

## APA Style Guide Cheat Sheet

*What are the rules?!* At university, students are expected to write papers that are well researched and well written. Sometimes, the writing process can be difficult because students don't quite know which grammar rules to follow. The answer to this problem can be tricky: each professor and each university prefers different style guides.

VIU uses the APA style guide for style and grammar. Below are basic rules that will help guide you through the writing process. For more information, see the *APA's Publication Manual: 6<sup>th</sup> Edition* or schedule an appointment with the WRMC for a coaching session.

### Titles:

Type of Title	Rule	Example
Long works: academic journals, documentaries, books	Italicize full title and capitalize essential words	<i>Don Quixote</i> (novel)
Conferences/Events	Write in plain font and capitalize essential words	Syria's Humanitarian Crisis and the International Response
Short works, like episodes, short journals, television episodes	Quotation marks go around short works and capitalize essential words	"Global Insights"

### Period Usage:

Situation	Rule	Example
To end a complete sentence	Place a period at the end of an independent clause	The boy threw the ball at his sister.
To initial names	Place a period between and at the end of the letters of an abbreviated name	J.R. Smith
To abbreviate countries when they are used as <u>adjectives</u>	Place a period between and at the end of the letters of the abbreviated country's name	U.S. Navy
To abbreviate the word inch	Place a period at the end of the abbreviation, because it can be misread	<i>in.</i>
To abbreviate acronyms of other proper nouns	<i>Omit</i> the periods and capitalize the letters	NY, VA, OH

## Comma Usage:

Situation	Example
To list elements	the height, width, or depth
To set off non-essential and non-restrictive clauses	Switch A, <u>which was on the panel</u> , controlled the recording device.
To join two independent clauses with a conjunction	I loved the shoes I saw at the store, <u>but</u> they simply did not fit my feet!
Omit when using a restrictive clause, or, a clause that is necessary to explain the sentence	The switch that stops the recording device also controls the light.
Omit when you have two parts of a compound predicate	All subjects completed the first phase of the experiment and returned the following week for Phase 2.

## Semi-colon and Colon Usage

Sometimes, it is a good idea to diversify your writing. If you think you may have too many commas and conjunctions, or too many short, choppy sentences, consider a semi-colon or colon.

Punctuation Mark	Rule	Example
Semi- Colon	Join together two very closely related independent clauses that flow better without a conjunction	The participants in the first study were paid; those in the second were unpaid. <i>(Relationship: participants, study, and payment)</i>
Semi-Colon	Join together a list that is using commas for a separate reason	She lived in Lisbon, Portugal; Washington, D.C.; and Berlin, Germany
Colon	Join together two independent, explanatory statements by using a colon and a capital letter for the second statement	They have agreed on the outcome: Informed participants perform better than do uninformed participants.
Colon	Join together two dependent, explanatory statements by using a colon and a lowercase letter for the second statement	Freud (1930/1961) wrote of two urges: an urge toward union with others and an egotistic urge toward happiness.