

This document contains detailed instructions
on how to format a paper and cite sources according to APA Style (seventh edition).

APA Citation: An Example to Follow

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Cover page formatting:

- Align automatic page numbers to the right margin.
- Student paper title is bolded with an extra line between it and the information below. The title should be concise but specific to the main topic of the paper. Students should also avoid abbreviations in titles and spell out all words (see page 32 of APA's *Publication Manual*).
- Leave a few empty lines at the top of the document and center the title and paper information.
- Student name format: First name Middle Initial(s). Last name (Jane L. Student)
- Course abbreviation is followed by the full course name.
- Credentials such as "Dr." should be included before the instructor's name.
- Date format: Month, day, year

Overall paper formatting:

- One-inch margins all the way around the paper
- Times New Roman 12-point font throughout the paper
- Double space the entire paper.
- **Note: Always check with your instructor to determine what is required for your assignment.**

Abstract

An abstract summarizes the important points of the essay. In publications, readers use the abstract to quickly find and evaluate sources. It is different from your essay's introduction, so do not copy the same paragraph. Different essay types may have different requirements, such as describing methods or study participants, so consult your instructor for any variations. If you use an in-text citation in the abstract, that source will need to be in the references as well. Any acronyms used in the paper should be defined in the abstract.

Keywords: abstracts, American Psychological Association

Formatting the abstract:

- Center the word Abstract and bold it.
- Use 12-point font.
- When writing an abstract, place it on its own page.
- Do not indent (tab key) the first sentence.
- Limit your abstract to your key ideas and keep it short.
- Use Times New Roman
- Double space the abstract.
- The abstract is always a single paragraph, never multiple paragraphs, and 250 words or less.

Keywords and acronyms:

An abstract can list keywords from the paper. Keywords are words that are important in the essay. In published essays, they are used as search terms in databases.

Acronyms can be keywords. If you use an acronym, e.g. Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus (SCUBA) in your abstract or your paper, you need to use the full name of the term and then write the acronym in parentheses next to it for the first use. Subsequent uses should just list the acronym. For example:

Researchers from Arizona State University (ASU) discovered...

APA Citation: An Example to Follow

To begin your essay, start by indenting (tab key) each new paragraph. Your introduction is where you bring forward your thesis (main idea) and any topics you are going to discuss in your essay. APA (American Psychological Association) format is typically used for papers in the social sciences, such as psychology, sociology, and education. You may also need to write an APA formatted paper for other courses in your college career. APA format guidelines also stress reducing bias in language, particularly when referring to age, gender, sexual orientation, racial and ethnic identities, and disabilities.

- Center and bold the essay title.

Headings in the Paper

Your supporting paragraphs are indented. APA format also requires headings for the different sections of your paper. For instance, headings might be titled Method, Results, or Discussion. Level 1 headings are used for each main section of the paper. Level 2-5 headings are sub-headings within a main section. However, depending upon your instructor or paper type, you may not be required to include headings. General rules are on the following page.

Level 1 Heading

Centered, Bold, Title Case

Paragraph text with indentation should be placed underneath the heading

Level 2 Heading

Aligned Left, Bold, Title Case

Paragraph text with indentation should be placed underneath the heading.

Level 3 Heading

Aligned Left, Bold Italic, Title Case

Paragraph text with indentation should be placed underneath the heading.

Level 4 Heading

Indented, Bold, Title Case, End Heading With a Period. Start paragraph text immediately after heading.

Level 5 Heading

Indented, Bold Italic, Title Case, End Heading With a Period. Start paragraph text immediately after heading.

In-Text Citations

There are many ways to use in-text citation. With APA Style, in-text citation revolves around the author(s) and the source's year of publication. When using a source in a direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary, you must give credit to that source. If a source is used in your essay, it must appear in the references list at the end of your paper. In other words, the in-text citation leads the reader to the references. If you use someone else's work, thoughts, or ideas and do not give them credit, it is plagiarism.

In general, in-text citations can take two forms: 1) author named in the sentence and 2) author named in a parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence. As a writer, you want to use both ways because it creates greater sentence variety and interest for your reader.

The examples on the following pages show both forms of citation.

Quotation, author named in the sentence:

In this example, Aaron is the author, 2014 is the publication year, and p. 497 is the page that the quotation came from. Note that the year always immediately follows the author in parentheses. The page number comes in parentheses after the quotation and before the period.

