

APA REFERENCING – THE BASICS

There are several systems currently used in academic writing to document a source. The two most widely used are the style of the Modern Languages Association (MLA) and that of the American Psychological Association (APA). The latter is described here.

Introduction to APA Style

APA style is a style described in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (now in its 6th edition) that describes rules for the preparation of manuscripts. These rules cover areas such as the content and organization of a manuscript, writing style, editorial style, references, and how to prepare a manuscript for publication.

Why Use APA Style?

- It provides a consistent format in your work.
- It allows you to communicate in a familiar and accepted way.
- It protects you against plagiarism.
- It allows readers to cross-reference your sources.
- It gives you credibility as an academic writer. A good writer is a good editor.

Who Uses APA Style?

APA style is used in many disciplines such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, business, economics, nursing, social work, linguistics, and criminology.

What do course tutors mean when they say write in “APA style”?

They may or may not mean writing style for the content of your paper. They are usually referring to APA editorial style, that is, “The rules or guidelines a publisher observes to ensure clear, consistent presentation of the written word.... [It] concerns the uniform use of punctuation and abbreviations, construction of tables, selection of headings, and citations of references, as well as many other elements that are part of every manuscript” (American Psychological Association, 2001, p. 77). They may, even more specifically, be referring to the system of *citations in text* and *reference format* that APA uses (this is what we are focusing on today). When in doubt, check with your course tutor.

“In text” versus “Reference list” citations

What is the difference between these two?

REFERENCE CITATIONS IN TEXT

You need to cite a reference when you are quoting, summarizing, or paraphrasing. The citation will refer the reader to the list of sources at the end of the text (i.e., the reference list).

The basic format for citations in text is to give the **author surname**, **year of publication**, and sometimes the **page number**. For subsequent references to the same study within the same paragraph, you do not need to repeat the year.

When a work has two authors, always cite both names every time the reference occurs in text. Note: “and” is used in text, and “&” if the citation is within parentheses.

Examples

Bachman and Palmer (1996) argue that it is much more useful to see language use being realized as learners performing specific language use tasks. OR
It may be more useful to see language use being realized through the performance of specific tasks (Bachman & Palmer, 1996).

When a work has three, four, or five authors, cite all authors the first time the reference occurs in the text; in subsequent citations, include only the surname of the first author followed by “et al.” Note: this is not italicized and there is a period after “al” (et al. is the Latin abbreviation for *and others*).

For six or more authors, cite only the surname of the first author followed by “et al.”. Note: in the reference list, cite the first six authors in full, and then shorten the remainder to “et al.”.

Example

As discussed in the previous chapter, Dunkel et al. (1993) do not agree with this perspective. OR
As discussed in the previous chapter, there is an alternative perspective (e.g., Dunkel et al., 1993).

Within the same parentheses, arrange two or more works by the same authors in the same order by year of publication.

Example

Past research (Gogel, 1984, 1990) has shown intuitions to be incorrect.

List two or more works by different authors who are cited within the same parentheses in alphabetical order by the first author’s surname and separate the citations by semicolons. There is no comma before an ampersand if there are only two authors.

Example

Several studies (Balda, 1980, 2004; Kamil, 1988; Pepperberg & Funk, 1990) come to the same conclusions.

If you read about a study in a textbook but didn’t read the actual study yourself (i.e., the *original work* or *primary source*), then the textbook is called the *secondary source*. Name the original work in the text, the secondary source, and the date of the secondary source.

Note: only the secondary source is given in the reference list (since this is the only one you actually read).

Example

Supporting data appear in a study by Wong (as cited in Marconi & Hamblen, 1990).

Citation of source for a quote/paraphrase

Give author last name, publication date, and page number in parentheses. Note: you do not have to give a page citation for a paraphrase.

Examples

(Cheek & Buss, 1981, p. 332)

(Shimamura, 1989, chap. 3)

Cobb (1994) suggests that interventions work because “the third party can alter persons’ discursive positions and, in the process, generate a new pattern of interaction, a new interdependence” (p. 58).

OR

It has been suggested that interventions work because “the third party can alter persons’ discursive positions and, in the process, generate a new pattern of interaction, a new interdependence” (Cobb, 1994, p. 58).

Quotations

- **If fewer than 40 words**, put the quotation into the text, and enclose with double quotation marks. Use single quotation marks within double quotation marks to set off material in the original source that was enclosed in double quotation marks.
- **If more than 40 words**, use a block quotation, that is, a freestanding block with no quotation marks, start on a new line, indent 0.5 inches from the left margin. Use double quotation marks within a block quotation to set off quoted material in the original source. The period comes before the page number at the end. Note: APA says not to single space block quotations in manuscripts (for publication) but for student papers, single space is ok.
- **If more than 500 words**, you should probably obtain permission from the copyright holder.
- Make sure your quotation is accurate, that is, the same as the original in wording, spelling, and interior punctuation, even if there is a mistake in the original. If so, insert the word [*sic*] immediately after the error. This is Latin for “in this manner” and tells the reader that the error was in the original.
- What you can change in the quotation **without** explaining: first letter of first word to upper/lower case; punctuation mark at end of the sentence.
- What you can change in the quotation **with** explaining: leaving out material shown by three spaced ellipsis points (...); adding material shown by brackets; emphasis shown by italics and followed by [*italics added*].

Examples:

Quotation 1:

She stated, “The APA style is very difficult for students to use” (Taylor, 1993, p. 276), but she added that with practice and guidance from teachers students can learn it.

Quotation 2:

Taylor (1993) found that “even after two years in graduate school students made a large number of mistakes in using the APA style” (p. 276).

