What is APA style?*

Like all documentation styles, APA style provides a standard system which gives credit to others for their contribution to your work. It is known as a “parenthetical” documentation style, meaning that citations to original sources appear in your text. This allows the reader to see immediately where your information was found, and it saves you the trouble of making footnotes or endnotes.

The APA style includes three kinds of information in in-text citations.

1. The author’s last name*
2. The work’s date of publication*
3. The page number, appears only in a citation to a direct quotation. (*these items must match exactly the corresponding entry)

The APA encompasses strict guidelines for the formatting of documents. Formatting the reference list and headings are the most important aspects of these guidelines in academic writing. The general intent of the Publication Manual is to assist the editorial staff of APA journals in typesetting. If you are preparing a paper for a class assignment rather than a journal, you are in a sense publishing it yourself. Therefore, according to APA, you may relax the APA’s rules in some cases: The student should find out whether (or in what respects) the university’s or department’s [or instructor’s] requirements for theses, dissertations, and student papers take precedence over those of the Publication Manual.

Writers are reminded that they are preparing the “final” copy; because the manuscript will not be set in type, the manuscript must be as readable as possible. Many of APA’s format requirements aid production for publication. Reasonable exceptions to APA style for theses and dissertations often make sense and are encouraged to better serve communication and improve the appearance of the final document. For example, tables may be more readable if single-spaced, and justified margins may substitute for ragged right margins (in this case, end-of-line hyphens are acceptable).

*Source: The Writing Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.
For an APA style online tutorial, refer to:

http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx

Bibliography for the APA Handbook:

An Introduction to Parenthetical Citation

This section provides guidelines on how to use parenthetical citations to cite original sources in the text of your paper. These guidelines will help you learn the essential information needed in parenthetical citations, and teach you how to format them correctly.

- Parenthetical citations are citations to original sources that appear in the text of your paper. This allows the reader to see immediately the source of your information, and it saves you the trouble of making footnotes or endnotes.
- The APA style requires three kinds of information in in-text citations. The author's last name and the work's publication date must always appear, and these items must match exactly the corresponding entry in the references list. The third kind of information, the page number, appears only in a citation to a direct quotation.

Where to place parenthetical citations

There are three options for placing citations in relation to your text:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sample Citation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Idea-focused</td>
<td>Place the author(s) and date(s) in parentheses at an appropriate place in or at the end of a sentence</td>
<td>Researchers have pointed out that the lack of trained staff is a common barrier to providing adequate health education (Fisher, 1999) and services (Weist &amp; Christodulu, 2000).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Researcher-focused</td>
<td>Place only the date in parentheses</td>
<td>Fisher (1999) recommended that health education be required for high school graduation in California.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Chronology-focused</td>
<td>Integrate both the author and date into your sentence</td>
<td>In 2001, Weist proposed using the Child and Adolescent Planning Schema to analyze and develop community mental health programs for young people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Guidelines

- Place citations in sentences and paragraphs so that it is clear which material has come from which sources.
- Use pronouns and transitions to help you indicate whether several sentences contain material from the same source or from different sources.

