

APA citations

APA is the citation and formatting style of the American Psychological Association. APA Style is frequently used within the biological and social sciences, among other fields. For more comprehensive answers to your APA questions, please see the APA Publication Manual (currently in its 6th edition). You can also try searching the APA Style Blog at blog.apastyle.org.

Citation and Plagiarism

Why Cite?

Citation serves two purposes: It gives credit to the sources whose work you used, and it helps the reader find additional information by locating the original source. By citing effectively, you demonstrate to your audience that you understand the ongoing conversation on your subject.

What Counts as Plagiarism? (1.10)

Plagiarism occurs when another's work is used without giving credit to the author. It is also possible to self-plagiarize by misrepresenting one's own previously published work as new.

Quoting versus Paraphrasing (6.03 & 6.04)

Direct quotations are best when the original wording is particularly eloquent, when you want the reader to know exactly what your source had to say on a subject, or when it is impossible to rephrase the quotation without losing its essential meaning. Otherwise, you can paraphrase by putting the material in your own words.

Do not simply change a few words here and there—a paraphrase should present the author's ideas in a new form, with a different sentence and paragraph structure. Remember that even when paraphrasing, you must always credit your source.

Note: For more information on how and when to summarize, paraphrase, and quote, please see our "Incorporating Sources" [handout](#).

In-text Citation: The Basics

Citation Components

There are three main components to an in-text citation: the author's surname, the year of publication, and page number.



Citation Placement (6.11)

There are two types of in-text citations: **signal phrase** and **parenthetical**. Signal phrase citations introduce the source as part of the narrative of the sentence.

Examples: According to Dowler (2004)... Pittman (2006) states...

Parenthetical citations go at the end of a sentence. Note that parentheses go **before** the period since they are part of the sentence.

Examples: ...rates of cancer (Dowler, 2004). ... their survival (Pittman, 2006).

When a paragraph contains more than one piece of information from the same source, make sure that everything you've taken from that source is clearly attributed. Note that the year is included only in the first signal phrase of the paragraph, but it is always included in parenthetical citations.

First Citation (Signal Phrase): According to Dowler (2004)...

First Citation (Parenthetical): ...different colors (Dowler, 2004).

Subsequent Signal Phrase Citations: Dowler states...

Subsequent Parenthetical Citations: ...rates of cancer (Dowler, 2004).

Example: A study by Dowler (2004) revealed that green is the most popular color among first-graders. Red and purple were the least favored colors (Dowler, 2004). According to Dowler, the preference for green was unexpected, since both kindergarteners and second-graders showed an aversion to that color. Among both of those groups, blue was the most strongly preferred color (Dowler, 2004).

Direct Quotations (6.03-6.05)

Place direct quotations within quotation marks and reproduce the original material exactly. Always provide the author, publication date, and page number(s). If no page number is available, indicate the paragraph number. If the paper uses subheadings, use the subheading and paragraph number.

Place the parenthetical citation outside the quotation marks. Only use page numbers that are explicitly marked in the original text. Do not base page numbers on the numbers that appear at the top of a computer printout.

Example with Page Number: It is clear that when "we think critically, we learn from our own experiences as well as the experiences of others" (Metcalf, 2007, p. 124).

Example with No Page Number: A study by Jones (2012) reports that "mice learn to navigate a maze 50% more quickly when Gouda cheese is used as a reward" (para. 2).

Example with Subheadings and No Page Number: Smith (2010) found "a strong correlation between regular fast food consumption and a variety of chronic diseases" (Discussion section, para. 3).

Long Quotations (6.03)

Use block format for direct quotations that are **40 words or more**. Indent the entire block quotation one half inch from the left margin (in the same location that you would begin a new paragraph). Block quotations should be double-spaced without quotation marks. Also note that the period goes **before** the parenthetical citation in a block quotation.

Example: Metcalfe makes the following remarks regarding plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the act of stealing the writings or ideas of another and using them as your own. It can

involve taking word-for-word passages from news articles, Internet sources, or verbal lectures or conversation and failing to give proper credit and/or quotations as to the source of the information. (Metcalfe, 2007, p. 122)

Multiple Works in the Same Parentheses (6.16)

If you need to cite multiple works, simply separate them with a semicolon. List them in alphabetical order.

Example: Multiple studies (Dowler, 2004; Runyan & Ogilvie, 2003) found...

Multiple Works with the Same Author and Date (6.16)

When citing multiple works by the same author and with the same publication date, attach the suffixes “a,” “b,” “c,” and so on. These suffixes should **also appear in the reference list**, where the works will be listed alphabetically by title.

