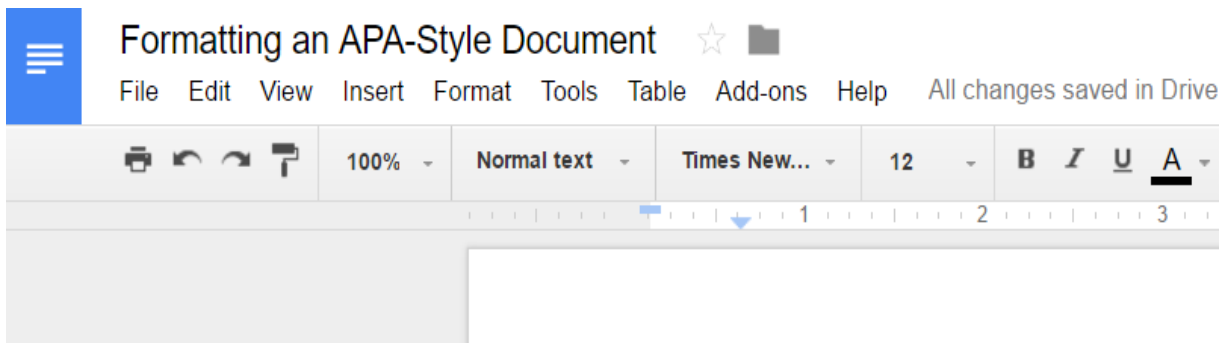# UNLV | WRITING CENTER

# APA FORMATTING FOR GOOGLE DOCS

By following these steps, you can set up a document according to the conventions of APA-style essays.

FORMAT YOUR ESSAY

1. **Set font and font size.** Open a blank document in Google Docs. Locate the font and size options on the editing bar. Set the font to Times New Roman and the size to 12.

2. **Change the line spacing to double and the paragraph spacing to zero.** Locate the paragraph spacing tool on the editing bar and select Double. Also be sure that the two options below read Add space before paragraph and Add space after paragraph, since this will ensure that you do not have any extra spaces between paragraphs. If either of these say Remove space before paragraph, be sure to select it to set it back to zero.
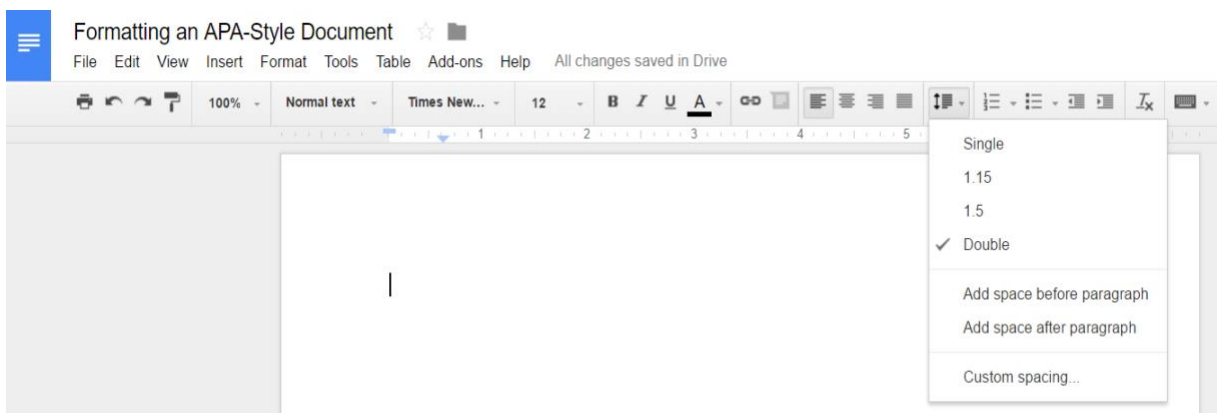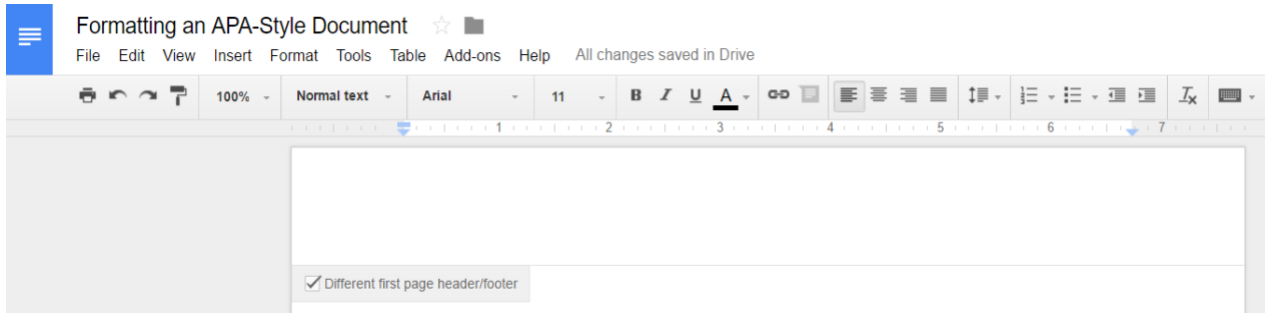
CREATE YOUR COVER PAGE

