

APSU Writing Center

GSA Style - Geological Society of America

Formatting

- **Margins:** 1-inch margins on all sides of the page.
- **Font:** Times New Roman, 12 pt.
- **Double-spaced:** for the content of the paper and the References List.
- **References:** each reference should have a hanging indent.

Title

- Include keywords in the title and geographical information.

Author List

- **Format:** first name (or initial), middle name (or initial if preferred), last name (surname/family name).
- **Affiliation:** institution (department and university or organization), city, state or province, postal code, country.

Abstract

- Write a concise abstract (250 words).
- Summarize your paper clearly and briefly, focusing on the most important points.
- Introduce the main topic in one sentence.
- Emphasize what's most significant or original in your research.

Body Text

- State your paper's main contribution with a thesis statement.
- Summarize the key results, clearly distinguishing between facts and interpretations.
- Describe how data was collected, citing standard techniques without extra detail.

Appendices

- An appendix should be a self-contained section that can stand alone, but it's smaller in scope than Supplemental Material. Any figures, tables, or equations in the appendix should have their own numbering, separate from the main paper (e.g., Fig. A1, Table A1, eq. (A1)).

References Cited

- In the References Cited section, list all sources mentioned in the text, figures, tables, captions, and appendices.
- References used only in the supplemental material should go there, not in the main list.
- For journals with more than 10 authors, use the first author's name followed by 'et al.'
- Always spell out journal titles and book publishers, and include DOIs when available.

APSU Writing Center

GSA Style - Geological Society of America

Figures and Tables

- Cite and number each figure and table in the order they first appear (Figure 1, Figure 2, Table 1, etc.), and make sure citations follow this numerical order.
- Figures and tables should provide extra information, not just repeat what's in the text.
- Each should be clear on its own, with all abbreviations or symbols explained in the caption or table notes.

Supplemental Material

- Authors can submit supplemental material to provide extra data or details that support, but are not required to understand, the main paper (e.g., species lists or geochemical data).
- The material should be central to the paper's conclusions, useful to other scientists, clearly described, and in an accepted digital format.
- Number figures, tables, and equations in supplemental files separately (Fig. S1, Table S1, Eq. S1) and cite them in the manuscript with a footnote.

Geosphere Multimedia Files

- Supplemental files must have an in-text citation, such as "Supplemental File S1," and the first citation should include a footnote to a caption for the supplemental file. The caption should include a brief description of the supplemental file and any software needed to view the file.

Heading Styles

- **Title of manuscript** [Capitalize only proper nouns, and do not use ALL CAPS]
- **FIRST LEVEL HEADING** [BOLD, ALL CAPS]
- **Second Level Heading** [Bold, Each Word Capitalized]
- *Third Level Heading* [Bold, Italic, Each Word Capitalized]
- *Fourth level heading.* [Bold, italic, sentence capitalization, indented (it runs into the paragraph)]
- *Fifth level heading.* [Italic, sentence capitalization, indented (it also runs into the paragraph)]

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GSA Style - References & Examples

References

- References should be in alphabetical order, and all should be cited in your manuscript.

Abstract Conference

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Abstract title: Conference location, Conference date(s), Conference host, Conference name and number, source type, abstract number [language notes (if applicable)], DOI [language notes (if applicable)].
 - **Example:** Fitzgerald, P.G., 1989, Uplift and formation of Transantarctic Mountains: Applications of apatite fission track analysis to tectonic problems: International Geological Congress, 28th, Washington, D.C., Abstracts, v. 1, p. 491.

Abstract Other Sources

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Abstract title: Publication name, v. #, (issue) no. #, p. #-# [language notes (if applicable)].
 - **Example:** Sears, J.W., 2012, Making Nuna and breaking Rodinia: Implications of Siberia-Laurentia connections for supercontinent cycles: Geological Society of America Abstracts with Programs, v. 44, no. 7, p. 378.

Book

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Book title: Publisher location, Publisher name and type of publication (if applicable) v# (if applicable), # p., DOI [language notes (if applicable)].
 - **Example:** Allmendinger, R.W., Cardozo, N., and Fisher, D., 2011, Structural Geology Algorithms: Vectors and Tensors in Structural Geology: New York, Cambridge University Press, 304 p.

Chapter in a Book/Paper in a Multiauthor Volume

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Chapter title, in Editor surname, Editor first name initial(s), ed(s)., Book Title: Publisher location, Publisher Name and series (if applicable) v# (if applicable), p. #-#, DOI [language notes (if applicable)].
 - **Example:** Taylor, J.C.M., 1990, Upper Permian—Zechstein, in Glennie, K.W., ed., Introduction to the Petroleum Geology of the North Sea (3rd edition): Oxford, UK, Blackwell, p. 153–190.