In-text: Several studies (Newton, 2005a, 2005b; Bryan, 2007a, 2007b) found...

Reference List: Newton, S. (2005a).
Newton, S. (2005b).

Personal Communications (6.20)

Personal communication includes letters, e-mails, interviews, and any other type of communication that is direct and unpublished. Since this type of source is not available to the public, there is no reason to include it in your reference list. Cite it in your text only.

Signal Phrase: A.B. Jones (personal communication, May 25, 1982) found...

Parenthetical: ...cancers (A.B. Jones, personal communication, May 25, 1982).

In-text Citation: Authors

APA requires different in-text citation formats for different numbers of authors. See page 177 of the APA manual (6th ed.) for a chart.

Single Author (6.11 & Table 6.1)

To cite a work by a single author, simply provide the author’s surname and the publication date.

Signal Phrase: Dowler (2004) found...

Parenthetical: ...rates (Dowler, 2004).

Two Authors (6.12 & Table 6.1)

When citing a work by two authors, provide the authors’ surnames and the publication date. Use the word “and” between the surnames when using a signal phrase and an ampersand (&) when using a parenthetical citation.

Signal Phrase: Dowler and Ogilvie (2004) reported...

Parenthetical: ...participants (Dowler & Ogilvie, 2004)

Three to Five Authors (6.12 & Table 6.1)

For three, four, or five authors, give each of the authors’ surnames in the first citation, whether in a signal

phrase or a parenthetical. Use the word “and” between the last two surnames in signal phrases and an ampersand (&) between them when in parentheticals.

First Citation (Signal Phrase): Dowler, Ogilvie, and Runyan (2004) observed...

First Citation (Parenthetical): ...responses (Dowler, Ogilvie, & Runyan, 2004).

In subsequent citations, only use the surname of the first author and the phrase “et al.” “Et al.” is an abbreviation of “*et alii*,” which means “and others.” Since it is an abbreviation, be sure you include the period after “al.”

Subsequent Signal Phrases: Dowler et al. (2004) surveyed...

Subsequent Parentheticals: ...schools (Dowler et al., 2004).

Six or More Authors (6.12 & Table 6.1)

If there are six or more authors, simply use the surname of the first author and “et al.” Remember the period after “al.” You do not need to list the rest of the authors’ surnames in your text.

Signal Phrase: Dowler et al. (2004) found...

Parenthetical: ...species (Dowler et al., 2004).

Groups as Authors (6.13 & Table 6.1)

Organizations and other groups can sometimes serve as authors. If you cite the organization more than once, spell out its name the first time, followed by an abbreviation. Afterward, the abbreviation will suffice.

If your first citation is a signal phrase, the abbreviation will be included in the parentheses with the date. If your first citation is a parenthetical, the abbreviation will be included within brackets.

First Citation (Signal Phrase): The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2010) reported...

First Citation (Parenthetical): ...enzymes (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2010).

Subsequent Signal Phrases: The CDC (2010) analyzed...

Subsequent Parentheticals : ...virus (CDC, 2010).

No Author (6.15)

If no author is identified, cite the first few words of the entry on your reference page. Usually, this means that you will cite the title or a short version of the title. Italicize titles of longer works (e.g., books, reports); place titles of shorter works (e.g., articles, chapters, Web documents) within quotation marks.

Signal Phrase: The book *Advancing Your Career* (2001) argues...

Parenthetical: ...diversity (“Exploring Differences,” 2012).

Secondary Sources (6.17)

Ideally, you should only use secondary sources sparingly; if possible, try to locate the original source.

When citing secondary sources in your text, name the original author in a signal phrase and place the source you used in parentheses. List the source you used in your reference page.

Let’s say that Bartlett’s work is cited in Davis, and Davis is the source that you used. Your citation will look like this:

In-text: Bartlett's theory states... (as cited in Davis, 2011).

Reference List: Davis, J. J. (2011).

Reference List: The Basics

Typically, reference list entries include **four basic elements**: the authors' names, the publication date, the title, and the publication information.

Authors' Names (6.27)

The names of authors should be inverted (i.e., the surname first). For **fewer than eight** authors, give each author's surname followed by his or her initials. For **eight or more** authors, list the first six authors, followed by an ellipsis and the last author.

One Author: Smith, J. J.

Two Authors: Xiao, X., & Song, B.

Three to Seven Authors: Rogers, A. B., Jones, K. D., & Johnson, E. C.

Eight or More Authors: Nunes, L. C., Galindo, A. B., Lustosa, S. R., Brasileiro, M. T., do Egito, A. A., Freitas, R. M., . . . Neto, R. J.