3. **Set up a running header.** Scroll back up to the top of the document, and double-click anywhere in the blank area at the top of the page. This will open the header. Immediately check the *Different First Page* box. **Check the box before you type anything at all in the header.**


4. **Type your first-page running header.** After checking the *Different First Page* box, hit enter in the empty space and type *Running head* (not italicized). Select the text and change the font to Times New Roman, 12 point. If you don't remember how to do this, see step 1. After *Running Head*, insert a colon and then type out the title of your essay in ALL CAPS. Do not use italics for any part of the running *head*. Do not capitalize head. See below for an example.
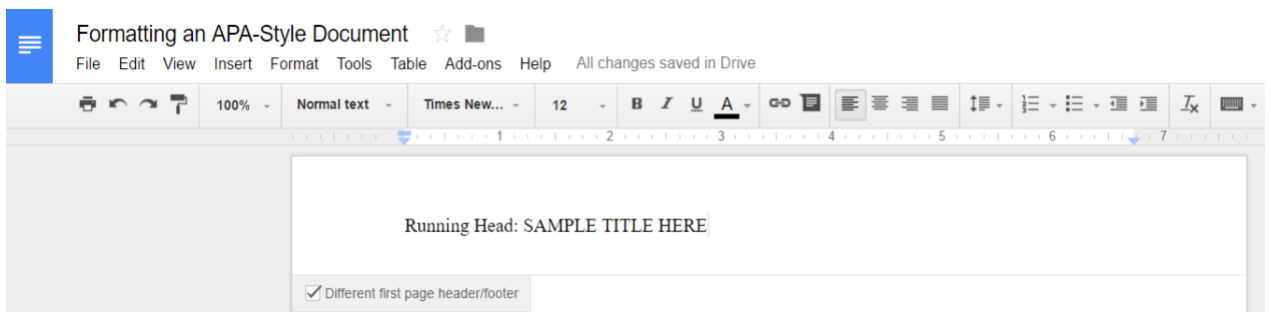
5. **Add a page number.** Click *Insert* and find *page number*. Hover over it and choose the first option.
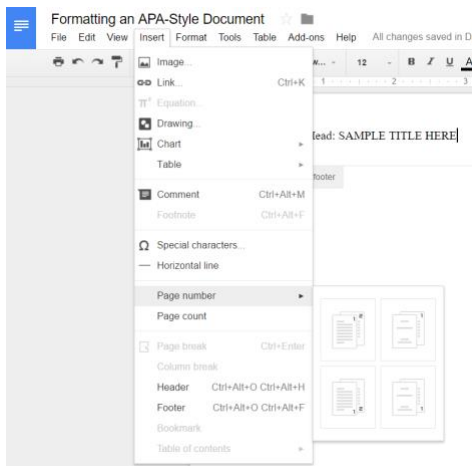
6. **Move your page number to the right.** When you first insert your page number, it will show up right next to your title. You will have to create a right tab-stop to move it all the way over to the right-hand corner. To do this, move your cursor directly before the number and then click anywhere along the ruler above the page. Click on "Add right tab-stop" and the drag your new tab all the way over to the right side, above the blue triangle that is already there.
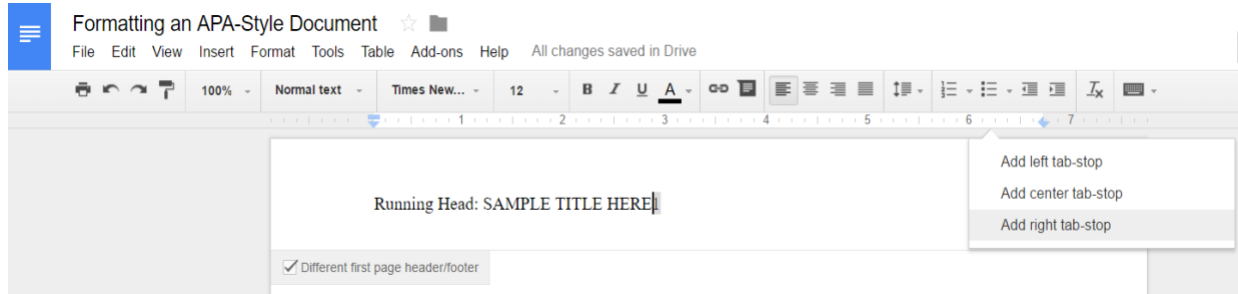

Once you create your tab-stop, all you need to do is hit *tab* on your keyboard one time and the page number will align with the right side of your page.

7. **Title, name, and course information.** Click anywhere on the page and center your text by clicking on the Center icon on the editing bar (or press Ctrl+Shift+E). Hit the *enter* key 6 times until your cursor is about halfway down the page. Type the title of your paper using standard title capitalization rules and hit *Enter*. Type your full name and hit *Enter*. Type the full name of your college or university. If your instructor has told you to include different information or to include this information in a different order, do what your instructor has told you when you are writing for that instructor.
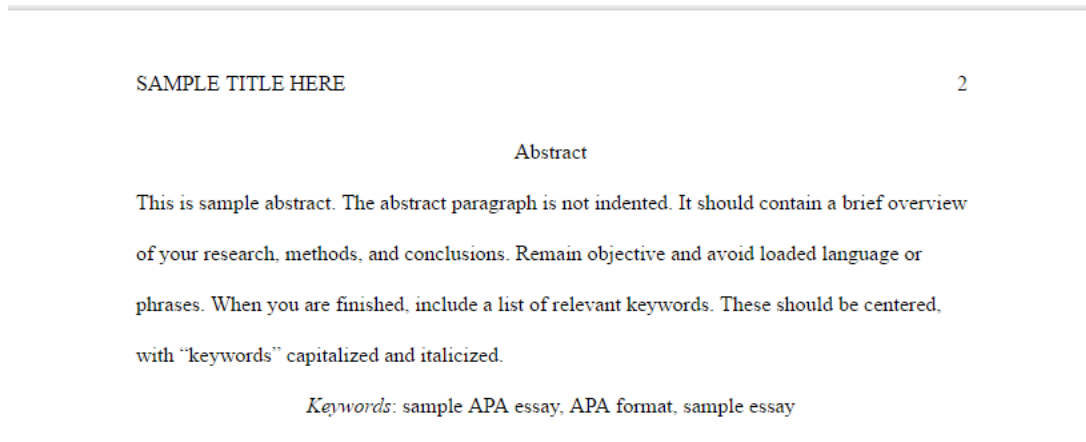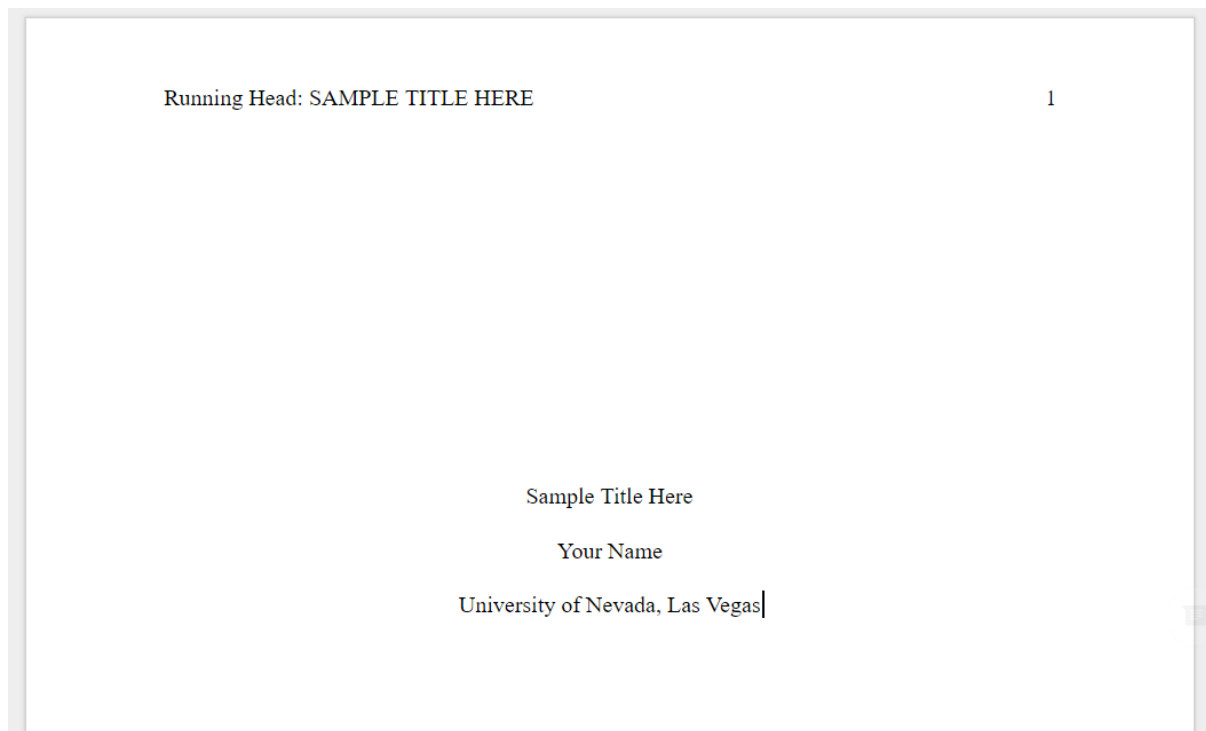
CREATE YOUR BODY PAGES