Symthe (1990) found that positioning influences ventilation. In his 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...
## Parenthetical Citations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First and subsequent citations</th>
<th>A source with 1 or 2 authors</th>
<th>Authors with the same surname</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within a paragraph, omit the year in citations after the first one if no confusion with other studies will result</td>
<td>Cite name(s) in first and all subsequent citations</td>
<td>Use initials even if the years are different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[new paragraph] The questionnaire administered by Fisher (1999) was used by . . .</td>
<td>Adkins and Singh (2001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A source with three to five authors</th>
<th>A source with six or more authors</th>
<th>Sources with two or more six-author groups with same first surname</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In all citations after the first, use the first author’s name followed by et al.</td>
<td>Use the first author's name followed by et al. in all citations</td>
<td>If two or more six-author groups shorten to the same surname, cite the surnames of as many subsequent authors as needed to distinguish references.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First citation: (Baldwin, Bevan, &amp; Beshalke, 2000)</td>
<td>6 authors: (Utley et al., 2001)</td>
<td>(Baldwin, Utley et al., 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent citation: (Baldwin et al., 2000)</td>
<td>7 authors: (Yawn et al., 2001)</td>
<td>(Baldwin, Bevan et al., 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Note: In the reference list, use of et al. begins with 7-author references.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A source with no author</th>
<th>An editor's work with no author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use the first few words of the title—in quotation marks for article or chapter; in italics for self-contained item</td>
<td>Use editor(s) names in the author position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(&quot;Mad Cow,&quot; 2001)</td>
<td>See guidelines for citing authored work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sleep Medicine, 2001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you have:</td>
<td>What you do:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Two or more works in parentheses</td>
<td>Arrange by order of the reference list; use a semicolon between works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Representative works</td>
<td>Use <em>e.g.</em> <em>(for Sample Citation)</em> before parenthetical citations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Major work plus others</td>
<td>Use <em>see also</em> after major work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When you have:</th>
<th>What you do:</th>
<th>Sample Citation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Entire Web site</td>
<td>Don't put on reference list. Include URL in-text instead</td>
<td>The APA’s site is an excellent source of information on writing (http://).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Direct quotation from electronic source without page numbers</td>
<td>Use paragraph numbers (preceded by <em>para.</em> or ¶); add section numbers for long documents</td>
<td>Universal interventions &quot;target the general public or a whole population group that has not been identified on the basis of individual risk&quot; (Greenberg et al., 2000, Section I, para. 20).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Book Reference

**Book (1):** Basic form, single author  

**Book (2):** Editors in place of authors  

**Book manuscript:** Submitted but not yet accepted; 3-6 authors  

**Chapter in edited work:** Second or later edition  

Magazine or Newspaper Reference

**Magazine article:** Basic form  

**Newspaper Article:** No author; electronic version found on searchable, aggregated database  

Private Organization Publication

**Publication, private organization:** Basic form  

Format for the Reference List

**Title**  
Type the word "References" at the top of a new page, centered.

**Spacing**  
All entries should be double-spaced, unless your assignment instructs you otherwise.

**Indentation**  
Although the current *Publication Manual* advises standard (five spaces, first line) indentation for the references list, this is primarily designed to make typesetting easier; the typeset version will have hanging indents (first line flush left, following lines five spaces indent).

If your final version will be turned in for a grade rather than publication, we recommend that you use hanging indents for enhanced readability. We have formatted our sample references list with hanging indents.

**Capitalization**  
Capitalize only the first word of titles of books and articles and the first word after a colon.

**Punctuation**  
Use a comma to separate
- surnames from initials
- a newspaper title from p. or pp.
- a journal title from volume number
- a volume number from page numbers
- when given, an issue number from page numbers
- (Ed.) from book title
- city of publication from state

Electronic Versions of Print Sources

**Electronic versions of print sources** reproduce the exact same content, format, and page numbers as the print versions. For these kinds of electronic sources, you need to indicate that you read the source in the electronic version (by placing [Electronic version] after the title of the article), but you do NOT need to provide a retrieval date or a URL.

**Journal Article**

**Journal article (1): Basic form, single author**


**Journal article (2): Journal paginated by issue, 3-6 authors**


**Journal article (3): 7 or more authors**


**Journal article (4): In press**


**Journal article (5): In Internet-only journal; secondary reference**


**Journal article (6): Electronic version of print journal that differs from print version (e.g. no page numbers in text; tables reduced)**


**Journal article (7): Special issue of Internet journal based on print source**


[Note: Brackets are used to enclose information about the form of a document, 2 items in this case.]

**Conference Paper**

**Conference paper: Basic form**


**Poster session: Form for non-online version would be the same except for retrieval statement**

Dissertation (1): Abstracted in Dissertation Abstracts International (DAI); obtained from university


Dissertation (2): Abstracted in DAI; obtained from UMI


Dissertation (3): Retrieved from online database


Government Report

Government report (1): From Government Printing Office (GPO); organization as author (group author)


Government report (2): Obtained online; organization as author (group author)

Page Numbering and Page Header

Starting with the title page, place consecutive page numbers at the upper right-hand corner of the page, at least 1 in. (whatever your right margin is) from the right edge of the page, between the top of the page and the first line of text (the default setting on most word-processing programs, 1/2 in. from the top of the page, is acceptable).

