APA STYLE CHECKLIST FOR A RESEARCH (EMPIRICAL) STUDY

General Items:
- The entire document is double spaced, from title page through references with no exceptions.
- Margins are 1” on all sides and a standard 12 pt font is recommended.
- There are no oversized, or decorative fonts used in the document.
- There are no “widows” nor “orphans.”

Title Page
- Running head: upper left at margin; actual running head is caps and limited to 50 characters (including spaces).
- Title: centered, positioned in upper half of the page; summarizes the topic and main variables of the study; No more than 12 words.
- Your name and institution are below the title and centered.
- Author note includes name, department, thesis course, and supervisor.

Abstract
- It is page 2 of the document and it is on a page by itself.
- The page is titled “Abstract”, in upper- and lower-case letters, not bold.

Introduction
- It is page 3 of the document and starts a new page.
- The title appears at the beginning of the Introduction.

Method
- New section, with bold, centered heading.
- Subsections are left-justified in bold text.

Results & Discussion
- New sections, with headings, centered and bold, but not a new page.
- State the results and give the supporting statistical information, \( F \), \( t \), \( p \), and means.
- Report exact \( p \) values to the second or third decimal place. Values less than .001 are reported as \( p < .001 \).
- Statistical symbols (\( F \), \( t \), \( p \), \( z \), etc.) are italicized.

References
- Start a new page.
- Heading is centered, not bold.
- Double-spaced; bring each new reference to the margin and indent the remainder of the reference (hanging indent).
- Only use last names and first (and middle) initials, not first names.
- Reference formatting is appropriate. (The general formatting for references from journals appears below, but format changes for books and internet resources, so beware!)

**Periodical Reference Format:**

doi:xx.xxxxxxxxxxx
Examples borrowed from Hacker & Sommers (2016) *Pocket Style Manual*

**Reaction Times in Two Visual Search Tasks**

Search experiments. The purpose of a visual search experiment is for the participant to identify the target as fast as possible. In my visual search experiment, the task was a green circle. The hypothesis of the experiment was that the green circle would be easier to detect in a feature search than in a conjunctive search because, according to Treisman’s theory, attention is needed for the latter task.

**Method**

**Participants**

Fourteen Carthage College undergraduates participated. Four were male; all were 20 to 21 years old.

**Materials**

The experiment was conducted in an environment of each participant’s choice, typically in a classroom or library, using the ZAPS online psychology laboratory (2004).

**Procedure**

In the feature search, orange squares were the distractors, and a green circle was the target. The conjunctive search contained distractors of orange circles, green squares, and orange squares, with the green circle as the target. For every trial under both searches, either four, 16, or 64 stimuli were present on the screen. If the green circle was present, the participant pressed the M key, and if it was not present the C key. There were 24 trials for each search, and feedback was given by the online program after each.

**Variables**

The three independent variables were number of distractors, present, type of search, and presence or absence of the target. The dependent variable was the reaction time.

**Results**

The reaction times in the feature search were constant regardless of the presence of the target and the number of distractors. The reaction times varied in the conjunctive search depending on the presence of the target and the number of distractors. Reaction times increased as the number of distractors increased, and reaction times were longer when the target was not present. Figure 1 shows the reaction times based on the three independent variables.

**Discussion**

The way the three variables interacted greatly affected the times needed by participants to find the target. The data in Figure 1 show similar reaction times for the feature search and varying reaction times for the conjunctive search. In the feature search, the reaction times, regardless of the two variables, were constant. In the conjunctive search, the reaction times were higher when there were more distractors and even higher when the target was not present. Without the target, participants scanned most of the screen to try to detect the green circle.

**References**