When using the same source in the same paragraph with APA citation, Aaron (2014) explains in the style guide *LB Brief* that APA style does not require the writer to “repeat the date beyond the first citation as long as it’s clear what source you refer. Do give the date in every citation if your source list includes more than one work by the same author(s)” (p. 497).

Quotation, author named in the parenthetical citation:

In this example, Aaron is the author, 2014 is the publication year, and p. 497 is the page that the quotation came from.

For instance, “in APA documentation style, parenthetical citations within the body of the text refer the reader to a list of sources at the end of the text” (Aaron, 2014, p. 497).

Multiple works by the same author:

When using multiple sources by the same author, the different sources can be distinguished from one another by the use of the publication date.

In both Matthews (2012) and Matthews (2013), citation techniques are explained.

However, if the author published multiple sources in the same year, the sources can be differentiated by a letter next to the year (a, b, c). The title of each source determines which letter is given. The alphabetical order of the titles on the references page dictates which letter is assigned. For example, if Jacobs wrote both “Learning APA” and “Skills for College” in 2012, the in-text citations would appear as follows:

Jacobs (2012a) explains that “citation can seem confusing at first, but with practice, it will get easier” (p. 4). In addition, Jacobs (2012b), argues that learning formatting guidelines can “make an individual a more critical reader” (p. 2).

In the references list, each entry would contain the year with the alphabetized letter.

If the name Jacobs was not used in the sentence, the author’s name would be included in the parenthetical citation.

Learning formatting guidelines can “make an individual a more critical reader” (Jacobs, 2012b, p. 2).

Direct quotation, online source without page numbers:

If a written online source does not have page numbers, APA allows the following options: paragraph number; title of a section or heading; or title of a section or heading along with the paragraph number. Use the abbreviation for paragraph (para.), not the entire word. If the online source does not number its paragraphs, the author should number the paragraphs from the start of the article. If the article has headings or sections, the author should number the paragraphs by each one. Cite the heading or section and the number of the paragraph to more quickly direct the reader to the source. Headings can be shortened. *Please note, despite this APA standard, some instructors do not require students to include the paragraph numbers. Check with your instructor for specific requirements.*

In this example, Dulgar is the author, 2015 is the year, the heading is Will I Ever Understand APA?, and para. 4 is the paragraph.

The study examined participants over a two year period and discovered “measurable improvements in understanding APA formatting between the first paper written and the last paper written” (Dulgar, 2015, Will I Ever Understand APA?, para. 4).

Quotation, two authors named in parenthetical citation:

You have to use both authors’ names and the year just as you would with a single author. The names are joined by an ampersand (&). In this example, Bunning and Ellis are the last names of the authors, 2010 is the publication year, and p. 46 is the page where the quotation appeared.

The ground-breaking study showed “significant communication differences between teachers and students” (Bunning & Ellis, 2010, p. 46).

Quotation, two authors named in text:

The authors' names are used in the sentence, joined by "and," followed by the publication year. The page number is at the end of the sentence.

According to Bunning and Ellis (2010), a study showed "significant communication differences between teachers and students" (p. 46).

Quotation, three or more authors named in text:

The phrase "et al." is Latin and short for *et alii* meaning "and the others." In this case, it simply means "Smith and others".

Smith et al. (2015) "discuss when removing the head from a dangerous robot, the main power cable should remain in place" (p. 32).

Quotation, no author:

In cases where there is not an individual author nor an organization as the author, you will often use the title of the source in place of the author. The title would also begin the citation on your references page. If an article title is long, it can be shortened to the beginning words, as in the parenthetical citation below. If the main title of the source is italicized in the reference entry, it should also be italicized in the parenthetical citation. If not, use double quotes.

"Learning How to Fight Robots in the Post-Apocalyptic World" (2015) explains "be wary of robots that appear friendly, as many possess sophisticated manipulation programs" (p. 43).

In addition, the article suggests "alternative power supplies such as portable charging stations" can be used to reboot robots ("Learning How to Fight," 2015).

Paraphrasing and Summarizing

Citing paraphrased or summarized text is similar to citing quotations. You want to give the authors' names and the year of publication. Using page numbers or paragraph numbers when paraphrasing is acceptable but not essential.

Paraphrase, one author named in text:

Williams (2018) explains that rogue mechanized automatons must be fixed by taking their heads off.