Use the first two or three words of your title as a page heading on every page, including the title page and reference pages. Place it five spaces to the left of the page number, using the header function of your word-processing software to place it automatically on every page.

Margins
Use uniform margins at least 1 in. from the top, bottom, and sides of every page.

Spacing
Double-space all text throughout the manuscript, including the title page and reference page. For student papers, the APA allows some exceptions, for instance, wider spaces between text and headings, and single-spacing within reference list items and long quotations. Check with your instructor before making these exceptions.

Indentation
Use the tab key to indent the first lines of paragraphs and all lines of block quotes five to seven spaces or 1/2 in.

Type Face
Use a serif typeface of 12 points, such as 12-point Times Roman or 12-point Courier. (Serifs are the "tails" that you see at the top and bottom of the letters that help readers to follow a line of text.)
Headings for Your Paper

Example: Level 1 Headings*

Most undergraduate papers often use only **Level 1** headings, which are:
- centered
- uppercase and lowercase

* Heading font sizes enlarged for illustration purposes. In an actual paper, headings are the same font size as regular text.

Example: Level 1 & 3 Headings*

Slightly more complex undergraduate papers often use **Level 1** and **Level 3** headings. **Level 3** headings are:
- flush left
- italicized
- uppercase and lowercase

* Heading font sizes enlarged for illustration purposes. In an actual paper, headings are the same font size as regular text.
Example: Level 1, 3, & 4 Headings

Papers that are long or that have many subsections often use Level 1, Level 3, and Level 4 headings. Level 4 headings are:

- indented
- italicized
- sentence case (only 1st letter capitalized)
- followed by a period, and then immediately by text

Example: Level 1, 3, 4 & 2 Headings

Multi-experiment studies, monographs, and lengthy literature reviews often require Level 1, Level 3, Level 4, and Level 2 headings. Level 2 headings are:

- centered
- italicized
- uppercase and lowercase
Example: Level 1, 3, 4, 2 & 5 Headings

Books often use Level 1, Level 3, Level 4, Level 2, and Level 5 headings. Level 5 headings are:
- centered
- uppercase

---

### Long Quotations

Place quotations of 40 or more words in block form: Indent the entire quotation five to seven spaces, or 1/2 in. (the same distance you indent the first line of a paragraph). An example of the formatting of a paragraph containing a block quotation follows:

> Each paragraph of your text begins with an indent of five to seven spaces, or 1/2 in., from the left margin. Block quotations are often introduced with a colon:

> Indent the whole block quotation as far as the first line of a normal paragraph of text. Don't put quotation marks around it. If the source you are quoting includes quotation marks, you should include them "as they appear in the original."

> If the block quotation has more than one paragraph, indent the first line of each additional paragraph five to seven spaces or 1/2 in. from the new margin. The parenthetical citation (or the page number[s], if the author and date are used to introduce the quote) follows the final punctuation mark of the block quotation, with no period after the closing parenthesis. (Author, 2001, page 000)
**APA Style**

**Abbreviations**

- 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**

- Capitalize all words of four letters or more in titles of books and articles in text.
- Do not capitalize names of laws, theories, and hypotheses except for proper nouns.

**Hyphenation**

- For compound words not in the dictionary, use hyphens for clarity rather than omit them.
- Hyphenate compound adjectives that precede the noun they modify:
  - role-playing technique
  - two-way analysis
  - middle-class families
- Do not hyphenate a compound adjective if its meaning is established or it cannot be misread:
  - grade point average
  - gender role difference

**Numbers**

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

**Quotations**

- Incorporate quotations of less than 40 words in the text with double quotation marks.
- Place quotations of 40 or more words in a double-spaced block, indented five spaces from left margin. Do not use quotation marks with a blocked quotation.
- If quoting more than one paragraph, indent the first line of each paragraph five additional spaces from the left margin (for a total of ten spaces).
- A page number always immediately follows a quotation, even when the author and date precede it: Lu (1990) found that "several hypotheses were partially supported" (page 48).