

7th Edition

Abstract and Keywords Guide

NOTE: Abstracts and keywords are not typically required for student papers. Students should consult their instructor or institution to determine whether to include an abstract and/or keywords.

ABSTRACT: The abstract needs to provide a brief but comprehensive summary of the contents of your paper. It provides an overview of the paper and helps readers decide whether to read the full text. **Limit your abstract to 250 words.**¹

Abstract Content

The abstract addresses the following (usually 1–2 sentences per topic):

- key aspects of the literature review
- problem under investigation or research question(s)
- clearly stated hypothesis or hypotheses
- methods used (including brief descriptions of the study design, sample, and sample size)
- study results
- implications (i.e., why this study is important, applications of the results or findings)

Abstract Format

- recommended fonts: 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode, 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or 10-point Computer Modern²
- 1-in. margins on all sides
- placement: second page of the paper
- section label: “**Abstract**”
 - centered and in **bold**
 - written on the first line of the page
- text:
 - one line below the section label
 - not indented and written as a single paragraph
 - double-spaced

¹Unless requested otherwise; consult your instructor for appropriate formatting guidelines. In academic journals, abstracts typically are limited to no more than 250 words. However, some instructors or journals have different abstract length and formatting requirements.

²Other fonts are also acceptable so long as they are legible and widely available.

KEY WORDS: Keywords need to be descriptive and capture the most important aspects of your paper. They are used for indexing in databases and as search terms for readers. **Include three to five words, phrases, or acronyms as keywords.**

Keywords Content

Keywords address essential paper elements, such as the following:

- research topic
- population
- method
- application of results or findings

Keywords Format

- recommended fonts: 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode, 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or 10-point Computer Modern (see Footnote 2)
- placement: second page of paper
- written one line below the abstract
- label: “*Keywords:*”
 - indented (like a regular paragraph)
 - *italic* (but not bold)
- text:
 - written on the same line as and one space after the label
 - lowercased (but capitalize proper nouns)
 - not italic or bold
 - each keyword separated by a comma and a space
 - no ending punctuation after the final keyword
 - listed in any order (not necessarily alphabetical)
 - if the keywords run onto a second line, double-space the two lines and do not indent the second line