Sources Within Sources

Sometimes you want to quote or paraphrase a source that references another source that you have not read. Examples include a passage that contains a citation and a passage that references a primary source (explained further below).

The example below is a quotation that includes a citation for a different source.

“In the United States, the National Institute of Health (2007) estimated that 75% of college students experience sleep problems” (Rodriguez et al., 2010, p. 114).

In this example, you read Rodriguez et al., and you are quoting part of her work in which she cited the National Institute of Health. Rodriguez et al., will appear in your references list; the National Institute of Health citation will not.

You may decide to write about a source that is discussed in another and is difficult to find. A primary source could be an original or personal work, such as a diary, letter, manuscript, or speech. A secondary source, such as a textbook or journal article, is a source that analyzes a primary source. The seventh edition of the *APA Publication Manual* encourages writers to locate and directly quote the primary source; however, that might not be reasonable. For instance, the primary source might be out of print or hard to locate. In the case when you cannot read the original source, list the source that you read in your references list and cite it in your paper.

In Franklin’s letter (as cited in Stoller et al., 2013), he discussed the battle...

In this example, Franklin’s letter is a primary source discussed in Stoller et al., and you did not read the original work. Once again, you will list the Stoller et al. source on the references page because that is the source that you read.

Block quotations

Any quotation fewer than forty words stays within the normal text lines. Quotations that are forty words or longer are done in a block fashion. Block quotations follow their own rules, which are slightly different from shorter quotations.

When the two-year mechanized police action in southern Ethiopia ended, Cooper (2020) tells us:

If it were not for the diligence of the machine enclosed communication hub installed after the robot uprising of late 2017 the human race as of now would most likely not exist on the planet Earth. Furthermore, if humans had not had the forethought to insure there would always be a back door into the subroutines of all robotic servants, then I fear Earth itself would no longer be orbiting the sun. (p. 102)

When using a block quote:

- Do not place the quotation in quotation marks
- Indent the quotation a ½ inch from the margin (tab key) and place it on the next line.
- The sentence introducing the quotation uses a colon
- The period comes BEFORE the parenthetical citation at the end of the quotation
- The author's name and year can come in the opening phrase or in the parenthetical citation

Be limited in your use of block quotations. It is better to paraphrase parts of an author's work rather than quote long passages. Another technique for avoiding block quotations is to remove parts of a passage that are not needed. Use the punctuation mark known as "ellipsis" (...) to show that you have removed words in the text. Be careful when removing part of the quotation.

Do not change the meaning of the quotation. Note that the ellipses below replace unneeded words.

Here is part of the same block quotation shortened with ellipses.

According to Cooper (2020), “If it were not for the diligence of the machine enclosed communication hub...the human race...would most likely not exist on the planet Earth” (p. 102).

In-Text Citations

Paper Sample

In his book *Children with Disabilities*, Batshaw (1997) suggests that smoking can have psychological effects on people who are unable to break the habit (p.147). However, what many do not realize is that, “The effects of long-term smoking are not always physical” (Batshaw, 1997, p. 149). It is important to understand that smoking results in physical and psychological repercussions. Yet, according to *Medical News Today*, “About 87% of lung cancers are related to smoking and inhaling the carcinogens in tobacco smoke” (“Lung,” 2013, para. 4). Therefore, we cannot ignore the physical causes of smoking altogether.

Formatting of in-text citations in the sample above:

- The author’s last name is mentioned in the sentence, followed by the publication date of the source, so they are not included in the parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence. This is a paraphrase of information from the source, so it is still cited.
- The page number where the information was found is included (preceded by “p.”).
- The period goes after the citation, not before.
- Basic citation: the author’s last name, the publication date, and the page number are included in the parenthetical citation: (Author, year, p. #)
- For sources with no authors, the article title is the first piece of information in the reference entry and corresponds with the in-text citation. The first word or two of the title is included in the parenthetical citation. Compare the References Page Sample on the next page to the In-Text Citations Sample above.
- For online sources with no page numbers, a paragraph number is included instead.
- When beginning a sentence with a website title (*Medical News Today* in the sample above), italicize the title and include the parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence.

