Writing & Documenting in APA
A Concise Guide for GU Students

Part Four: Proofreading; APA & the Internet

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Proofreading for APA style

As we move into the final stage of this writing project, it might be a good idea to go back and review the entire APA guide to ensure that you have all of the pieces in place for this final step. Throughout this tutorial, we will discuss some of the key areas you need to look at when proofreading to make sure your paper meets APA standards.

Checking your Work

This checklist should be used to ensure that your papers and documents are in proper APA style.

Formatting:

- Font used is 12 pt Times New Roman.
- One inch margins on all sides.
- Running head is the title of your paper (up to 50 characters; no longer than five words).
- Running head (abbreviated title) is flush left and in ALL-CAPS.
- Page number is top, flush right, starting on the title page

In-text Citations:

- Do you provide appropriate in-text (i.e. parenthetical) citations for all uses of external source material?
- Do those in-text (i.e. parenthetical) citations include all of the necessary information (e.g. author name(s), dates)?
- Do those in-text (i.e. parenthetical) citations precede the final punctuation of the sentences in which they appear?

Reference Page:

- Is your References page separated from the last page of your paper with a page-break? It is important that your References page begin at the top of a new page immediately following the last page of the text of your essay, report, paper, etc. So, you need to insert a page-break (e.g. see the “insert” menu if using Microsoft Word) after the last line of the
text of your paper, rather than using the Return/Enter key, to ensure that your list of References begins at the top of the following page.

- Is your References page formatted according to the guidelines outlined above (e.g. is the title References centered)?

- Are lines following the first line in each entry, indented appropriately? Hint: the way to ensure proper indentation is by setting/changing the hanging indent within your document, rather than by using space or tab key.

Remember to Check Your Paper for Possible Plagiarism:

(Komm, 2012)
APA and the Internet

Terms to Know: If you are unfamiliar with these terms please review them in the Glossary.

database
online library
search engine
credible sources
paper mill
message boards

In many of your classes at Grantham, you will be expected to use the EBSCO library database for your research paper and any other formal papers. Many students will often say, “I prefer to use Google for my research.” While Google is a fantastic Internet search engine, it is not a library database. Google will lead you to everything that is out there on the web and while some of the search results are credible, many are not. Google Books and Google Scholar can be more useful to academic researchers, but they do not provide academic research with as many full-text resources as does the University’s official free library research database, EBSCO, which is a collection of scholarly journals, newspapers, and documents that a person might find in an on-ground university library.

With that being said, in discussions and in your journal, you might find that you want to use a source from the Internet. Perhaps you want to share an idea you found at a particular website or you want to talk about a YouTube Video. This chapter will help you decide which sources to use and which sources to avoid.

Characteristics of a Credible Website

- Identifiable: the site and its content can be positively attributed to a recognizable publication (e.g. scholarly journal, research database, major newspaper) or institution (e.g. local, county, state, or federal government agencies); can be attributed to an author or group of authors (preferable but not essential).

- Impartial: while complete impartiality is, perhaps, unattainable, it is important that those sites you reference in support of your arguments demonstrate as little bias as possible relative to the question(s) at issue you address in your argument(s).

- Substantiated: include primary source data and/or appropriately formatted citations of relevant primary source material verifiable citations
## Credible Sites

**Online Libraries:** EBSCO, Internet Public Library  
**.edu:** Grantham University, Purdue Owl, Harvard University, etc.  
**Newsources & Newspapers:** CNN, NPR, New York Times, Chicago Tribune, etc.  
**.gov:** Department of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; United States Department of Agriculture; Federal Student Aid Information Center, etc.  
**Online periodicals:** New Yorker, Time, U.S. News, etc.

## Use with Extreme Caution

**Professional blogs:** Even the most credible of these should never be used as a primary source. Even as a secondary source, it is important to vet the authors of such blogs for their credibility concerning the topic in question.  
**.orgs** - avoid political, controversial, or overtly biased organizations.  
**Wikipedia:** this very popular, collaborative, online encyclopedia is a great tool for acquainting oneself with a wide variety of topics, but, like other encyclopedias, (e.g. Encyclopedia Britannica) it is a reference work offering cursory information that is not peer-reviewed. Wikipedia cannot be considered a repository of scholarly work and should therefore never be used as a source in academic writing.  
**About.com:** similar to Wikipedia in that it is not vetted. Articles are written by paid contributors. Reliability is questionable.  
**YouTube:** as with Wikipedia, YouTube is not a vetted academic source of information. In a rare video or two, there may be scholars discussing scholarly things, but unless you vet the author and the venue, it’s best to avoid this as a source.

## Avoid

**Papermills:** consultation of such sites likely constitutes plagiarism.  
**Tutoring sites:** you run the risk of committing an act of academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism) by consulting such sites.  
**Personal blogs and websites:** bloggers and cyber-authors who lack certifiable credibility on specific topics lack the ability to substantiate your arguments and, thus, should be avoided.  
**Q&A sites (e.g. Ask.com, Yahoo Answers):** these are watered-down versions of About.com at best and should, thus, be avoided as they do your arguments no credit whatsoever.  
**Online Chatroom/Discussion Board messages:** chatrooms and discussion forums are useful ways to communicate with others interested/invested in particular topics (e.g. your classmates within the Cybercafe and the other course-based Discussion Forums). But, messages posted online are not sources of research on which you can rely in substantiating your arguments.  
**Freelance article sites (e.g. Helium, Associated Content):** these lack sufficient credibility to support your own arguments.
References


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