APA Citation Style

Guidelines established by the American Psychological Association (APA) are used by writers in many disciplines to give proper credit to previous works and studies that have informed their own writing. The guidelines for APA Citation Style are outlined in the associations’ Publication Manual (American Psychological Association [APA], 2010).

Plagiarism (APA Manual, pp. 15-16)

It is essential students and scholars do not claim credit others’ words and ideas and properly give credit to others who informed their work. To avoid plagiarism, each time a writer paraphrases or quotes the works of another, that source must be credited in the text. Be sure to cite any worked paraphrases or quoted in your text via an “in-text citation” (usually a parenthetical reference).

For More Information about APA Citation Style see:

Library APA Citation Style Resources (CSU Stanislaus Library):
Available via: http://library.csustan.edu/apa
- Links to examples for basic types of resources
- Access to help via other websites and librarians
- Link to EasyBib citation software

Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL):
Available via: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
Includes online examples for:
- How to cite books, articles, and other sources
- How to cite print and online sources
- Introductory video tutorials on References List and MS Word

APASTyle.Org Website (APA):
Available via: http://apastyle.org/
Blog updates answers to questions on many aspects of APA style
Introductory video tutorials on using APA style

EasyBib (CSU Stanislaus Library):
Available via: http://library.csustan.edu/s/purl.php?1258
Online software that helps format References list entries in APA style:
- Manual forms require correctly typing in author, title, date, etc.
- “Automatic” forms may generate APA-formatted citation based on journal article title or website address
References List

For details, see the APA Manual, pp. 180-192. Every work cited in text of a paper must be listed in the References list at the end. The basic format for a References list entry is:

Author. (Publication Date). Title of author’s work. Publication information.

These elements are entered somewhat differently depending on whether the entry is for a book, an academic journal article, a newspaper article, a government website, etc.


- Appears at the end of a paper, usually on a separate page
- Double-spaced and indented with a “hanging indent” (The first line of each entry is flush left, and subsequent lines are indented 0.5 inch.)
- Alphabetize list by each entry’s first word (usually 1st author’s last name).

Author Names (APA Manual, pp. 181-183)

For first and middle names, use initials (not the full name). Example: Ringstad, R.

- If seven or fewer authors, list all authors in the References list entry with an ampersand (&) before the last author:

  Examples:
  

- If there are more than seven authors, list the first six, followed by an ellipses (…), and then the last author.


- If no individual is listed as an author, a corporate body (e.g. government agency, research institute, company) may sometimes be considered the author.


- If there is clearly no author (for example, a newspaper article without a byline or author listed), the work’s title is placed first.

  State staff visited chaotic assisted care center. (2013, November 1).

Dates

- For most publications, simply include the year of publication.
- For newspapers, entry includes month and day: (2013, May 13).
- If there is no date listed, use n.d. instead. Example: Adams, J. Q. (n.d.).
References List Entries: Articles


Note the capitalization rules (different for article titles and journal names).
Italicize the name of the journal and the volume number.
Add issue number in parentheses after volume if journal’s page numbers restart in each issue:

Format:

Author’s last name, Initials. (Year). Title of the article: Subtitle of article. *Name of the Journal*, volume, pages. doi:doi number

Examples:


Newspaper Article  (APA Manual, p. 200)

Include the month and day after the year. Since newspapers often number their pages with a section letter (e.g. page A7), include p. (or pp.) before the page number. For online articles, include URL.

Format:

Author’s last name, Initials. (Year, Month Day). Title of the article: Subtitle of article. *Name of the Newspaper*, pages.

Examples:


State staff visited chaotic assisted care center. (2013, November 1). *Modesto Bee*.

References List Entries: Books


Italicize the title of the book capitalize the first word of the title and subtitle, and any proper nouns. For the U.S. state, use the two letter abbreviation. For non-U.S. cities, spell out the name of the country. If two or more publisher locations are listed, use the first one (or the main location, if specified). Omit “superfluous” words like Publishers, Inc., or Co. from the publisher’s name.

Format:

Author’s last name, Initials, & Second author’s last name, Initials. (Year). Title of the book: Subtitle of the book. City, State: Publisher

Example:


CSU Stanislaus Master’s Thesis

If the university’s name includes the city and/or state, the city and/or state do not need to be repeated.

Format:

Author’s last name, Initials. (Year). Title of the thesis (Unpublished master’s thesis).

Name of University, City, State.

Example:


California State University, Stanislaus, Turlock.
Online Publications (Articles, Reports, Web Pages)

For additional help with how to cite items retrieved online, see:

APA Manual (pp. 187-192, 198) - Library Ref. BF 76.7.P83 2010
APA Style Online - http://apastyle.org (especially the Blog section)
Library APA site - http://library.csustan.edu/apa (links to Purdue and EasyBib)

Articles, Reports, or Books

For articles, books, technical reports, or newspaper articles retrieved online, you can often cite the item in the same way you would a “normal” print item, but add either a “doi” or a “Retrieved from” statement.

