APA (AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION) CITATION STYLE GUIDE

This guide provides examples of citations you might use in research papers following the APA standard. Explanations and formats are based on the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, (fifth edition), (BF76.7.P82 2001 Ref.), which is located at the Reference Desk.

WHICH SUBJECTS USE THE APA STANDARD?

The APA standard for writing research papers is the format outlined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. It is the accepted standard for writing research in the field of psychology. While it is also used for the social sciences in general, it is important that you check first with your professor to see which style that professor prefers.

WHAT IS THE BASIC FORMAT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER?

A research paper written in the APA format consists of a title page, an abstract page, the main body of the paper and final page(s) of references. The American Psychological Association outlines specific rules for writing each of these parts, but this citation guide will focus on the style for citing the sources used to write the paper, including in-text citations and the list of references at the end. Please consult the Publication Manual for instructions on writing the other parts. The web site, Psychology with Style: A Hypertext Writing Guide (http://www.uwsp.edu/acad/psych/apa4b.htm) is also helpful. The site provides examples of different sections of an article in APA format.

The reference list is a alphabetical list (by author) of all the sources used to write the research paper. It differs from a bibliography in that it includes only those sources used to write the paper and cited in-text, whereas a bibliography may also include background material and suggestions for further reading. The reference list appears at the end of the paper and provides enough information to enable the reader to identify and find each source on his/her own.

Reference citations within the text of the paper give specific documentation to the research used in writing the article. They briefly identify (by author and date) the source and enable the reader to find it in the alphabetical list of references at the end of the paper. References cited within the text of the paper must appear in the list of references, and any source included in the list of references must also be cited in the text.

REFERENCE LIST

The reference list (entitled or headed "References") appears at the end of the article and lists all the sources used to write the paper. The entries appear alphabetically by author's last name, and each entry includes the following main parts, each separated by a period:


- xx = volume number  
  xxx = page numbers

If there are multiple entries by the same author, they should be arranged chronologically by publication date. If entries by the same author are published in the same year, place those in alphabetical order by title, and label them "a," "b," etc. following the year but still within the parentheses.

While titles of books and journals should be italicized, the titles of journal articles should not be set off in quotations. In APA format, only the first word of the article or book title is capitalized. The first line of each entry should left justified, the second line should be indented by .5, and the entire reference list must be double-spaced. Periods separate the main parts of the entry and commas or colons are used within each part. Listed below are some examples of sources in a list of References. Examples are taken from or based on the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (fifth edition). Please consult the Publication Manual if you need to see additional examples.
1. PERIODICALS

a. Journal article:


-- If the article is in press, place "in press" instead of the year in parentheses.

-- This format is used for up to and including six authors. When there are seven or more, abbreviate the seventh and additional authors as "et al."

-- Spell out the full name of a group author (e.g., National Institute of Mental Health).

b. Magazine article:


-- Give the periodical title in full, in uppercase and lowercase letters.

-- Give the volume number of journals, magazines and newsletters. Do not use “Vol.” before the number. If, and only if, each issue of a journal begins on page 1, give the issue number in parentheses immediately after the volume number and not italicized.

-- Give the date shown after the year, month day.

-- If there is no volume number, include the month or season, for example (2001, August).

c. Newspaper article, no author:


-- Alphabetize works with no author by the first significant word in the title.


-- Precede page number(s) for newspaper articles with p. (single) or pp. (multiple).

d. Book review in a journal:


-- If the review is untiitled, use the material in brackets as the title; retain the brackets to indicate that the material is a description of form and content, not a title.

-- Identify the type of medium being reviewed in brackets (book, motion picture, etc.).

2. BOOKS

a. By a single author:

b. By two or three authors:


-- If a book has more than six authors, follow the same rule for journals and abbreviate remaining authors as “et al.”

-- When a title is broken by a colon, capitalize the first letter of the following word.

c. Edited book:


-- If only one editor, use (Ed.).

d. Book translated from original:


-- For a book with the combination of one author and editor as well, list the editor in parentheses after the title, as a translator is treated (see following example):

e. No author given:


f. Edition other than first:


g. Group or corporate author:


-- When author and publisher are identical, use the word “author” as name of publisher.

h. Multi-volume edited work:


i. Article or chapter in an edited book:

-- The author at the beginning is the author of the chapter/article, not the book.

3. DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

a. Doctoral dissertation abstracted in *DAI* and obtained from UMI:


-- For a master’s thesis abstracted in *Masters Abstracts International* and obtained from UMI, use the format shown here.

-- Prior to Volume 24, the title of *Masters Abstracts International* was *Masters Abstracts*, and prior to Volume 30, the title of *Dissertation Abstracts International* was *Dissertation Abstracts*.

b. Unpublished doctoral dissertation:


-- For a master’s thesis abstracted in *Masters Abstracts International* and obtained from the university, use the format shown here.

4. CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

a. Unpublished paper presented at a meeting:


b. Unpublished poster presented at a meeting:


5. REFERENCE WORKS AND TECHNICAL REPORTS

a. Encyclopedia article:


-- If the entry has no byline, place the title in the author position.
b. Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) document:


c. Government document:


6. ELECTRONIC SOURCES

**FORMAT FOR CITING ELECTRONIC SOURCES**

The variety of materials available on the Web, and the variety of ways in which it is structured and presented, can present challenges for creating useable and useful references. Authors should observe the following two guidelines when citing Internet sources:

-- Direct readers as closely as possible to the information being cited – whenever possible, reference specific documents rather than home or menu pages.