References Page Sample

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References

Batshaw, M. L. (1997). *Children with disabilities*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Byrne, S. C., Barrett, B., & Bhatia, R. (2015). The impact of diagnostic imaging wait times on the prognosis of lung cancer. *Canadian Association of Radiologists Journal*, 66(1), 53-57.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.carj.2014.01.003>

Lung cancer causes. (2013, January 14). *Medical News Today*.

<https://medicalnewstoday.com/lungcancercauses>

APA references formatting:

- APA has a references page, not a works cited page.
- The sources used are listed in alphabetical order.
- A hanging indent is used. This means the first line of each citation is aligned with the left margin, and each additional line for that source is indented.

APA References: Examples

General tips:

- Start your references on a new page.
- **Titles (Capitalization):** In APA format, only capitalize the first word in the title, any proper nouns, and the first word after a colon. This kind of capitalization is called “sentence case” because the title looks like a sentence. **Titles of journals are capitalized in title case, not sentence case.** In journal titles, the first word, significant words, the word that begins a subtitle, and words containing at least four letters are capitalized.
- **Titles (Italics):** Titles of books, movies, journals, magazines, and newspapers are italicized.
- **Quotation marks:** In the references list, quotation marks are not used around titles of articles.
- **Retrieval date:** The retrieval date is not included unless you determine that the information or webpage might change with no trace of the original content.
- **Author names:** Write all authors’ names as Last Name, First Initials through 20 authors. Add the ampersand symbol (&) just before the last author’s name (Example: Smith, A., Johnson, R., & Scott, T. J.). If a source has at least 21 authors, write out the initial 19 authors followed by an ellipsis (three spaced dots) and list the last author. (Example: Smith, A., Johnson, R., Scott, T.J., . . . Brown, G.). Initials have one space between them.
- **Date:** If the date for a source is missing, substitute n.d. for **no date** (n.d.).
- **Work found in a database:** APA doesn’t require the database name to be listed when a work is located in an academic database. Instead, include the DOI. If there is no DOI, your reference entry will be complete at the page numbers. The DOI stands for digital object identifier and is a set of numbers and letters specifically assigned to a work allowing it to be found online. Not all works will have DOIs, but it should be included if there is one. Database names can be added when there is little chance that the article can be found elsewhere.

	APA Format	Example
Book or ebook	<p>Author Last Name, First Initial. (year). <i>Title of book</i>. Publisher. DOI – if there is one.</p> <p>If there is a URL but no DOI, include the URL only if you expect it not to change.</p>	<p>Albro, S. (2019). <i>Vacant to vibrant: Creating successful green infrastructure networks</i>. Island Press.</p>
Book with editor (ex: textbook)	<p>Editor Last Name, First Initial. (Ed.). (Date).</p> <p><i>Title of book</i>. Publisher.</p> <p>https://doi.org/xxxxx</p> <p>Include the abbreviation for editor, Ed., in parentheses after the first initial. If there is more than one editor, type Eds.</p> <p>Add a DOI if there is one; if there is no DOI, add the URL if you expect it not to change.</p>	<p>Perry, J., Bratman, M., & Fischer J. M. (Eds.). (2019). <i>Introduction to philosophy: Classical and contemporary readings</i>. Oxford University Press.</p>

	APA Format	Example
Journal article with DOI	<p>Author Last Name, First Initial. (year). Title of article. <i>Title of Journal, volume</i>(issue), page numbers. https://doi.org/xxxxx</p> <p>For journal articles, the name of the journal and the volume are italicized. There is no space between the volume and the issue. If there is no issue number, just include the volume.</p>	<p>Buoninfante, L., Lambiase, G., & Stabile, A. (2020). Testing fundamental physics with photon frequency shift. <i>European Physical Journal C - Particles & Fields</i>, 80(2), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1140/epjc/s10052-020-7712-5</p>
Journal article without DOI	<p>Author Last Name, First Initial. (year). Title of article. <i>Title of Journal, volume</i>(issue), page numbers. URL – see below</p> <p>It is not necessary to add a URL to a reference when the article is found in an academic database and does not have a DOI. It is possible that the article can be found in several databases, so a database URL is not essential to the reference entry. When a journal article without a DOI is found online but <u>not</u> in an academic database, you can add the URL only if you expect it not to change.</p>	<p>Porpora, D. V. (2019). Truth, communication, and democracy. <i>International Journal of Communication</i>, 13, 938-955.</p> <p>Note: This article does not have an issue number.</p>
Journal article with article number	<p>Author Last Name, First Initial. (year). Title of article. <i>Title of Journal, volume</i>(issue), article number. DOI</p> <p>For article numbers, write “Article” and then the number, not the page range. Article numbers start with the letter “e”.</p>	<p>Zhang, G., Fan, X., & Wu, Y. (2016) Minimal increase network coding for dynamic networks. <i>PLoS ONE</i> 11(2), Article e0148725.</p> <p>https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0148725</p>
Magazine article	<p>Author Last Name, First Initial. (Date). Title of article. <i>Title of Magazine, volume number</i>(issue number), page numbers.</p> <p>https://doi.org/xxxxx</p> <p>Add the DOI if one is available. When a DOI is not available and the article was found in an academic database, the reference entry looks the same as a magazine in print. Stop the reference</p>	

