Headings and Subheadings

Headings and subheadings are words or short phrases throughout a paper that divide the text into multiple sections.

Headings and subheadings serve several purposes:

- They help your reader know what to expect in a specific section.
- They break up long texts to make them more readable.
- They help your reader locate the information they are most interested in.

Common Headings and Subheadings:

Headings and subheadings will vary depending on two primary factors:

- Documentation style (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.)
- Your professor’s instructions

Common headings and subheadings in scientific writing are as follows:

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Methods or Methodology (or a variation of the term)
- Procedure
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion

Common headings and subheadings in non-scientific writing are as follows:

- Introduction
- Background
- Headings for argumentative points
- Conclusion

If you do not have specific guidelines from your instructor and if it is appropriate to your paper’s topic, consider creating headings and subheadings that are helpful to your reader. Make sure the headings and subheadings match the overall tone and intent of your paper.
Headings and Subheadings

Capitalization
Most headings will use title case. All words will be capitalized except
- conjunctions (and, or, but, nor, yet, so, for)
- prepositions (in, to, of, at, by, up, for, off, on, etc)
- articles (a, an, the)

Parallelism
Consistent parallel headings style will help make your paper’s organization clear to your reader. Notice the consistency in capitalization of parallel headings:
- Executive Summary, Justification of Study, Background Information, Feasibility of Study
- What Is the Function of a Browser? How Do You Choose a Browser? How Do You Navigate a Browser?
- History of Cryptocurrencies, Use of Cryptocurrencies, Risks of Cryptocurrencies, Future of Cryptocurrencies

Here are some examples of headings that are NOT parallel:
- Executive Summary of My Report, Study’s Justification, Background, Why is this Feasible?
- What is the function of A Browser? Choosing A Browser, Navigation of a browser?

Remember if you don’t have specific guidelines from your instructor, think about how headings and subheadings could help your reader navigate your paper.