

American Psychological Association (APA) Documentation and Style



Based on and quoted from the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th Edition, 2010. Prepared by the Southeastern Writing Center. Updated by Mechelle Rouchon. Last updated August 2010.

When you write a paper containing information drawn from published sources, you need to document or acknowledge the sources of the information you borrow. Documenting your sources is not just fair academic practice (failure to document is *plagiarism*, a very serious offense), but it also allows your readers to evaluate the originality of your work, the quality of any research you have done, and the relevance, currency, and reliability of the information you are using. This handout describes APA documentation requirements, as well as several useful APA stylistic guidelines for formatting your papers.

Formatting Quotations and In-Text (Parenthetical) Documentation

APA style requires you to document your use of sources by placing the author's last name, the year of publication, and either the page or paragraph number at appropriate points in your text. This in-text citation method documents your work, briefly identifies the source for readers, and enables them to locate the source of information in the alphabetical list of *References* at the end of your paper. Citation of an article implies that you have personally read the cited work.

Each of the following common uses of source materials requires documentation:

- direct quotations
- paraphrases and summaries
- information and ideas that are not common knowledge or have influenced your work
- any borrowed material that might appear to be your own if there were no citation

Quotations with fewer than 40 words: Incorporate it into your text and enclose the quotation with double quotation marks. If the quotation appears in mid-sentence, end the passage with quotation marks, cite the source in parenthesis immediately after the quotation marks, and continue the sentence. Use no other punctuation unless the meaning of the sentence requires such punctuation.

Quotations with more than 40 words: Display it in a freestanding block of text and omit the quotation marks. Start the block quotation on a new line and indent the block about a half inch from the left margin (in the same position as a new paragraph). Double-space the entire quotation. If there are paragraphs within the quotation, indent those another half inch. The parenthetical citation should be placed after the final punctuation mark.

Guidelines for In-Text Citation of Sources

Give enough information—most typically the author's last name, the date of publication, and the page number (or paragraph number if not paginated)—to identify all borrowed material.

Two kinds of material are cited only in the text: references to classical works, such as the Bible or Qur'an whose sections are standardized across editions, and references to personal communication.

Format and location

- Do not include in the in-text citation any information already indicated in the text of your paper.
For example: "Hillocks (1986) argues that the teaching of grammar has no effect on students' writing development."
[author already cited in-text]
- A page number always immediately follows a quotation, even when the author and date precede it. For example: Lu (1990) found that "several hypotheses were partially supported" (p. 48).
- Place citations within sentences and paragraphs so that it is clear which material has come from which sources. Use pronouns and transitions to help indicate whether several sentences contain material from the same source or from different sources.
For example: "Smythe (1990) found that positioning influences ventilation. In his quasi-experimental study of 20 ICU patients, he used two methods to. . . . However, his findings did not support the work of Karcher (1987) and Atley (1989), who used much larger samples to demonstrate that. . . ."

Punctuation

- Place a comma between the author's last name and the date of publication in each in-text citation.
- Join two co-authors in the text with the word *and*, but within parentheses use an ampersand (&).

- When an author-date citation appears at the end of a sentence, place the period after the parentheses. When an author-date citation appears mid-sentence, punctuation depends on the normal punctuation of the sentence.

Sample In-text Parenthetical Citations

A work with one or two authors

When a work has a single author or two authors, cite their names and the date of publication whenever you refer to their work in the text. (Exception: *Within a single paragraph*, do not include the date after the initial citation unless it could be confused with other studies elsewhere in the paper.)

Smith (2001) insisted that . . .
(Smith & Thomas, 2001)

A work with three to five authors

When citing groups of three to five co-authors, cite all names and the date in the initial citation, but only the first author followed by “et al.” and the date in subsequent citations.

First reference: (Brown, Jones, & Smith, 2001)
Subsequent references in the same paragraph: (Brown et al.)
References in later paragraphs: (Brown et al., 2001)

A work by six or more authors

For groups of six or more co-authors, cite in the text only the last name of the first author followed by “et al.” and the date. If two or more six-author groups shorten to the same surname, cite the last names of as many subsequent authors as needed to distinguish references.

(Brown et al., 2001)

A work by authors with the same last name

If authors have the same last name, always include their initials in each citation.

F. C. Thomas (2001) and C. S. Thomas (2000)

A work by a corporate author

When no individual author(s) can be identified, look for indications of “corporate authorship” (groups, organizations, government agencies, etc.). Use the full title of the corporate author for the first in-text citation and for the corresponding entry in the list of references; subsequent in-text citations can use abbreviations when the corporate title is long.

First reference: (National Organization for Women [NOW], 1997)
Subsequent references: (NOW, 1997)

A work with no author(s)

If a work has no author(s) indicated, use the first two or three words of the title (omitting a beginning article), and capitalize each word of the shortened version. Substitute the short title for the name of the author. Place the short title in quotation marks if it is an article or chapter, or italicize it if it is a book or periodical. The full title appears alphabetically in the *References* list (without quotation marks) in the author position.

