

A CONCISE GUIDE TO APA STYLE

A. Citing Your Sources

A research paper includes ideas and facts gathered from other sources. As you write your paper, you will summarize, paraphrase, or quote directly from these sources. To let your reader know that you have taken information from someplace else, you must give credit to your sources through proper documentation, i.e. you must cite your sources. What must be cited?

CITE

Any information that was not originally created by you:

- Quotations and opinions, whether directly quoted or paraphrased
- Key terms or phrases
- Ideas
- Case studies
- Another author's direct experimental methods or results
- Another author's specialized research procedures or findings
- Facts and statistics not broadly known
- Images and Sounds

Any material from another source regardless of where you found it:

- Printed sources
- Electronic sources
- Conversation or email
- Recorded sources
- Images

DON'T CITE

- Your own thoughts and ideas
- Your own research or experiment
- Common Knowledge

B. Documentation style

When citing your sources, you must follow a prescribed format known as a documentation style (sometimes called a citation style). The two most common documentation styles are:

- MLA style (Modern Language Association)
- APA style (American Psychological Association)

MLA style is commonly used for research papers in English and humanities courses, while APA style is often used in psychology and the social sciences.

The precise format (i.e. punctuation rules) for citing sources (along with other information about the mechanics of writing and presenting your research paper) is described in books called **style manuals**. A style manual will tell you how to cite a source within the body of your paper (either through a parenthetical reference or a footnote), and how to cite them in a **bibliography** at the end of your paper. (A bibliography is an alphabetical list of all of the sources cited in your paper.) Style manuals are available as separately published books, and summaries of documentation styles are available on the Internet.

C. How to cite a work within the text of your paper: APA style for in-text citations

To give credit to authors whose words or ideas you are using in your paper, you must provide brief author-date citations within the text of your paper. These “in-text citations” help your reader know who said the words you quoted or paraphrased and locate the full information about that source on your alphabetical **reference list** page in case the reader wishes to consult the sources you’ve used. In other words, in-text citations and the reference list work together. In-text citations provide at least the author’s last name and the date of publication.

EXAMPLES:

1. IN-TEXT CITATION FOR A DIRECT QUOTE OF FEWER THAN 40 WORDS

Ordinarily, introduce the quotation with a **signal phrase*** that includes the author’s last name followed by the year of publication in parentheses. Put the page number (preceded by “p.”) in parentheses after the quotation.

Critser (2003) noted that despite growing numbers of overweight Americans, many health care providers still “remain either in ignorance or outright denial about the health danger to the poor and the young” (p. 5).

* A signal phrase alerts your reader that you are integrating someone else’s ideas or words into your writing. This is usually done with a phrase that includes the author’s name and a verb, e.g. argued, claimed, speculated, suggested, described. In the example above, the signal phrase is “Critser (2003) noted....”

If the author is not named in the signal phrase, place the author’s name, the year, and the page number in parentheses after the quotation:

Confusing this issue is the overlapping nature of roles in palliative care, whereby “medical needs are met by those in the medical disciplines; nonmedical needs may be addressed by anyone on the team” (Critser, 2003, p. 7).

NOTE: APA style requires the year of publication in an in-text citation. Do not include a month, even if the source is listed by month and year.

2. IN-TEXT CITATION FOR A SUMMARY OR PARAPHRASE

Include the author’s last name and the year either in a signal phrase introducing the material or in parentheses following it.

PARAPHRASING AN IDEA OR OPINION FROM A JOURNAL ARTICLE:

The sibutramine study by Berkowitz et al. (2003) noted elevated blood pressure as a side effect (p. 1809).

OR

Elevated blood pressure is a side effect of taking sibutramine (Berkowitz et al., 2003, p. 1809).

PARAPHRASING AN IDEA OR OPINION FROM A WEB PAGE:

<http://www.hhs.gov/asl/testify/t040302.html>

According to Carmona (2004), the cost of treating obesity is exceeded only by the cost of treating illnesses from tobacco use (para. 9).

OR

The cost of treating obesity is exceeded only by the cost of treating illnesses from tobacco use (Carmona, 2004, para. 9).

D. THE REFERENCE LIST

- Each reference cited in your text must appear in the reference list.
- The reference list is on a separate page.
- The word "References" should appear in upper and lowercase letters, centered, bolded.
- Double-space all entries.
- The first line of each entry is set flush left, and subsequent lines are indented.
- Arrange in alphabetical order by the last name of the author.
- In general, each entry contains:

*** author's name**

--last name, comma, initials:

Anderson, A. K.

*** date of publication**

-- after the author(s), give the year the work was published, in parentheses

Anderson, A. K. (2005).

--- for magazines, newspapers and newsletters, include the year, and exact date of publication (month or month and day):

Carlson, S. (2015, August 7). Shooting tests ties between a university and its city. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 61(42), A4.

*** title of the work (article, chapter or book)**

-- for articles or chapter titles, capitalize only the first word of the title and subtitle, if any, and any proper nouns:

Anderson, A. K. (2005). Affective influences on the attentional dynamics supporting awareness.

-- for books, capitalize only the first word of the title and subtitle, if any, and any proper nouns; and italicize the title:

Anderson, A. K. (1987). *And with the gift came laughter.*

* publication information

-- for magazine or journal articles, give the magazine or journal title and volume number in italics; include the issue number in parentheses after the volume number, but don't italicize it; give page numbers:

Anderson, A. K. (2005). Affective influences on the attentional dynamics supporting awareness. *Journal of Experimental Psychology, General*, 134(2), 258-281.

-- for newspaper articles, give the newspaper title in italics; precede page numbers with p. (for one page) or pp. (for multiple pages); give page number(s):

Oppenheimer, M. (2016). A Debate Over Black Lives Matter. *The New York Times*. p. 13.

-- for books, include the city of publication and the publisher:

Anderson, A. K. (1987). *And with the gift came laughter*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House.

E. CITING ELECTRONIC SOURCES IN YOUR REFERENCE LIST

ARTICLES FROM DATABASES

- When referencing material obtained from an article database (such as SuperSearch databases), follow the format appropriate to the work retrieved and add a retrieval statement that gives either the URL of the database, or the DOI. (The DOI is a unique number assigned by a registration agency to identify content and provide a reliable link to its location on the Internet.)
- If the database entry includes a DOI for the article, use the DOI number at the end. If there is no DOI, include the URL for the database.

EXAMPLES:

Jennings, Jerry L. (2007). Dreams without disguise: The self-evident nature of dreams. *Humanistic Psychologist*, 35, 253-274. doi: 10.1080/08873260701415413.

Beck, A. T. (2008, August). The evolution of the cognitive model of depression and its neurobiological correlates. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 165(8), 969-977. Retrieved from <http://web.ebscohost.com>.

WEB PAGES

List as many of the following elements as are available.

- Author's name
- Date of publication (if there is no date, use "n.d.")
- Title of document (if page is part of larger website, do not italicize title; if page is independent work, italicize title)
- A URL that will take readers directly to the source

EXAMPLES:

Plous, S. (2011). *The social psychology network*. Retrieved from <http://www.socialpsychology.org>

Archer, D. (n.d.). Exploring nonverbal communication. Retrieved from <http://nonverbal.ucsc.edu>

NOTE: If a source has no author, begin with the title and follow it with the date in parentheses: For example:

New child vaccine gets funding boost. (2001). Retrieved from

http://news.ninemsn.com.au/health/story_13178/asp

NOTE: Use a retrieval date for an online source only if the content is likely to change.

If you are unsure about whether to use a retrieval date, include the date or consult your instructor.