

## Fonts

When writing a research paper, many students struggle to choose a font that is appropriate for academia. Many students become frustrated when they choose a font and their professors respond unkindly to that choice. APA has helped ease these confusions and frustrations by explaining why some fonts are appropriate to use in research papers and what fonts researchers should use.

The goal of APA style is to provide a standard writing and research guide, and font style is part of this standardization. Many professors, for example, place font rules in their assignment directions because they know that if the font is standardized, they know which students have fulfilled the page and content requirements: A five-page paper written in Trebuchet will produce larger lettering and less content than a five-page paper written in Times New Roman (TNR). Therefore, if a professor compares two papers-- one written in TNR and one written in another, larger font, he will quickly know who has provided more research.

Besides size, some fonts are very attractive but difficult to read, so APA recommends simpler fonts. Fonts that tend to mimic handwriting like French Script MS are in the attractive-but-difficult family: because they have so many curves and curls, they are cumbersome to read and to maintain a reader's attention within a manuscript. The APA Manual, 6th Edition (2010) recommends that when preparing a manuscript, writers should "use a simple typeface with enough space between letters to avoid crowding. (p. 161)" In fact, APA recommends that when writers have a choice, they should write in the serif typeface family for writing texts, lists, and references. The serif font group includes Times New Roman, Garamond, and MS Serif (Lee, 2013). For this reason, most professors choose to have students write their papers in Times New Roman, a rule that has sound APA support.