

Abstracts vs. Introductions

APSU Writing Center Handout

Abstract: Provides a concise summary of the entire paper, including its main points and conclusions.

Introduction: Engages the reader by offering background information and setting up the paper's thesis and structure.

Abstract

- A summary (usually one paragraph, about 150–250 words in APA format).
- Help readers decide whether to read the full essay, similar to the back cover of a book.
- Includes the topic, purpose or thesis, main points, and conclusion.
- Double-spaced, with the word Abstract centered and bolded.
- Includes keywords at the end in a list.
- Consult your professor about their specific preferences and requirements.

Introduction

- The first section of an essay that leads the reader into the paper.
- Creates a roadmap that guides the reader through the essay.
- Provides background information and explains why the topic matters.
- Includes the thesis statement or main idea.
- Does not summarize results or conclusions.
- Usually longer than an abstract, depending on the essay's length.

References

Saybrook University. (2025). *Introduction vs. Abstract*.

<https://community.saybrook.edu/writingcenter/Pages/introduction-vs-abstract.aspx>

APSU Writing Center. (2024). *APA Style 7th Edition*.

<https://www.apsu.edu/writingcenter/writing-resources/APA-Style-7th-Packet-2024.pdf>