

APA Documentation Format Information

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This document provides you with an overview of how to document sources in the American Psychological Association documentation format. Its two sections, “The APA References List” and “APA In-Text Citation” provide general guidelines for citing sources that you use in your texts. Remember, though, that this document provides *only* an overview and guidelines; it should *not*, therefore, be used in lieu of *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, as that book provides much greater detail on the citation of sources.

The APA References List.

The *references list* is the way in which bibliographical information describing cited sources is presented in every document prepared in APA format. Though we will not be covering APA *manuscript* format in this document, we will cover APA *citation* format; this is to say that when we cite sources in our projects, we will use the rules set forth by the APA to report the sources of the information we use.

First, a few definitions. A *source* is any book, magazine, journal, newspaper, audiorecording, videorecording, database, cd-rom, or anything else we get information from. When we use information from *sources*, we cite the source; *citing* a source is giving credit for information or ideas where that credit is due – in short, not claiming someone else’s ideas or information as your own. So when we use information from a *source*, we *cite* it; and we’ll cover the procedures for citing our sources in-text (where we’ve placed the borrowed information) in “APA In-Text Citation” below. For right now, we’re concerned with the fact that we must, when we have cited sources, provide a list of the sources we have cited. In APA citation format, this is called a list of *References* (as opposed to a list of *Works Cited* or a *Bibliography*). The remainder of this section provides instruction in setting up a list of references.

Print Sources in the APA List of References

The basic pieces of information we need to create an entry in a list of references for a print source (we will cover on-line sources below) are as follows (this is, again, *basic*, consult *The Publication Manual of the APA* for greater detail):

- the author’s name *or* the authors’ names: last name and initial(s) for each author.
- the date of publication: at least the year, and oftentimes the month or other periodical demarcation.
- the title of the work.
- the title of any larger work in which this work appears, if any: most often with edited collections (books of articles) and periodicals.
- name(s) of editor(s) and/or translator(s), if any: last names and initial(s) for each.
- the place of publication (for a book): city (and state or country).
- the publisher (for a book).
- the volume and issue numbers (for a periodical).
- the page numbers in a larger work, if any.

This information will allow you to generate an entry for most any print (books and periodicals) source in an APA list of references. Specific examples are given below.

Books.

The form of a book citation in which the whole book is the work of the same author or set of authors (as opposed to an edited collection of work with an editor and a different author or authors for each chapter) is:

(Gen. Form) Author, A. A. (yyyy). *Title of book in italics: Only first word and first word after colon capitalized.* Place: Publisher.

(Example) Damasio, A. (1999). *The feeling of what happens: Body and emotion in the making of consciousness.* San Diego: Harvest.

Note that even if we know the full first and/or middle names of the author or authors, we use only her/his/their initials in the citation. Note, too, that *all* authors' names are inverted if a text has more than one author.

(Example) Kurtz, E., & Ketchum, K. (1992). *The spirituality of imperfection: Storytelling and the journey to wholeness.* New York: Bantam.

Additionally, note the ampersand (&) above. This is always used in APA format.

For works with multiple authors, if there are six authors or fewer, list all authors in your reference list entry. If there are more than six authors, list the first six and then add "et al." (which is a Latin abbreviation meaning *and others*). This is rarely an issue with books other than textbooks.

If you are citing a chapter from an edited collection (also a book, but a book with an editor and a different author or authors for each chapter), the following format is used:

(Gen. Form) Author, A. A. (yyyy). Title of chapter or shorter work. In E. E. Editor (Ed.), *Title of book* (pp. xxx-xxx). Location: Publisher.

(Example) Newkirk, T. (1992). The narrative roots of case study. In G. Kirsh & P. A. Sullivan (Eds.), *Methods and methodology in composition research* (pp. 130-152). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Note that the editors' names are not inverted. Finally, if a book has been translated, the following format is used:

(Gen. Form) Author, A. A. (yyyy). Title of book. (T. T. Translator, trans.) Location: Publisher. (Original work published yyyy).

(Example) Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). *Thought and language.* (A. Kozulin, trans.) Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (Original work published 1934).

Also note that if a single author's work has been edited by another individual or group, the editor(s) is/are treated in the same manner as a translator, above.

(Example) Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Periodicals.

For citing sources which are published in periodicals (scholarly journals, magazines, newspapers, and the like), use the following format:

(Gen. Form) Author, A. A. (yyyy). Title of article. Title of Periodical, v#(i#), xxx-xxx.

(Example) Balester, V. & McDonald, J. C. (2001, Spring). A view of status and working conditions: Relations between writing program and writing center directors. *WPA: Writing program administration*, 24(3), 59-82.

(Example) Lord, L. (1999, March 22). DiMaggio's America: The way we were. *U. S. news and world report*, 126, 19-21.

Web (or Internet) Sources.

