: YOUR TITLE

6. Press the Tab key to move to the right hand side of the header (usually twice will do it)
7. Click INSERT-PAGE NUMBER-CURRENT POSITION-BLANK NUMBER
8. Close the Header or double click on the blank page outside the header to close
9. Click HOME and change your Font to TIMES NEW ROMAN and 12
10. Click the little arrow next to Paragraph and select DOUBLE for LINE SPACING and set the Before and After to 0 pt

11. Select CENTER (CTRL+C) to center your cursor on the page and press ENTER 3–4 times to move to the middle of the page
12. Type the full title of your paper using proper title case format (i.e. capitalize all major words, the first word and the first word after a colon. Do not capitalize articles, conjunctions, or contractions unless it is the first word of the title or the first word after the colon).

The Title of your Paper is Concise: It should Describe the Contents
13. On the next line type your full name and the third line type the name of the school or institution to whom you are submitting your research, see below for an example.

The Title of your Paper is Concise: It should Describe the Contents

Alexis M. Carlson
Indian River State College

14. Click INSERT-PAGE BREAK

15. Click INSERT-HEADER-BLANK

16. Delete the text that says “Type text” then click HOME and set your Font in the header to TIMES NEW ROMAN and 12

17. Type your shortened title in all capital letters and leave out the words Running head:

18. Press the Tab key twice and click INSERT-PAGE NUMBER-CURRENT POSITION-PLAIN NUMBER

19. Close the header, you will not need to edit it again

20. Click on HOME and Center the cursor on the page, type the word Abstract. Press Enter and move your cursor back to left justify. Type the abstract in one paragraph; do not indent the first line. After the abstract, list a few keywords that describe the major themes or topics of your paper. Keywords is italicized and centered, see below for an example.
Abstract

An abstract provides the reader with a quick and concise overview of your paper. Write the abstract in a neutral tone, it is simply a summary of your paper and is not meant to sway the reader. Include a comprehensive overview to allow the reader to decide if the paper contains the information he or she seeks. An abstract for a college level course may or may not be required, check with your professor before including one.

Keywords: APA paper, research, how-to, librarians are awesome

21. Select INSERT-PAGE BREAK

22. Select CENTER to center the cursor and once again type your full title in proper title case format. Press the Enter key and Tab once to indent, START WRITING YOUR PAPER! See below for an example.

YOUR TITLE

The Title of your Paper is Concise: It should Describe the Contents

Introduce the problem in the first paragraph(s) of your paper (depending on the length). Keep your writing clear, consistent, concise, and formal. Do not use personal pronouns, such as me, my, I, etc. Remember to include in-text citations for any and all information you found elsewhere (Hood, 2010; Kendrick, 2005; Subol & Profeta, 2003).

Use the tab key to indent each new paragraph. Allow the words to run to the end of the page until they wrap onto the next line. In other words, only use the Enter or Return key when you start a new paragraph. The entire paper needs to be double spaced, including the references.

23. After the last word in your paper, select INSERT-PAGE BREAK to move to the next blank page. Place your cursor in the center and type the word References.
24. Type each of your full references, starting each one on a new line, do not indent. Place the references in alphabetical order by the first word in each full reference. When finished highlight all your references, but not the heading at the top. Then click the arrow next to paragraph and under INDENTATION-SPECIAL, select HANGING. This will place all your references into a hanging indent, see below for an example.

YOUR TITLE

References

