



APA Style Changes Coming



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When a potential author reviews the author guidelines for *ViewPoint*, they are instructed to follow the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), Sixth Edition*. This edition was published in 2009. This summer, the APA announced it would be publishing a seventh edition, available now for purchase and effective January 2020. What is the *Publication Manual of the APA* and what does this mean for authors submitting to *ViewPoint*?

The *Publication Manual*, first developed in 1929, provides guidance to writers mostly in the social and behavioral sciences. This manual provides publishing rules with the goal of clear communication. The manual was developed by a committee of social scientists who wished to establish standards of communication where none existed before (APA, 2019; Breitenbach, 2016). When following the *Publication Manual*, the writer is given standard rules to follow concerning punctuation, abbreviation, citation of references, and presentation of statistics, among others.

The seventh edition of the *Publication Manual (2020)* updated many items in its 12 chapters, but I will only highlight those items we want potential authors to particularly note:

- The singular “they” is now supported as a way to be more inclusive rather than the use of ‘he/she’ (Chapter 4).
- Only one space is now used after a period at the end of a sentence rather than the previous two spaces (Chapter 6).
- When adding tables or figures to a manuscript, an author should add these after the references and refer to them in the text rather than embed them within the text (Chapter 7). The tables/figures are considered artwork and are handled separately from the manuscript text. The seventh edition says there is flexibility, but in this case an author should follow the publisher’s guidelines.
- In Chapter 8, a big change to current practice is noted, “All in-text citations for works with three or more authors are shortened to the name of the first author plus “et al.” (p. 4). The exception would be where ambiguity occurs with fewer authors. Also in Chapter 8, there is guidance for authors regarding how to paraphrase to achieve clear attribution without overcitation. This is always an area in which authors struggle so reviewing this information and the examples that are given will be helpful (APA, 2020).

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The listing of references is another area in which authors should closely follow the rules set out in this edition; however, there is a new rule *ViewPoint* will not change. Up to 20 authors are now allowed to be included before names are eliminated with an ellipsis. *ViewPoint* will continue to use the old rule of using an ellipsis after six authors with the last author then listed after the ellipsis. We are continuing to use the total of seven author limit in order to manage publication space. Another reference rule change is the elimination of “Retrieved from” in front of a URL unless there is a needed date. Refer to that new rule in Chapter 9 for examples. Finally, in Chapter 10, there are some small rule changes to how a reference is listed. A publisher’s location is no longer required.

The new edition has been published and *ViewPoint* will begin using the rule changes beginning in January 2020. If you are in the process of writing a manuscript or column for *ViewPoint*, please update those items listed in this editorial. *ViewPoint*’s Managing Editor, Kaytlyn Mroz, will catch APA style changes that are missed. We will have updated Author Guidelines posted on the AAACN *ViewPoint* webpage before the New Year.

You can view the Author Guidelines at <https://www.aaacn.org/sites/default/files/documents/viewpoint-author-guidelines.pdf>

Kitty Miller Shulman, MSN, RN-BC, is the Editor of AAACN’s official publication, *ViewPoint*.

References

- American Psychological Association (APA). (2020). Introduction. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th Ed., pp. xvii-xxii)*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Breitenbach, A. (2016). *The origins of APA style*. Retrieved from <https://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2016/07/the-origins-of-apa-style.html>