

Formatting a Paper in Word

Accessing Word

In the Writing Lab, log on to a computer using your user name and password. If you do not have a user name or password, go to COE 158 or call 247-5755 to set up a student account. Once you are logged in, go to **start** and double-click on the Microsoft Word icon to start the program. The symbol looks like this:



Microsoft Word.Ink

Setting the Margins

In the Word program, go to **File** and then **Page Setup**. Both MLA and APA require 1-inch margins. Change the top, left, bottom and right margin measurements to 1 inch by clicking on the up or down arrows.

Setting the Font Size and Style

Before you start typing, go to **Format** and then **Font**. For the text font, select **Times New Roman** unless your instructor has a particular preference. For the font style, select **Regular**, and for the font size, select **12** unless your instructor has a particular preference.

Double Spacing

Before you start typing, go to **Format** and then **Paragraph**. Look for **Line spacing** and then click on the arrow to reveal the options. Click on **Double**. If you have already typed your paper, highlight the text that should be double-spaced by clicking and dragging the cursor over the text or by going to **Edit** and clicking on **Select All**. Then, follow these steps.

Inserting a Header

Both MLA and APA style require a page header. To insert a header using the Word program, go to **View** and then click on **Header and Footer**.

1. The box labeled **Header** will show what the header will say. To position the cursor to the far right inside the box, click on the right alignment tool in the toolbar at the top of the screen in the upper right.
2. Now that the cursor is placed at the far right, type the information needed for the header. For APA style, the header should list the abbreviated title of the paper. For MLA style, the header should state the last name of the student.
3. To add a page number, position the cursor where you would like the page number to appear in the header. In MLA style, there is one space between the last name and the page number. In APA style, there are five spaces before the page number. Click on the first page number symbol in the **Header and Footer** toolbar. It looks like a square with the upper left corner folded over and a # symbol inside.
4. Click **Close**. The computer will now place the header at the top of each of the pages in the paper with the appropriate page number.

Indenting Paragraphs

In both MLA and APA, the beginning of a new paragraph should be indented ½ an inch. Instead of using the space bar to guess approximately how far ½ an inch is, use the **Tab** button on the keyboard. It will automatically indent the beginning of the paragraph ½ an inch.

Starting Sections at the Top of the Page

If a certain section is to begin at the top of a new page, such as “Works Cited” or the first page after the title page in APA, insert a hard page break between the sections by going to **Insert** and clicking on **Break**. For example, after formatting the title page in APA style, go to **Insert** and click on **Break**. The cursor will automatically move to the top of the next page. Now, with the hard page break, any spacing changes on the title page will not shift any of the following text.

Saving

To save your paper on a floppy disk, insert your 3 ½” diskette into the A drive on the front of the computer. Wait until the green light on the drive turns off.

1. Go to **File** and then click on **Save as**. At the top of the screen, following the words **Save in:**, make sure it says **3 ½” Floppy (A:)**. If it does not say this, click on the arrow and then click on **3 ½” Floppy (A:)** so that it appears after **Save in:**.
2. Go down to the **File name:** box and type in the name that you would like to call the file. It is helpful to name the file using a class number, assignment number or key words that will enable you to know exactly which paper the file contains.
3. Next, select the type of file to be saved as shown in the **Save as type:** box. If you will only be using the Microsoft Word program, save the file as a **WordDocument**. If you will also be using another word processing program, such as Microsoft Works, WordPad or WordPerfect, or e-mailing the document, save the file as a **Rich Text Format**. Different word processing programs cannot read each other’s specific types of files. Rich Text Format is a generic file type; however, with Rich Text Format, some of the formatting may not transfer to another program, such as indents or line spacing.
4. After making sure the A drive is selected, naming the file and selecting the type of file to be saved, click on **Save**. The file has been saved when the green light on the front of the A drive turns off.

To save your paper to your Z drive, do the following:

1. Go to **File** and then click on **Save as**. At the top of the screen, following the words **Save in:**, make sure the location is followed by **(Z:)**. If it does not say this, click on the arrow and then click on the appropriate selection so that it appears after **Save in:**.
2. Follow steps 2–4 above. In step 4, make sure the Z drive is selected. The file has been saved when you are returned to your document in Microsoft Word.

For more information regarding formatting a paper in a specific style, please see the sample MLA or APA papers provided in the Writing Lab.