Publication Date (6.28)

Entries in the reference list should include the publication date. Often, this means you will list the year; however, there are exceptions.

Magazines and Newspapers: (2004, May 6).

No Date Listed: (n.d.).

Manuscript Accepted for Publication but Not Yet Published: (in press).

Capitalization of Titles (6.29)

For an article, capitalize the first word of the title and subtitle as well as any proper nouns. Do not enclose the title in quotation marks. Book titles follow the same rules, except that they are italicized.

Article or chapter title: Cultural definitions of quality care: Perspectives of Jordanian patients.

Book title: *The immortal life of Henrietta Lacks.*

Capitalize the first letter of **every major word** in the name of a periodical (e.g., a magazine or journal title). These titles are also italicized.

Periodical title: *Landscape and Urban Planning*

Publication Information (6.30)

For **periodicals**, give the volume number (in italics) and, if applicable, the issue number (in parentheses and **not** italicized). Also, provide inclusive page numbers.

Example: *Pacific Legal News*, 75(6), 200-215.

For **non-periodicals** (e.g., books), provide the publisher's location (city and state or, if outside the U.S., city and country), followed by a colon and the publisher's name. If multiple locations are listed, use only the first. Include the words "Books" and "Press," but do not include "Publishers," "Co.," "Inc.," and the like.



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Reference List: Examples

Book (7.02)

This category encompasses any type of book, including edited anthologies, reference books (e.g., encyclopedias and dictionaries), and electronic books. Include the **Digital Object Identifier (DOI)** if possible; if none is available, include the URL.

Book: Bekaert, S. (2007). *Women's health: A practical guide for healthcare professionals*. New York, NY: Radcliffe.

Specific Edition of a Book: Oermann, M. H., & Hays, J. C. (2010). *Writing for publication in nursing* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Springer.

Book with Editor: Malchioldi, C. A. (Ed.). (2012). *Handbook of art therapy*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Book Chapter: Lester, G. (2011). The aging workforce and paid time off. In R. Wiener & S. Willborn (Eds.), *Disability and aging discrimination: Perspectives in law and psychology* (pp. 72-94). New York, NY: Springer.

Electronic Version of Print Book (no DOI): Simpson, C., & Simpson, D. (1999). *Careers in social work* [Adobe Digital Editions version]. Retrieved from <http://web.ebscohost.com/>

Electronic Version of Print Book (DOI): Nakkula, M. J., Foster, K. C., Mannes, M., & Bolstrom, S. (2010). *Building healthy communities for positive youth development* [Adobe Digital Editions version]. doi: 10.1007/978-1-4419-5744-3

Electronic-only Book: Kleinbaum, D. G., Sullivan, K. M., & Barker, N.D. (2007). *Pocket guide to epidemiology*. Retrieved from <http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-0-387-45966-0/page/1>

Journal Article (7.01)

This format is used for articles that appear in academic or other journals. Include the DOI if available.

Article with DOI: Allen, J. (2012). The future of nursing in assisted living. *Geriatric Nursing*, 33(5), 416-418. doi: 10.1016/j.gerinurse.2012.07.009

Article without DOI: Yoder, E. A. (2010). Compassion fatigue in nurses. *Applied Nursing Research*, 23(4), 191-197. Retrieved from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0897189708001006>

Magazine Article (7.01)

An entry for a magazine article should include the author, publication date, title, name of periodical, volume and number, and page numbers (print source) or URL (Internet source).

Print Magazine Article: Carpenter, S. (2013, January). Awakening to sleep. *Monitor on Psychology*, 44(1), 40-43.

Online Magazine Article: Weir, K. (2012, February). The beginnings of mental illness. *Monitor on Psychology*, 43(2). Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/monitor/>

Newspaper Article (7.01)

Entries for newspaper articles are similar to those of magazine articles, but there are some key differences. Be sure to include the precise date and the section number (print source) or URL (Internet source).

Newspaper Article: Gorman, A. (2013, January 6). Diabetes is a stubborn adversary. *The Los Angeles Times*, pp. A1, A4.

Online Newspaper Article: McNeil, D. G., & Seelye, K. Q. (2013, January 9). Flu widespread, leading a range of winter ills. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/10/health/flu-widespread-leading-a-range-of-winters-ills.html?_r=0

Technical Reports (7.03)

This category includes reports by government agencies, corporations, and nonprofit organizations. It also includes issue briefs.

Corporate Author or Governmental Report: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Research. (2008). *Effects of preschool curriculum programs on school readiness* (NCER Report No. 20082009REV). Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncer/pubs/20082009/pdf/20082009_rev.pdf

Issue Brief: Christianson, J. B., Tu, H. T., & Divya, R. S. (2011, October). *Employer-sponsored health insurance: Down but not out* (Issue Brief No. 137). Washington, D.C.: Center for Studying Health System Change.