8. **Format body header and page numbers.** Move the cursor to the end of last word on your title page. Click on the *Insert* tab. Choose *Page Break*. The cursor will move to the next page. Once here, click anywhere at the top of the second page to format your body header.
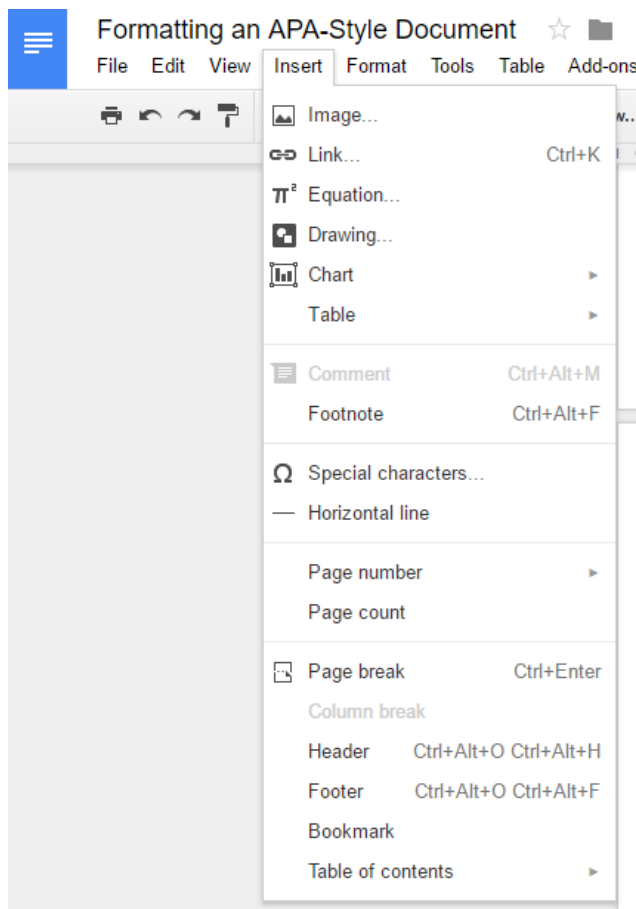
9. **Set your subsequent-pages header.** You should be on a new, blank page. Double click at the top of the page to open the header. Type the title of your paper in all caps. Do not include the words *Running head* on this page. Follow step 9 to add page numbers, and they'll automatically appear for you, too. To move the page number to the right side of the page, follow the steps from B4 (create a right tab-stop).
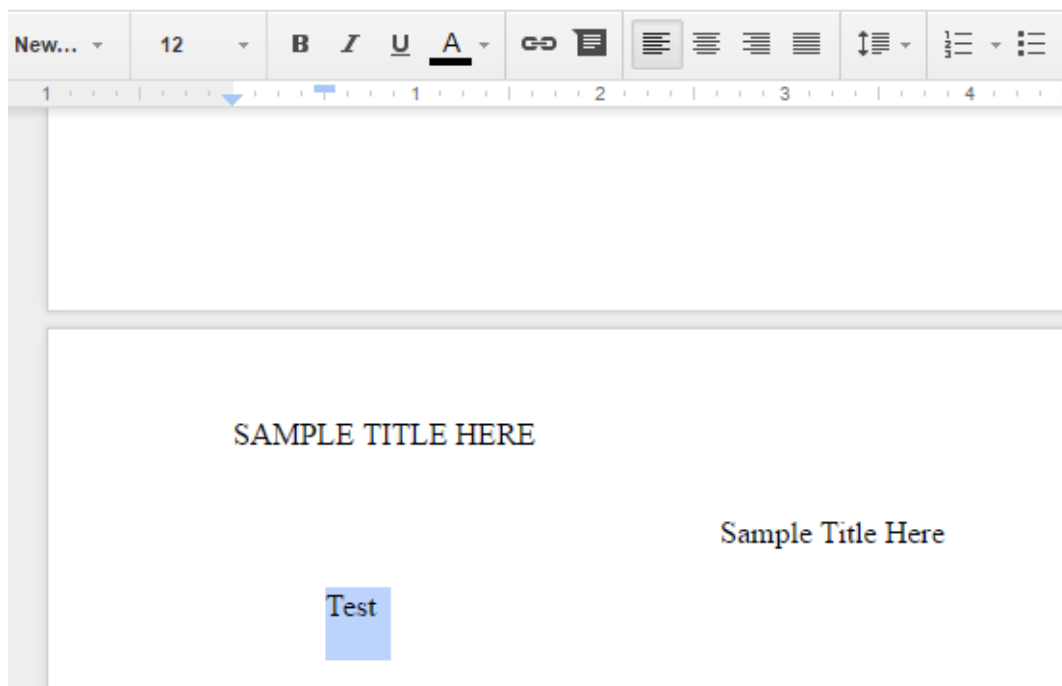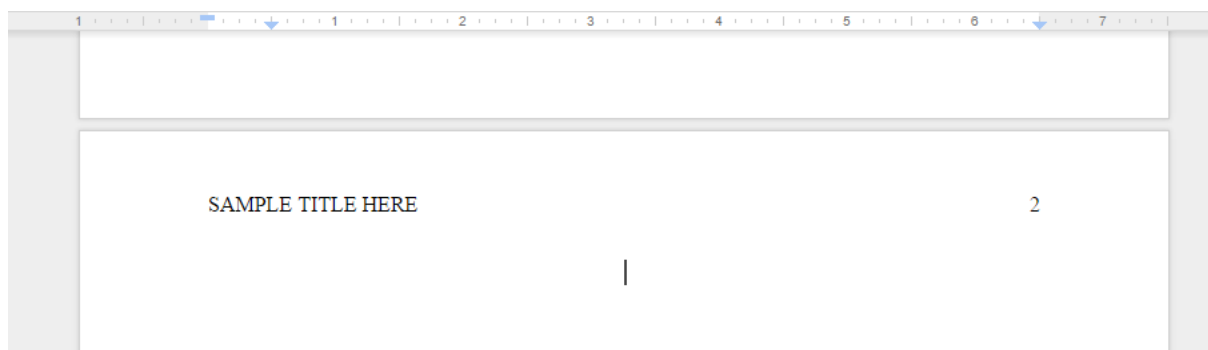
10. **Set up your abstract page and body pages.** Sometimes instructors do not require an abstract. If your instructor does want an abstract, type the word *Abstract*, capitalized but without italics, in the center of the page. Hit the *Enter* key and type your abstract. At the end of the abstract, include relevant keywords. When you are done, insert another page