(“Flood Survey,” 2001)

An edited work with no author(s)

When citing an edited work (e.g., a book, report, or monograph) and that work has no author, the editor assumes the author position.

(Jones, 2001)

A personal communication

Cite letters, memos, personal conversations, unpublished interviews, electronic lists, group posts, and so on only in the text. These sources are not included in a list of references because they are not recoverable information.

(K.W. Shay, personal communication, November 28, 1998)

Secondary Sources

Indicate in the text when you are citing from a secondary source in one of the following ways: place both authors in the same citation at the end of the sentence or cite them separately within the sentence.

(Smith, 1976, as cited in Carrington, 1989)
“Smith (1976) formulated a theory about deviant behavior (as cited in Carrington, 1989).”

Direct Quotations of Online Material without Pagination

Cite by giving the author, year, and page number in parenthesis. If no page numbers are available and paragraph numbers are visible, use the abbreviation *para*. If there are neither visible paragraphs or page numbers, cite the heading and the number of the paragraph following it to direct the reader to the location of the quoted material. If the heading is lengthy, shorten it.

“Empirical studies have found mixed results on the efficacy of labels in educating consumers and changing consumption behavior” (Golan, Kuchler, & Krissof, 2007, “Mandatory Labeling Has Targeted,” para. 4).

Classical Works

When a date of publication is inapplicable, such as for some very old works, cite the year of the translation you used, preceded by *trans.*, or the year of the version you used, followed by *version*. When you know the original date of publication, include it in the citation. Ancient Greek and Roman texts and religious texts keep their systematic numbering (these works do not need to be cited on the reference page).

(Aristotle, trans. 1931)
(1 Cor. 13.1, Revised Standard Version)

Southeastern Writing Center
“Celebrating the Writer’s Voice”
383 D. Vickers Hall
(985) 549-2076
writing@selu.edu

References

A list of all sources cited comes at the end of your paper (following the last page of text or content notes, if used) on a new numbered page headed *References*. All in-text citations must be matched to a corresponding item in the References list. Likewise, all publications appearing in your References list must have been cited in text. Additional reference examples may be found on the APA website (www.apastyle.org). When in doubt concerning how to format a reference, provide more information rather than less.

Guidelines for References

Format

- Reference entries are double-spaced.
- Use a “hanging indent” to format each entry.

Arrangement

- List reference items alphabetically. Spell out the author's last name, and use initials for the first and middle names.
- Single-authored entries precede multiple-authored entries that begin with the same last name.
- Entries by the same author(s) are arranged according to date of publication, beginning with the earliest date.
- Entries with the same author(s) and date of publication are arranged alphabetically according to title, with the first designated *a*, the second *b*, and so on.
- Entries by the same first author but different second author are alphabetized according to (1) the first author's name, then (2) the second author's name.

Capitalization and punctuation

- Capitalize only the first word of titles of books and articles and the first word after a colon, but capitalize all major words in journal titles.
- Capitalize all authors' names and initials, names of publishers, editorial abbreviations (e.g., Ed., Trans.), and places (city/state) of publication.
- Use a comma to separate: last names from initials; individual authors in a co-authored publication; a journal title from volume number; a journal volume number, issue number, or newspaper title from page numbers; and city of publication from state.
- Use one space after commas.
- Use one space after the colon in a two-part title and after the publisher's location.
- Use one space after the period separating initials in a personal name and after periods that separate all major parts of a reference citation.

Sample Traditional Print Sources

Journal article, without DOI

Bibace, A., & Walsh, P. (1984). Piaget revisited. *Journal of Social Issues*, 37, 618-625.

Dom, L. R., & Ryerson, D. (1984). *Elements of a healthy childhood* (2nd ed.). New York: Macmillan.

Journal, entire issue

Conover, T. N. (Ed.). (1986). Testing concepts: Measurements of health [Special Issue]. *American Psychologist*, 42(18).

Book

Shotton, M. A. (1989). *Computer addiction? A study of computer dependency*. London, England: Taylor & Francis.

Book, other than first edition

Book, corporate author as publisher

National Institute of Mental Health. (1989). *Manual of cognitive learning*. Washington, DC: Author.

Newspaper article, discontinuous pages

Reichenbach, M. (1988, May 10). Mind and body of a child. *Christian Science Monitor*, pp. 4, 16.

Research report, private organization

Swift, A. C. (1985). *Determining our children's future* (Research Report No. 12). Milwaukee: Child Care of Wisconsin.

Corporate author, Government Report

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. (2003). *Managing asthma: A guide for schools* (NIH Publication No. 02-2650). Retrieved from http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/lung/asthma/asth_sch.pdf

Edited book, editor as author

Dykes, A. T. (Ed.). (1983). *Early developmental stages*. Bethesda, MD: Norcroft Books.

Article or chapter in edited book

Eiser, S., Redpath, A., & Rogers, N. (1987). Outcomes of early parenting: Knowns and unknowns. In A.P. Kem & L. S. Maze (Eds.), *Logical thinking in children* (pp. 58-87). New York: Springer.

Magazine article

Palmer, H., & Lewis, C. D. (1987, October). Using a common sense approach to evaluating behavior. *Psychology Today*, 40(5), 40-47.

Newspaper article, no author

Understanding early years as a prerequisite to development. (1986, May). *The Wall Street Journal*, p. 8.

Edited book

Gibbs, J. T. (Eds.). (1991). *Children of color: Psychological interventions with minority youth*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Sample Electronic Sources

Technical report, electronic data base

Thomas, P. (1996). *Looking at cognitive differences* (Tech. Rep. No. 3). East Lansing, MI: National Center for Research on Cognition. Retrieved June 4, 200 from ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 346 082.

World Wide Web file, no author, no date of publication

Understanding children's thinking. *Understanding children information page*. Retrieved August 12, 2001, from <http://www.mit.edu/childrethinking.html>

Abstract, CD-Rom

Treary, J. T. (1997). *Preschool development: New cognitive conceptions* [CD-ROM]. Abstract from Proudest File: Dissertation Abstracts Item: 9315947.

Television broadcast

Wells, G. (Executive Producer). (1998, September 2). *Rivera Live*. [Television broadcast]. New York: CNBC.

For guidelines on citing additional types of references, consult the APA Publication Manual or talk to a Writing Center consultant or your course instructor.

Some Principles of APA Editorial Style

Headings (See pp. 62-63 in APA Manual, 6th ed.)

Headings from one to five levels are generally used to indicate the organization of the text. Use Level 1 headings when a single level is necessary. Use Level 5 only when all other levels are already being used. Topics of equal importance have the same heading. Do not use a heading for the introduction. Do not label headings with numbers or letters. Title case means when the first and important words are capitalized, as in book titles.

Centered, Boldface, Title Case Heading (Level 1)

Flush Left, Boldface, Title Case (Level 2)

Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period. (Level 3)

Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period. (Level 4)

Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading with a period. (Level 5)

Abbreviations (See pp. 106-112 in APA Manual, 6th ed.)

Acronyms and abbreviations must be spelled out completely on initial appearance in text. Use only if abbreviation is conventional, is apt to be familiar, will save considerable space, and will prevent cumbersome repetition. Avoid beginning a sentence with an acronym or an abbreviation.

Capitalization in text (See pp. 101-104 in APA Manual, 6th ed.)

Capitalize all words of four letters or more in titles of books and articles in text. Capitalize the first word after a colon that begins a complete sentence. Do not capitalize names of laws, theories, and hypotheses except for proper nouns.

Hyphenation (See pp. 97-97 in APA Manual, 6th ed.)

For compound words not in the dictionary, use hyphens for clarity rather than omit them. Hyphenate compound adjectives that precede the noun they modify (e.g., role-playing technique, two-way analysis, middle-class families). Do not hyphenate chemical terms or common fractions used as nouns.

Numbers (See pp. 111-114 in APA Manual, 6th ed.)

Use figures for numbers 10 and above (e.g., 12 of the subjects); for numbers above and below 10 grouped for comparison (e.g., 2 of 16 responses); for numbers representing time, dates, and age (e.g., 3 years ago, 2 hr. 15 min.); for numbers denoting a specific place in a series, book, or table (e.g., Table 3, Group 3, page 32). Use words for numbers below 10 that do not represent precise measurements (e.g., eight items, nine pages); for numbers beginning a sentence, title, or heading (e.g., Forty-eight percent responded; Ten subjects improved, and 4 subjects did not).

Sample Page Layouts

A WORKSHOP ON APA 1

A Workshop on APA
Style and Documentation
Dr. Jayetta Slawson
Southeastern Louisiana University
The Writing Center

Title page

A WORKSHOP ON APA 2

Abstract

An abstract is a brief (120 words or less) summary of your paper that appears on page two of your text in block paragraph form. In a research report, you will introduce the problem and subjects being studied, your methods and main findings, and major conclusions or applications of your study.

Abstract

A WORKSHOP ON APA 3

A Workshop on APA Style and Documentation

The text of your paper begins on page 3, just below your full title and in indented paragraph form. As always in APA format, your text should be double-spaced, unjustified, and in 11-12 point font. Page numbering is indicated on each page of your paper.

First page of text

A WORKSHOP ON APA 23

References

American Psychological Association. (1995). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Bibace, A., & Walsh, P. (1984). Piaget revisited. *Journal of Social Issues*, 37, 618-625.

References

(This area is intentionally left blank in the sample layout.)

(This area is intentionally left blank in the sample layout.)