

Manuscript Preparation Guidelines

ACA believes it is essential to provide authors with clear guidelines that ensure consistency, accuracy, and adherence to APA standards. The manuscript preparation guidelines listed below are not intended to be comprehensive - if issues or situations arise in which it is unclear how to proceed, please contact the ACA Publications Staff for clarifications and support.

Style Guidelines

- All manuscripts submitted should use the style guidelines of the *American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual, 7th Edition*.
- All citation styles and references should strictly follow APA guidelines.
- If APA guidelines do not address a specific issue, please refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style, 18th Edition* for further guidance.
- Spelling should match the word's reference in the [Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition](#). Spelling of psychological terms should match the [APA Dictionary of Psychology](#). For proper hyphenation and capitalization, consult Merriam-Webster; for psychological terms, consult the APA Dictionary.
- See our [Visual Materials Guidelines](#) for accepted file formats and additional instructions.

Documents to Submit

- **Manuscript files** should be prepared and submitted as individually named files according to the instructions below.
- **All text, references, and image files** must be complete at time of submission.
- **Table of contents** listing content in the proposed order including parts (if applicable), chapter titles, and complete author names (if applicable).
- **Alternative text** for any images that are included. Please consult the [Alternative Text for Visual Materials Guide](#).

File Formats

- Manuscript files must be submitted as **Microsoft Word .docx** documents.
- Do not place images or other visual materials in the text file. See our [Visual Materials Guidelines](#) for accepted file formats and additional instructions.
- Submit front matter, chapters, and back matter as individual files.
- File names should follow this naming convention: Author_Lastname-ShortTitle
 - Smith-Introduction.docx
 - Smith-My_Chapter_Titledocx
 - Smith_image01.jpg

Document Formatting

- Pages should have 1-inch margins on all sides.
- The font should be Times New Roman, 12-point size.
- The same font should be used throughout the document except for additional language or character support as needed.

- Double-space the entire manuscript, including block quotes and references per APA style.
- Indent the first line of each paragraph by 0.5 inches using the paragraph indent feature in MS Word (not tabs or spaces).

Tip: In MS Word, you can turn on “Show/Hide Editing Marks” to check if the formatting is correct.

Titles & Headings

- Include a title at the start of all chapter text files.
- For chapters in edited volumes, include a byline after the title that includes the author(s)name(s) only. Do not include credentials or institutional affiliations.
- Titles and headings should be left-aligned and in title case.
- Headings throughout the manuscript should be formatted using Microsoft Word default heading styles for all heading levels, not the APA formatting. These styles are found in the “Styles” panel on the “Home” tab and will appear bluish teal and sized from large to smaller.

Text Boxes and Callouts

You can draw attention to information by using text boxes and callout within the manuscript. The content of these should be placed in a separate file from your manuscript. To indicate the ideal location of a text box or callout place a textual note indicating the number of box or callout and the filename like this [Callout 1 – filename].

Example usage:

- Case studies
- Definitions
- Learning highlights within a chapter like tips, reflection questions, activities, etc.
- Checklists
- Pull quotes
- Can also be at the end of a chapter as a summary, quiz or checklist, etc.

Visual Materials

Please consult the [Visual Materials Guidelines](#) for full details on acceptable file types, file naming, and formatting requirements for any photos, charts, tables, graphs, maps, and screenshots taken from websites or software applications that will be part of your manuscript.