How to Use APA-Style Headings

The following text contains examples of how to format the different levels of headings suggested in APA style. When using headings, always start with the top level and add sublevels as needed. Different sections of a paper may have different numbers of sublevels. For instance, one section may begin with a first-level heading and include two second-level headings. Another section may begin with a first-level heading and include three second-level headings, one of which includes two third-level headings.

**Level One Heading**

This heading’s text is bold and centered, and it uses title case: capitalizing the first and last words and all other words in between except for articles (a, an, and the), conjunctions (words like and and or), and short prepositions (like of and for).

**Level Two Heading**

This heading is a subsection of a level one heading. It is formatted the same except that it is left-aligned, not centered.

**Level three heading.** A subsection of a level two heading, this heading is actually part of the paragraph, so it is indented. It is bold, but it uses sentence case: capitalizing only the first word and any proper nouns (names of specific people, places, etc.). The heading ends with a period regardless of whether it is grammatically a complete sentence.

**Level four heading.** This level is a subsection of a level three heading. It is formatted the same except that it is italicized.

**Level five heading.** The final level, a subsection of a level four heading, is italicized but not bold.