Comment, Discussion, or Reply

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Title of Comment/Discussion thread/Reply: Comment/Discussion/Thread: Publication name, v. #, p. #-#, DOI [language notes (if applicable)].
 - **Example:** Retallack, G.J., 2014, How well do fossil assemblages of the Ediacara Biota tell time?: Comment: Geology, v. 42, p. e332, <https://doi.org/10.1130/G34781C.1>. [Modern example with e page number.]

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Computer Program

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s) OR Authoring Organization, Year, Program title/name: Program creator(s), version, URL.
 - **Example:** Lahr, J.C., 1999, HYPOELLIPSE: A computer program for determining local earthquake hypocentral parameters, magnitude, and first-motion pattern: U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 99-23, version 1.1, <https://pubs.usgs.gov/of/1999/ofr-99-0023/>.

Database

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s) OR Authoring Organization, Year, Database title: Database host, URL (date last accessed).
 - **Example:** U.S. Geological Survey, 2006, Quaternary fault and fold database for the United States: <https://www.usgs.gov/natural-hazards/earthquake-hazards/faults> (accessed June 2012).

Guidebook

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Guidebook title: Publisher name Book type volume number, # p., DOI [language notes (if applicable)].
 - **Example:** Barton, C.C., and Hsieh, P.A., 1989, Physical and hydrologic-flow properties of fractures, in International Geological Congress, 28th, Field Trip Guidebook T385: Washington, D.C., American Geophysical Union, 36 p.

Journal Article

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Article title: Journal title, v. #, (issue) no. #, p. #-# (or article number), DOI [language notes (if applicable)].
 - **Example:** Balco, G., Stone, J.O., and Mason, J.A., 2005, Numerical ages for Plio-Pleistocene glacial sediment sequences by ²⁶Al/¹⁰Be dating of quartz in buried paleosols: Earth and Planetary Science Letters, v. 232, p. 179–191, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.epsl.2004.12.013>.

Map

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Map Title: Publisher name and map number (if applicable), scale 1:###, # sheet(s)/plate(s), # of text pages, DOI/URL.
 - **Example:** Ernst, W.G., 1993, Geology of the Pacheco Pass quadrangle, central California Coast Ranges: Geological Society of America Map and Chart Series MCH078, scale 1:24,000, 1 sheet, 12 p. text.

Online PDF

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s) OR Authoring Organization, Year, Document title: URL (date last accessed [Month Year]).
 - **Example:** Bureau of Land Management, 2010, Plan amendment/final EIS for the Genesis Solar Energy Project, Vol. 1: https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/nepapub/nepa_documents/Re-dDont/EIS-0455-FEIS-01-2010.pdf (accessed March 2014).

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Open-File Report

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Report title: Publisher name Report type report number, total pages, DOI.
 - **Example:** Wilson, A.B., 2001, Compilation of various geologic time scales:U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 01-0052, <https://doi.org/10.3133/ofr0152> (accessed May 2024).

Paper in a Government or University Serial Publication

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Paper title: Publisher name paper type (or series) publication number, p. #–#, URL.
 - **Example:** Hay, R.L., 1963, Stratigraphy and zeolitic diagenesis of the John Day Formation of Oregon: University of California Publications in Geological Sciences, v. 42, p. 199–262.

Proceedings from a Symposium or Conference

- Include year of conference if it differs from publication year.
- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Title, in Proceedings, Conference/Symposium title, Conference/Symposium number: Location, Date(s), Conference/Symposium host, v. #, (issue) no. #, p. #–#, DOI.
 - **Example:** Baar, C., 1972, Creep measured in deep potash mines vs. theoretical predictions, in Proceedings, Canadian Rock Mechanics Symposium, 7th, Edmonton: Ottawa, Canada Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, p. 23–77.

Thesis/Dissertation

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Thesis/Dissertation title [thesis type (e.g., Master's thesis, Ph.D. dissertation, etc.)]: City of university, University name, total pages [language notes (if applicable)]
 - **Example:** Wopat, M.A., 1990, Quaternary alkaline volcanism and tectonics in the Mexican Volcanic Belt near Tequila, Jalisco, southwestern Mexico [Ph.D. thesis]: Berkeley, University of California, 277 p.

Website

- **Format:** Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Website title: URL (date last accessed [Month Year]).
 - **Example:** Helmuth, L., 2009, The ten most spectacular geologic sites: Smithsonian Magazine: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/the-ten-most-spectacular-geologic-sites-38476122/> (May 2024).



APSU Writing Center

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Golden West College. (2025, August 13). *Citations: GSA Style Guide*.

<https://goldenwestcollege.libguides.com/gsa>

The Geological Society of America. (2024). *Reference Guidelines and Examples*.

https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/Publications/Info_Services/guidelines-and-policies/GSA/Pubs/ref-guide-examples.aspx?

University of South Carolina. (2025, August 5). *GSA Style*.

<https://guides.library.sc.edu/sciencecitationstyles/gsa>