To cite an internet source (specifically a web node), use the following format:

(Gen. Form) Author, A. A. (yyyy). Title of web document. Retrieved Month dd, yyyy from URL (including protocol).

(Example) Kapper, M. C. (2002). english 102 ~ spring 2002. Retrieved May 7, 2002 from <http://icdweb.cc.purdue.edu/~kapper/teaching/102spr2002/index.html>.

These are the basic types of documents generally included in APA lists of references.

APA In-Text Citation

When you are using information from a source, there is no question that you need to acknowledge that it is not your information and tell whose information it is. The question that you must ask yourself is whether you have *quoted* that information or *paraphrased* it; the answer to this question will enable you to provide the information's source proper credit for it.

Quoting.

We say that you have quoted information when you use information from a source *word-for-word* as that source's author presented it. We generally indicate this borrowing of a source's words by the use of quotation marks (" ") around the quoted material. This is a solid practice in all writing, whether or not you are following any specific manuscript

document format (that is, in *any* form of writing, you should enclose quotes in quotation marks). With longer quotations (more than 40 words), APA manuscript format calls for a *block quote*: all text is indented 1/2" from the left margin and no quotation marks are used. Block quotation is entirely optional when you are not conforming to any manuscript format, but if you are using words directly from another source, you *must* somehow indicate that.

In addition to showing that the words you've used are a direct quotation from a source, you must give your reader some way to connect that quotation to your list of references. In APA Citation format, this is accomplished by reporting the author's last name and year of the source. In addition, when you have directly quoted the source, you include the page number from which you took the information. You may either introduce your quotation with the author's last name and year of publication and follow the quotation with the page number, or include all three pieces of information following the quotation.

(Example) According to Smith (2002), ". . . ." (p. 257).

(Example) ". . . ." (Smith, 2002, p. 257).

Either format is acceptable for reporting the source of the quotation. Note, though, that the year of publication always comes with the author's last name, and that the page number always follows the quotation. Note, too, that if the same author has two publications in the same year (J. R. Smith published two articles in 1999), each article is assigned a letter, and they become (Smith, 1999a) and (Smith, 1999b).

Paraphrasing.

The more common way of presenting information in APA writing styles is to paraphrase the information. To do this, you put the information from the source in your own words, and present it without setting it off as quoted material.

Remember, though, that just because you've paraphrased information, it does not mean that the information in question is your own – you've still taken it from a source, and you still need to acknowledge that source. There are, however, a few differences. For one, you (obviously) don't need quotation marks, since you're not quoting. Second, you don't have to cite the page number from which you took the information (other citation formats, though, *do* ask you to include the page number of a paraphrase, so be careful about this). Third, it is most common to mention the author's name in the text when introducing a paraphrase, rather than including it parenthetically after a paraphrase.

More common

(Example) According to Smith (1999),

Less common

(Example) (Smith, 1999).

Other In-Text Citation Information.

Citing Web Nodes.

When you are citing a web page, remember that web nodes *do not have page numbers* and the numbers that your browser includes when you print out a node will not necessarily be the same for other people, so you need not include page numbers even if you are quoting from a web node.

Remember, too, that even within the same site, each web node has a different url, and should be a separate entry in the list of references, using letters after years of publication as needed to distinguish.

Personal Communication.

If you are citing any form of communication from another person to you, you cite it as *personal communication*. This applies to interviews, conversations, letters, emails, and anything else that you think might count.

You *do not* include personal communications in your list of references, you merely cite them in-text (again, no page numbers, even with quotations).

(Example) (G. W. Bush, personal communication, June 10, 2002)

This would be how you would cite something the President told you or wrote to you on June 10, 2002.

Note that in the instance of personal communication, you include the initials of the source in the citation, but that in other instances you do not – *unless* you must do so for clarity's sake. If your reference list includes both J. R. Smith and A. J. Smith, you would include their initials in citations of *their works only*.

Multiple Citations of the Same Work.

The first time you cite a particular source in a project, cite all of the authors' names – whether one or one hundred:

(Example) Smith and Jones (1996) *or*
(Smith & Jones, 1996)

(Example) Dewey, Cheatum, and Howe (1997) *or*
(Dewey, Cheatum, & Howe, 1997)

In subsequent citations, cite one or two authors fully:

(Example) Andersen (1998) *or* (Andersen, 1998)

(Example) Smith and Jones (1996) *or* (Smith & Jones, 1996)

but cite three or more authors by the first author's name, followed by "et al.":

(Example) Dewey et al. (1997) *or* (Dewey et al., 1997)

Finally, if you cite the same source a number of times within the *same paragraph*, you may omit the date after the first citation (unless doing so would inhibit clarity by causing confusion between two or more entries in your list of references).

This covers the basics of APA documentation. If you have questions or run across anything that's not covered here, please ask your instructor and/or consult *The Publication Manual of the APA*.