-- Provide addresses that work.

At the minimum, a reference of an Internet source should provide a document title or description, a date (either the date of publication or update or the date of retrieval), and an address (in Internet terms, a uniform resource locator, or URL). Whenever possible, identify the authors of a document as well.

-- You might want to check the following webpage if you need further assistance with citing electronic sources: [http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html](http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html).

Below are some examples of citations that you might use in writing your research paper:

a. Internet articles based on a print source:


-- If you have reason to believe that the online version differs from the text (e.g., the format differs or page numbers are not indicated) or that it includes additional data or commentaries, you will need to add the date you retrieved the document and the URL. For example:


b. Article in an Internet-only journal:

c. **Daily newspaper article, electronic version available by search:**


d. **Message posted to an electronic mailing list:**


-- Provide the name of the mailing list and the address for the archived version of the message.

e. **Electronic copy of a journal article retrieved from database:**


-- If retrieving an abstract from a database, include “Abstract retrieved” after citation information.

f. **Nonperiodical document on the Internet:**


g. **Email:**

Since the APA *Publication Manual* considers email personal correspondence rather than "recoverable data," it suggests that while messages can be cited within the text of the paper, they should not be included in the list of references. To cite within the text, include the author's first initials and last name as well as an exact date:

Some suggest that analysis of child maltreatment in Pennsylvania should be carried out on disaggregated data (R.W. Wilson, personal communication, March 24, 1999).

**Parenthetical Text References**

Citations within the text of the paper follow detailed documentation of the research studies used to write the paper. These text references use author and date to briefly identify the study and to point readers to the more detailed information in the list of References at the end of the paper. Listed below are some common examples of reference citations within the text of the paper. As you can see from these examples, any information that is mentioned in the text does not need to be repeated within the parentheses.
a. One work by one author:

-- The author and date can be mentioned either with or without the parentheses:

As Bandura (1977) noted, human behavior can be seen as an ongoing interaction between an individual and her environment.

In 1977 Bandura noted that human behavior can be seen as an ongoing interaction between an individual and her environment.

Human behavior can be seen as an ongoing interaction between an individual and her environment (Bandura, 1977).

b. One work by multiple authors:

-- When a work has two authors, always cite both authors whenever the reference appears in the text of your paper.

-- If the citation occurs at the beginning or within a sentence, spell out “and” (i.e., Bandura and Smith, 1977). If the citation is enclosed by parentheses at the end of the sentence use an ampersand (i.e., Bandura & Smith, 1977).

-- When a work has three, four or five authors, cite all authors the first time the reference appears followed by the year in parentheses. In subsequent appearances, cite the first author followed by "et al.," and the year in parentheses if it is the first subsequent mention in the paragraph. If there is more than one subsequent mention within a paragraph, then omit the year from the citation and include only the first author's last name followed by "et al."

-- When a work has six or more authors, cite only the last name of the first author followed by "et al.," and the year in parentheses for all citations that appear in the paper.

c. Corporate author:

The American Psychiatric Association defines Conduct Disorder as a persistent pattern of behavior in which the basic rights of others are violated (1994).

Conduct Disorder is defined as a persistent pattern of behavior in which the basic rights of others are violated (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

-- The first text citation should write out the entire name of the organization, but subsequent text citations may use accepted abbreviations (i.e., Amer. Psych. Assoc.).

d. Direct Quotations:

-- Include the page number after the author and year:

The inner world of children suffering from abuse has been described as one in which "organized images and thoughts can be punctured without warning by fragmented pictures, flashes, sounds and feelings" (Heineman, 1998, p. 144).
e. Multiple works within the same citation:

-- If the works are by the same author, cite the author's or authors' last name followed by the years:

Past research (Edeline and Weinberger, 1991, 1993) tells us that…

-- If the works are by different authors, list them within the parentheses in alphabetical order, and separate the citations by a semicolon:

Several studies (Balda, 1980; Kamil, 1988; Pepperberg and Funk, 1990) have explored the relationship…

FOOTNOTES

Footnotes are used on occasion to supplement an idea from the text of the paper. These notes should be brief and should convey just one idea that enhances a point from the main content of the paper. When this additional information is necessary, place a number at that point in the text (slightly above the line) and place the information, correspondingly numbered, on a separate page at the end of the paper after the page of References. Double-space all content footnotes, and indent the first line, just like the first line of a paragraph. An example is listed below.

Text:

This shows that the problem for research areas in which different measurement instruments and different cutoff points are employed is simply that the various studies address different questions. This is important to recognize because it rules out solutions that are based on research designs, data analysis, or statistical methods.¹

Note:

¹This is a much-debated and contentious issue in modern measurement theory. A proper treatment of this claim is well beyond the scope of this chapter. The claim, however, should not be taken lightly, since at its root are arguments that undermine the logical coherence of construct validity and axiomatic measurement theory. Interested readers can find a comprehensive treatment of the relevant issues in Jackson (1996).

LINKS TO OTHER APA CITATION GUIDES:


OTHER USEFUL SOURCES: