



## Using Headings in APA Style

APA style uses headings to help the reader easily understand the organization of your paper. These headings are arranged in a hierarchy, with the same heading levels applying to topics of equal importance. As with an outline, you should have more than one subsection heading within a section.

The way your headings look depends on how many levels of headings you have. To figure out how to format these different levels, first find the section of your paper that has the most levels. Most papers will only use two or three levels of headings. Four and five levels are typically used for papers describing multiple experiments. Then format the entire paper as indicated below.

### One level

Centered Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

### Two levels

Centered Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

*Flush Left, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading*

### Three levels

Centered Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

*Flush Left, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading*

*Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading, ending with a period, with following text starting on the same line.*

### Four levels

Centered Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

*Centered, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading*

*Flush Left, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading*

*Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading, ending with a period, with following text starting on the same line.*

### Five levels

CENTERED UPPERCASE HEADING

Centered Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

*Centered, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading*

*Flush Left, Italicized, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading*

*Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading, ending with a period, with following text starting on the same line.*

**Note:** Since the formatting of headings is determined by the section that uses the greatest number of headings, each section may not need to use all of the levels. Sections that have fewer levels should still start with the highest level of heading.

**Note:** One section that slightly differs from the above format is the "Introduction" section. Since this section is not labeled "Introduction" and therefore, does not start with a heading, the first heading used within that section is assigned the highest level of heading (usually the Centered Uppercase and Lowercase Heading).

Please look at the sample experimental report for an example of actual headings in a paper.

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