Expressing Numbers in APA Style

In general, use words to express numbers from zero to nine, and use numerals to express numbers 10 and above. This applies to ordinal numbers as well.

i.e. There were 20 students in the class.   
 I surveyed 45 teachers for the study.   
 Research was conducted at five lakes.

Third grade, sixth grade, 12th grade.

For lists, or numbers is a series, please follow these guidelines, using the same rules as above.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number after a noun | Number before a noun |
| Step 1 | The first step |
| Level 3 | The third level |
| Items 4 and 7 | the fourth and seventh items |
| Question 2 and 15 | The second question, the 25th question |
| Table 6, Figure 11 | The sixth table, the 11th figure |
| Chapter 1, Chapter 10 | The first chapter, the 10th chapter |

These are the general rules, but there are exceptions.

You will always use numerals when referring to:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Ages | 8 years old, 2-year-olds |
| Dates | March 3, 1993; June 10, 2002\* |
| Fractions or decimals | 3.5, 39.6 |
| Money | $6.00, $23.00 |
| Measurement | 3 inches, 10 mg |
| Percentages | 50% |
| Percentiles | The 90th percentile |
| Ratios | 2:1 |
| Scores and scales | Scored 7 on a 10-point scale |
| Statistics/Math functions | Divide by 5 |
| Times, periods of time | 5 minutes, 3 hours, 4:30 p.m., 4 decades |

\*Note: dates do **not** use Ordinal numbers   
(Incorrect: March 3rd, 2013, June 10th, 2002; Correct: March 3, 2013, June 10, 2002)

*Always use words* when a number or date is required to start a sentence and when using common fractions (Thirteen respondents…; Sixty-three percent…; one third of the class; four fifths of the group)

Only use a hyphen when modifying a noun: third-grade students. Not students in third-grade.