Check Tools – Check Headings Order

This handout explains how to ensure your headings are formatted in the correct order.

In APA Style®, headings follow a top-down progression. In a paper with three heading levels, use Levels 1, 2, and 3, in that order. For detailed information about Levels of Heading in APA Style, refer to Sections 2.26 and 2.27 of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.).

Academic Writer has Check tools to help you check your work. The Check Headings Order tool will help ensure headings are in the correct, consecutive order.

To use this tool, go to the Main Menu on the left side in the Writing Center. Select the drop-down arrow next to Check to reveal the different Check tools. From this list, select Check Headings Order.

Next you will see a message prompting you to run the check tool. Choose Run Now to search your paper for any errors in the headings order (then allow you to make corrections).
If the Check tool finds one or more heading order errors in your paper, you will see the following message indicating heading order errors will be flagged:

To fix errors, select Go to Paper. The heading order errors will be marked in the Body section outline of the Main Menu. If a heading level has been identified as out of order, it will be marked with a red flag.

Use the Headings drop-down menu to make the heading levels consecutive. You also have the option to add a new heading level or remove a heading to correct the order.
After you fix headings errors, you can run the Check Headings Order tool again to be sure your changes are correct. If the check tool doesn't find any new errors, you will see the following confirmation message:

![Check Headings Order](image)

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