- For items with a doi number, simply include doi: and the number at the end.
- For items without a doi and retrieved from a library database, APA now suggests simply citing it as a normal print item (p. 192). Note: generally, the library’s online copy should be exactly the same as the original print.
- For online items **lacking a doi and not retrieved from a library database**, add a “Retrieved from” statement and the appropriate URL (web address) and do not include a final period. Example: Retrieved from http://www.socialworker.com

Other, Non-Traditional Sources Online

For items of a specific or non-traditional form, include the brief “description of form” in brackets after the title. E.g. [Web log post]

**Web Page:** (individual author but sponsored by an organization) (p. 206)

Author’s last name, Initials. (Year). Title of web page. Retrieved from Name of Organization’s website: URL.

**Web Page:** (corporate author)

Name of Organization. (Year). Title of web page. Retrieved from URL.


**Web Page** (for informally / self-published works)

Author’s last name, Initials. (Year). *Title of web page*. Retrieved from URL.
Other Online Materials

To Indicate Item was Retrieved Online (APA Manual pp. 214-215):

- If they are identifiable, use the name of an individual author (or the responsible corporate body). If not available, “screen names” can be used instead.
- For items of a non-traditional format (e.g., not a book, article, report, etc.), include the brief “description of form” in brackets after the title. E.g. [Web log post]

Message Posted to an Online News/Discussion Form

Author’s last name, Initials. (Year, Month Day). Title of post [Online Forum comment]. Retrieved from URL

Blog Post

Author’s last name, Initials. (Year, Month Day). Title of post [Web log post]. Retrieved from URL

Blog Post Comment

Author’s last name, Initials (or handle/nickname). (Year, Month Day). Title of post [Web log comment]. Retrieved from URL

You Tube Video

Author’s last name, Initials [Screen name]. (Year, Month Day). Title of video [Video file]. Retrieved from URL


Examples are from the APASStyle.org and Purdue OWL APA Style websites.
In Text Citation Basics

- To avoid plagiarism, academic authors credit works that provided major ideas as well as facts, figures and quotations for that paper.
- Any work listed in the References must be cited in the text of the paper, and works cited in the text must appear in the References list.
- Citations usually include the author names and the year of publication.
- Author’s names and publications years are usually found in parentheses. However, if those elements are included in the prose of the paper (making it clear to the reader what the source is), those elements may be excluded from the parenthetical citation.
- The beginning of a parenthetical citation must match the beginning of the corresponding References list entry (usually the first author’s last name).
- APA format for in-text citations can be found on pages 170-171 in the American Psychological Association’s (2010) *Publication manual*.
- Direct quotations of less than forty words appear in the normal text in quotation marks. Forty words or more appear in an indented block quote.

### Format for In-Text Citations

**Single author:**

(Author’s last name, year)  
Example: (Taylor, 2004)

**Two authors:**

(Taylor & Green, 2004)

**Corporate Author:**

(American Psychological Association, 2010)

**If no author, abbreviate title:**

(“State staff visited chaotic assisted care center,” 2013)

**Three to Five Authors:**

List all first time work is cited: (Taylor, Green & Cho, 2007)

List first followed by et al. for subsequent citations: (Taylor et al., 2007)

**Six or More Authors:**

List first author’s last name followed by et al.: (Jones et al., 2007)
Examples of In-Text Citations:

As stated in the American Psychological Association’s (2010) *Publication manual* and various web site guides (CSU Stanislaus University Library, 2010; Purdue University Online Writing Lab, 2011), the basic format for a citation in the text of a paper is to place the author's last name and the year of publication in parentheses. The “in-text” citation leads the reader to a specific entry in the References list included at the end. This handout includes an example of a scholarly journal article that is continuously paginated (Rjecki & Borden, 2011), and one that is not (Meymandi, 2010).

References


How to Cite In Text: Elements in Parentheses (or text)

Two elements (author and date) need to be clearly included. Both are usually placed in parentheses at the sentence end, but can instead be included in the prose (non-parenthetical text of the paper). *Examples:*

In a recent study, a majority of social workers reported being the victims of assault (Ringstad, 20015).

Ringstad (2005) reported that over half of social workers experienced assault within the past year.

A 2005 study by Ringstad reported over half of social workers were the victims of client assault in the past year.

Basic Citation Styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of citation</th>
<th>First citation in text</th>
<th>Subsequent citations in text</th>
<th>Parenthetical format, first citation in text</th>
<th>Parenthetical format, subsequent citations in text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One work by 3-5 authors</td>
<td>Bradley, Ramirez, and Soo (1999)</td>
<td>Bradley et al. (1999)</td>
<td>(Bradley, Ramirez, &amp; Soo, 1999)</td>
<td>(Bradley et al., 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One work by six + authors</td>
<td>Wasserstein et al. (2005)</td>
<td>Wasserstein et al. (2005)</td>
<td>(Wasserstein et al., 2005)</td>
<td>(Wasserstein et al., 2005)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>