SAMPLE TITLE HERE   2

Abstract

This is sample abstract. The abstract paragraph is not indented. It should contain a brief overview of your research, methods, and conclusions. Remain objective and avoid loaded language or phrases. When you are finished, include a list of relevant keywords. These should be centered, with "keywords" capitalized and italicized.

*Keywords*: sample APA essay, APA format, sample essay

11. **Set your paragraph indentations.** Center your title and then hit *Enter*. To indent the first line of each paragraph, either hit *Tab* each time you begin a new paragraph or set up automatic indentations. To set up auto indent, type something and select it. Then move the top portion of the blue box/triangle combo over one half inch. Move only the rectangular segment. This will result in an automatic indent each time you hit *Enter*.

SAMPLE TITLE HERE

Sample Title Here

Test

SET UP YOUR REFERENCES PAGE

12. **Format your reference page.** Insert another page break (step C1). Center the cursor. Type the word *References* without italics or any other special formatting. Hit *Enter*.

SAMPLE TITLE HERE   4

References
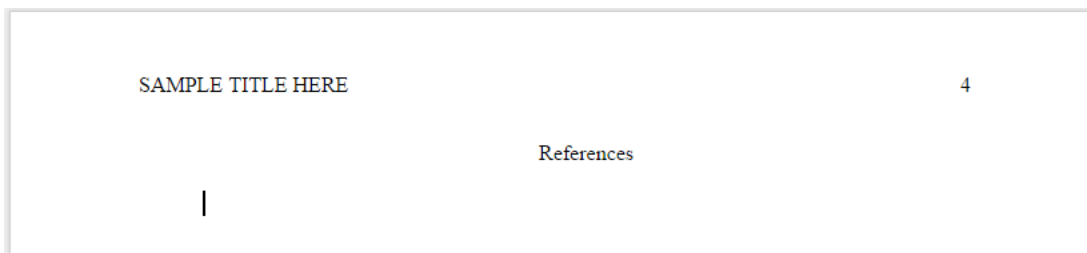
13. **Set your hanging indent.** To format your citations, you'll need to create a hanging indent for all subsequent lines after the first. If you decided to set up automatic paragraph indentations (step C4), you'll need to reverse this and set it up in the opposite way. Instead of moving the rectangular box over, you will drag it back over to the left and then move the bottom triangle over. You may need to drag both over and then move the rectangle back over independently.