IMPORTANT: Google Docs has default settings you need to understand before starting to format a paper.

- Paragraphs can be further indented left only.
- “Normal text” governs the headers and footers as well as the body of the paper. Therefore, you will need to format each section as you go.
- Once you have set the format for paragraphs in a section, each subsequent paragraph will keep that formatting as long as you use the Enter key to move from the end of the first to the next paragraph.
- If you have already written several paragraphs in a section, you can bulk format them by selecting all of them at once.

It is easiest to write the body of the paper first, then format the references, the running head, title page, and abstract.

**General formatting**
Click the File tab to open the Page Setup menu. Set the margins to 1 inch; orientation to portrait.

Type the first paragraph; it can be a placeholder. In Google Docs, the default setting for normal text paragraphs is indented first line. (If it is not indented, tab in once for the first line of the first paragraph.) Leave the cursor in the paragraph. On the toolbar, click the line spacing button and select double.
Using the mouse, select the paragraph. On the toolbar, click the Font button, and select the font you want to use and the size (10-12).

Again, select the entire paragraph. On the toolbar, click the Normal text button, and select update ‘Normal text’ to match.

If you have already set up the running head, title page, or anything else, it will be changed too when you update Normal text. You can reset their formatting by selecting the text, clicking the Clear formatting button, and reapplying any elements needed.

You are now ready to type the body of your paper! The following pages show how to format headings, the references list, the running head, the title page, and the abstract.
Formatting an APA style Paper in Google Docs

Heading level 1
To center the first heading, type it & select it. On the toolbar click Clear Formatting then Align Center. Apply the proper font, size, double line spacing, and make the font bold. (Or under View menu turn on the ruler and use the tab marker: slide the bar to the pointer at the left margin.)

Heading level 2
To format a heading at level 2, type it first as a separate paragraph. Then follow the same steps for Heading 1, but align it left, set line spacing double, and reapply the font and size if needed. Heading levels 3-5 follow the body text paragraph formatting, and just need to be selected and changed to bold or italics. (Note: the tab bar will be to the right of the pointer.)

Formatting the References list
Step 1: Under the View menu, select Show ruler.
Step 2, to begin your list: Type your first reference. Using the mouse, put the cursor or select text anywhere inside the paragraph.
Step 2, to format an existing list of references: Using the mouse, select all the references.
Step 3: On the toolbar, click the Increase indent button. The whole paragraph or paragraphs will move to the right.

©2018 Ivy Tech Fort Wayne Library (Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License 3.0)
Step 4: Notice that the blue tab indicator on the ruler has two parts. With the mouse, select only the top bar of the tab indicator and drag it left to the margin; it will show the distance at 0.0 when you are there. The first line only of each paragraph will move out.
Step 5, if beginning: Position the cursor at the end of the first reference. Hit the Enter key, and your subsequent references will all be in this hanging paragraph format.

Formatting the Title page
To insert a title page, insert a page break: position the cursor in front of the first letter of the first paragraph (which should be a level 1 heading), and use the Insert button on the toolbar.

Then click near the top left of the new first page - not in the header - and type your title. It should appear on the new page. Avoid the page break, which is a hidden character on the page, near the center of the top, below where you are typing. Move the cursor to the left of your title and hit the Enter key several times to move your title down the page. Select your title. On the toolbar, select Clear formatting, then select align center. Re-apply the font, size, and line spacing as needed.

To add any other paragraphs of the title page with the same centered formatting, position the cursor at the end of the existing paragraph and use the Enter key.
**Formatting the Running Head**
Double click in the top margin of the first page to open the header. Select the different first page header box. Use the Insert button on the toolbar to add a page number, at the top right.

Position the cursor just to the left of the number, and type: Running head: SHORT TITLE, using your own title. Use the Tab key to move this text away to the left margin. You may need to add spaces to get the page number flush right. If the running head text will not move flush left, select it, click the Clear formatting button on the toolbar, then Tab to move it flush left. Then reapply the font and font size. You may also need to move the whole line down by positioning the cursor at the very left and using the Enter key. Go to the next page; it should have a number. Repeat these steps, omitting the words “Running head:”

**Formatting the Abstract**
Insert another page after the title page paragraphs and before the body text or first heading.

Type the abstract title and the abstract text. Use the clear formatting button, then the paragraph alignment button to align the abstract title center. Do the same to align the entire abstract text flush left. Indent the keywords line by pressing the Tab key once.