

Formatting Figures and Tables

Technical Report Writing Today (10th ed)

- “Make the visual aid an opportunity both to present your data and to engage your readers. Your overall goal is to help your readers as they research the information they need and help them to make sense of it once they find it (schriver). Consider your audience’s knowledge and what they will do with the information.”
- “Treat all items consistently. Reduce clutter as much as possible by eliminating unnecessary lines and words”
- “Carefully guide the reader’s attention to the aspect of the visual aid you want to discuss. . . . In addition, you must explain background, methodology, and significance. Background includes who ordered or conducted the study of the [data], their reasons for doing so, and the problem they wanted to investigate. Methodology is how the data were collected. Significance is the impact of the data for some other concern”
- “Refer to the visual aid by number. If it is several pages away, include the page number in your reference. You can make the references textual or parenthetical.”
 - Textual examples
 - . . . as seen in Table 1 (p. 10)
 - If you look at Figure 4, . . .
 - The data in Table 1 show . . .
 - Parenthetical examples
 - The profits for second quarter (see Figure 1) are . . .
 - The cost analysis (see
 - Insert the disk into slot A (Fig 1). Or Set the CPM readout (Fig 2) before you go to the next step.
- (Figure and Fig. are both used, but Figure is preferred. Do not capitalize see unless the parenthetical reference stands alone as a separate sentence).
- All examples of Figures and Tables in this book show the visual aid with Figure # and then a brief title describing the figure under it.



➔ **Figure 1.2** Writing Occurs Within a Community

Riordan, Daniel. (2014). *Technical Report Writing Today* (10th ed.). United States of America: Wadsworth
Cengage Learning.

APA (6th ed.)

In the APA example paper section of the manual pages 127 and 128 discuss adding figures and tables in an APA paper.

Formatting and Color

- Make sure the format of the table or figure is appropriate (jpg. Or clear resolution image)
- Include color only when “the color representation adds significantly to the understanding of the material. If color representation is not crucial for immediate understanding you may consider placing it online as supplemental material” or changing it to have little or no color to save cost on printing.

Numbers

- “Number all tables and figures with Arabic numerals in order in which they are first mentioned in the text, regardless of whether a more detailed discussion of the table or figure occurs later in the paper. Do not use suffix letters to number tables and figures, that is, label them as Table, 5 . . . or Figure 5 . . . instead of 5, or 5a and 5b. If the manuscript indicates an appendix with tables or figures identify those elements of the appendix with capital letters in Arabic numerals (e.g., Table A1 is the first table of Appendix A)”

Permission

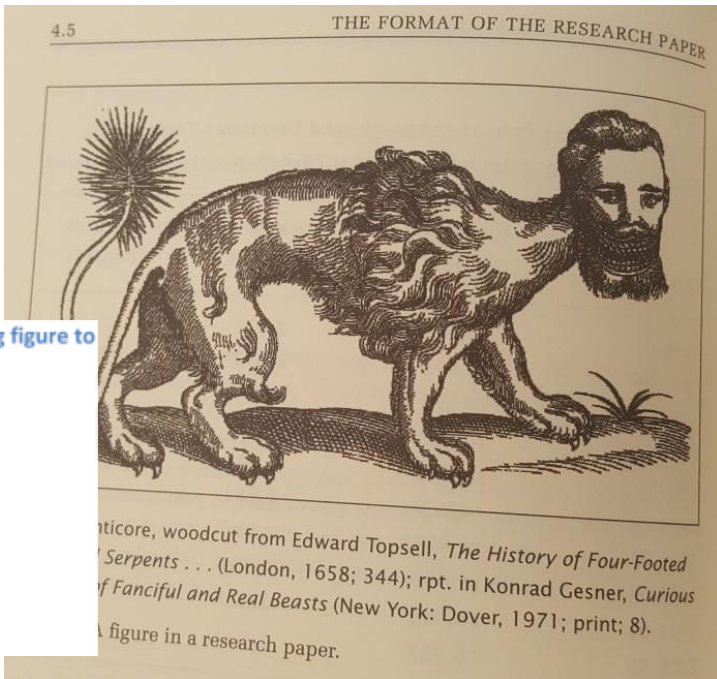
- “If you reproduced or adapted a table, figure, questionnaire, or test item from a copy-righted source, you must obtain written permission for print and electronic reuse from the copyright holder and give credit in the table or figure caption to the original author and copyright holder.”

American Psychological Association, (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

MLA Figures (7th and 8th eds.)

Pages 118-121 of the MLA 7th edition discusses Tables and illustrations.

- MLA explains, along with Technical Writing guides, expresses the importance of placing “tables and illustrations as close as possible to the parts of the text to which they relate.”
- A table is usually labeled *Table*, given an Arabic numeral, and titled. Give the source of the table and any notes immediately below the table in a caption.”



- MLA continues to explain that “any other type of illustrative visual material—for example a photograph, map, line drawing, graph, or chart—should be labeled *Figure* (usually abbreviated *Fig.*), assigned an Arabic numeral, and given a caption. . . A label and caption ordinarily appear directly below the illustration and have the same one-inch margins as the text of the paper.” (See Figure 1).

- If the illustration or table is cited entirely in the caption, then the source does not need an entry in the works-cited list.

- MLA 8th Edition uses 7th Edition Table and Figure Formatting.

The Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook For Writers*. 7th ed. New York: The Modern Language Association, 2009. Print.