

# Writing With Style

## APA Style Made Easy

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### Chapter 7

#### The Abstract

# Who reads it and why

- Someone who is about to read the whole article but wants the overview first
- Someone who is browsing the journal looking for an interesting read
- Someone who is searching abstracts looking for good sources for something

THEREFORE,

IT MUST BE ACCURATE AND SELF-CONTAINED

**LOCATION AND LENGTH**

- Right after the title page
- First line, centered, neither bold nor italic, should be

### Abstract

- A single paragraph — not indented
- About 150 to 250 words
  - The journal specifies the exact length

# CONTENTS

# Key facts from each section

- Global statement of purpose
- Participants: number, age, gender
- Method: primary IV and DV
- Results: major findings in words but include effect sizes, significance levels
- Discussion: the main contribution of the study

# Refer to others?

- Yes, if this is a replication or extension
- Yes, if abstract mentions a measure from someone else's research

**STYLE**



# Prefer

- Active rather than passive voice
- Verbs rather than nouns

# Abbreviations?

- No unusual ones
- Use common ones freely (e.g., ANOVA)
- No nicknames or abbreviations for treatment groups

# Other legal ways to shorten it

- Numerals instead of number words except to start a sentence
- Don't repeat information that is in the title
- Omit phrases that don't carry information (e.g., "The conclusions are that")
- Combine things
  - Undergraduates rated...
  - The hypothesis that \_\_\_\_\_ was supported in an experiment that \_\_\_\_\_

# Special words to include

1. Consider what search terms people might use in looking for an article like this.
2. Fit them into the abstract so that they will find you!