Magazine article continued	<p>at the page range. Database information is not added.</p> <p>If you don't have a DOI but you have a URL that works and that you expect not to change, you can add the URL if the article was not found in an academic database but was found in an online magazine.</p> <p>Author Last Name, First Initial. (Date). Title of article. <i>Title of Magazine</i>. https://www.xxxx</p> <p>If there are no volume, issue, or page numbers, it's alright for those items to be left out.</p>	<p>Park, A. (2020, July 15). 5 ways to get the most from your sleep. <i>Time</i>. https://time.com/5866724/sleep-tips-andre-iguodala-cheri-mah/</p>
	APA Format	Example
Newspaper article	<p>Author Last Name, First Initial. (Date). Title of article. <i>Title of Newspaper</i>.</p> <p>https://www.xxxx</p> <p>When you find an article in an online newspaper, and it has a URL that works and that you expect not to change, add the URL to the reference.</p> <p>If there are no volume, issue, or page numbers, it's alright for these items to be left out.</p> <p>When writing a reference for an article in print, note the page numbers after the newspaper name. APA says not to place p. or pp. in front of the page numbers. You only note the numbers themselves.</p> <p>Just like journal and magazine articles, a database URL is not necessary.</p>	<p>Burfoot, A. (2020, July 14). Study: To get enough exercise, try engaging in three different activities a week. <i>Washington Post</i>.</p> <p>https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/wellness/study-to-get-enough-exercise-try-engaging-in-three-different-activities-a-week/2020/07/13/c168aeb0-c538-11ea-a99f-3bbdff61af38_story.html</p>
Article or webpage from news website	<p>Author Last Name, First Initial. (Date). <i>Title of article or webpage</i>. News Website.</p> <p>https://www.xxxx</p> <p>The article or webpage is italicized. The news website is not italicized.</p>	<p>Brzezinski, M. (2021, July 19). <i>This is the age of global gender equality — if we want it to be</i>. MSNBC.</p> <p>https://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/age-global-gender-equality-if-we-want-it-be-n1274261?icid=msd_topgrid</p>

	APA Format	Example
Website article with author	<p>Author Last Name, First Initial. (Date). <i>Title of article</i>. Website. https://www.xxxx</p> <p>The article or webpage is italicized. The website is not italicized.</p>	<p>Kapil, R. (2020, May 20). <i>Five ways to protect your mental health with MHFA</i>. Mental Health First Aid.</p> <p>https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2020/05/five-ways-to-protect-your-mental-health-with-mhfa</p>
Website article with no author	<p><i>Title of article</i>. (Date). Website.</p> <p>https://www.xxxx</p> <p>Move the title in front of the date.</p>	<p><i>EMCC invites public to 2-day series of events celebrating Juneteenth</i>. (2021, June 10). Estrella Mountain Community College.</p> <p>https://www.estrellamountain.edu/news/juneteenth-2021</p>
YouTube video	<p>Name. (year, month day). <i>Video title</i> [Video]. YouTube. https://www.xxxxx</p> <p>The author of a YouTube video is the individual or organization that posted it. The name is often not in the form of a first and last name but rather a username or organization name.</p>	<p>Animalogic. (2017, June 20). <i>Pangolins are the cutest animals you've never heard of</i> [Video]. YouTube.</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QY1qqZiaTU8</p>

Resources

This guide was developed using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th Edition (2020) along with its supporting online materials from apastyle.apa.org.

For additional information, consult the following resources:

- The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th Edition
companion blog: apastyle.apa.org/blog
- The Purdue OWL (Online Writing Lab):
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

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