Meetings and Symposia (7.04)

If the proceedings of a meeting or symposium are published in a book or periodical, simply cite them the way you would normally cite those types of sources. However, if they have not been formally published, follow these examples:

Symposium Contribution: Brown, S. R. (2012, November). Poverty and diabetes. In B.T. Williams (Chair), *Chronic diseases in a social context*. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the Association for Chronic Disease Prevention, Baltimore, MD.

Paper Presentation or Poster Session: O'Brien, K. E. (2011, May). *Privacy concerns and electronic medical records*. Poster session presented at the meeting of the American Nurses Association, Silver Spring, MD.

Unpublished Works (7.05 & 7.09)

This category includes works in progress, completed works that have not been published, or works that have been submitted for publication.

Unpublished Dissertation: Lewis, J. K. (1982). *New frontiers in early autism diagnosis*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Maryland, Baltimore, Baltimore, MD.

Manuscript in Progress or Submitted for Publication: Carr, C.B. (2013). *Gender differences in responses to childhood trauma: A theoretical perspective*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Web Sites (7.11)

The APA manual (6th ed.) states that it is not necessary to cite entire websites in your reference list when referring to them **generally**. Simply provide the name of the site and the URL in the body of the paper.

Entire Website (in-text citation): The Purdue OWL is an excellent source for citation information (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>).

Note: In this sentence, the author is referring to the site in general, not to specific pages of information.

However, when citing **specific information** from a Web site—or when citing a Web document (i.e., a specific page on a site)—include it in your reference list.

Web Document (reference page): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012, July 2). About antimicrobial resistance: A brief overview. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/about.html>

Web Article with No Author: Severe storms bring dark clouds, heavy rains, hail to Md. (2013, June 13). Retrieved from <http://www.wbaltv.com/weather/nws-warns-of-another-round-of-severe-weather/>

Note: Since there was no author, the title shifted into the author position.

Web site with no date: The University of Maryland, Baltimore. (n.d.). About the university. Retrieved from <http://um.umaryland.edu/about/>

Blog post: Hume-Pratuch, J. (2013, May 15). APA publication manual is now available on Kindle. [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2013/05/pub-manual-now-on-kindle.html>

Note: If the author's name is not provided, it is acceptable to use the author's screen name.

Course Materials (7.09 & 7.10)

Sometimes you may need to cite unpublished course packet materials written by an instructor. Treat these as part of an anthology compiled by the instructor and published by the university. Use whatever is written on the cover as the title; this may be the course name and number.

Course packet material with author: Wellman, A. (2000). Stages of early child development. In A.P. Kessler (Comp.), *Selected readings in child psychology* (pp. 10-15). Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona.

Course packet material with no author: Parts of the brain. (2012). In R. F. Matthews (Comp.), *PSYCH 101: Intro to Psychology* (pp. 5-10). New York, NY: New York University.

Audiovisual Media (7.07)

Audiovisual media include motion pictures, audio or television broadcasts, and static objects such as maps or photos.

Video: American Psychological Association (Producer). (2008). *Weight loss and control* [DVD]. Available from <http://www.apa.org/videos>

Motion picture: Schwary, R. L. (Producer), & Redford, R. (Director). (1980). *Ordinary people* [Motion picture]. United States: Paramount.

Podcast: Wheeler, S. (Producer). (2012, October 22). *Seeing in the dark* [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from <http://www.radiolab.org/>

Reproducing Tables and Figures (5.06 & 6.10)

When writing for publication, you must obtain written permission before reprinting (reproducing exactly) or adapting (reproducing with modification) a table or figure from a copyrighted source. Note that government sources are not copyrighted. Obtaining permission is not necessary when you are writing a paper that will not be published. In either case, remember to cite the original source in a caption beneath the table. The citation format for tables and figures, shown below, is different from the one used on the reference page.

Example: *Note.* Images of body changes. From "Body Changes in Patients with HIV," by F.P. Robinson, 2005, *The American Journal of Nursing*, 105, p. 70. Copyright 2005 by Lippincott Williams & Wilkens. Reprinted with permission.

References

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Hume-Pratuch, J. (2012, September 27). How to cite course packs, custom textbooks, and other classroom compendiums.



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[Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2012/09/how-to-cite-course-packs.html>
Lee, C. (2010, November 18). How to cite something you found on a website in APA style. [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2010/11/how-to-cite-something-you-found-on-a-website-in-apa-style.html>



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