Quotation 3:

Taylor (1993) found the following:

A large number of the surveyed MA and PhD students made up to 5-10 mistakes per paper in using the APA style. The students complained about the unpredictable and illogical nature of the APA style and commented that more explicit teaching of the guidelines would have been useful. (p. 276)

THE REFERENCE LIST

- Enables readers to go back to the original sources. Every source cited in the text should be in the reference list. Exceptions: personal communication, secondary sources, citations within quoted materials unless you cite them elsewhere.
- Every citation in your reference list should be in the text/body of your paper. Unlike a bibliography, the reference list does not cite works for background or for further reading.

Layout

- The reference list goes at the end of your paper.
- Start on a new page. Type the word References in upper and lowercase letters, centered, at the top of the page.
- Generally, the reference list is double-spaced (but, for student papers, APA allows single spacing for reference entries with double spacing between entries - check for your tutor’s requirements) and entries should have a half-inch hanging indent (you can use the hanging indent function in Word).
- The basic information that needs to be included is **author surname and initials, year of publication, title, and publishing data**. Separate each part with a period and a single space.

Order of references

There are three main points to remember for ordering:

- In alphabetical order, letter by letter, by author surname (or title if no author).
- If the same author has several works, order with the earliest work first, and for works in the same year, identify with lower case letters placed after the year.

Types of sources that need to be referenced

What are the sources that you will draw upon in writing your paper? For a comprehensive listing see Chapter 6 of the APA Manual (6th edition).

Format for references – the general forms

Source	General format
Periodicals, e.g., journals, magazines, scholarly newsletters	Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (2004). Title of article. <i>Title of Periodical</i> , xx, xxx-xxx. doi: http://dx.doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy (If a DOI ¹ has been assigned to the article that you are using, you should include this after the page numbers for the article. If no DOI has been assigned and you are accessing the periodical online, use the URL of the website from which you are retrieving the periodical).
Nonperiodicals, e.g., books, reports, brochures, manuals, audiovisual media	Author, A. A. (2004). <i>Title of book</i> . Location: Publisher.
Part of a nonperiodical	Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (2004). Title of chapter. In A. Editor, B. Editor, & C. Editor (Eds.), <i>Title of book</i> (pp. xxx-xxx). Location: Publisher.

Example of a reference list

- Brenneis, D., & Lein, L. (1977). You fruithead: A sociolinguistic approach to children's dispute settlement. In S. Ervin-Trip, & C. Mitchell-Kernan (Eds.), *Child discourse* (pp. 49-65). New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Calfee, R. C., & Valencia, R. R. (1991). *APA guide to preparing manuscripts for journal publication*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Dersley, I., & Wootton, A. J. (2000). Complaint sequences within antagonistic argument. *Research in Language and Social Interaction*, 33, 20-46.
- Doe, B., & Doe, S. (Eds.). (1994). *Stressful life events: Their nature and effects*. Nashville, TN: Bodem Books.
- Garcia, A. (1991). Resolution without disputing: How the interactional organization of hearings minimizes argument. *American Sociological Review*, 56, 818-835. doi: 10.2307/2096258
- Henry, W. A. (1990, April 9). Making the grade. *Time*, 135, 28-31.

¹ DOI is the abbreviation for Direct Object Identifier. The new 6th edition of APA requires that DOI is given for online resources and journal articles. DOIs are an attempt to provide stable, long-lasting links for online articles. They are unique to their documents and consist of a long alphanumeric code. Many-but not all-publishers will provide an article's DOI on the first page of the document. This online tool can help you find the DOI for journal articles: <http://www.crossref.org/guestquery/>

New drug appears to sharply cut risk of death from heart failure. (1993, July 15). *The Washington Post*, p. A12.

Wagner, E. (2002). Video listening tests: A pilot study. *Teachers College, Columbia University Working Papers in TESOL & Applied Linguistics*, 2(1). Retrieved March 31, 2002, from <http://www.tc.edu/tesolalwebjournal/wagner.pdf>

Non-English Books

If the original version of a non-English book is used as the source, cite the original version: Give the original title and, in brackets, the English translation.

Piaget, J., & Inhelder, B. (1951). *La genèse de l'idée de hasard chez l'enfant* [The origin of the idea of chance in the child]. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

English translation of the book

If the English translation of a non-English book is used as the source, cite the English translation: Give the English title without brackets. In text, cite the original publication date and the date of the translation: (Laplace, 1814/1951).

Laplace, P. (1951). *A philosophical essay on probabilities*. (F. W. Truscott & F. L. Emory, Trans.). New York: Dover. (Original work published in 1814)

Non-English article or chapter in an edited book

Davydov, V. V. (1972). De introductie van het begrip grootheid in de eerste klas van de basisschool: Een experimenteel onderzoek [The introduction of the concept of quantity in the first grade of the primary school: An experimental study]. In C. F. Van Parreren & J. A. Carpay (Eds.), *Sovjetpsychologen aan het woord* (pp. 227-289). Groningen, The Netherlands: Wolters-Noordhoff.

Unpublished doctoral dissertations

Kjarsgaard, M. M. (1979). *The order of English morpheme category acquisition by Vietnamese children*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Arizona State University, Phoenix.

Unpublished paper presented at a conference

Cook, V. (2005, October). *Multicompetence: Black-hole or worm-hole?* Plenary speech presented at the Second Language Research Forum, New York.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Citations in text for electronic media

The same basic principles as for print media apply. Give **author surname**, **publication date**, and if no page numbers, give paragraph number and use the abbreviation 'para. If no paragraph number, give heading and number of paragraph following it. You can omit this information if it is confusing. If no author or date is given, use the title in your signal phrase or the first word or two of the title in the parentheses and use the abbreviation "n.d." (for "no date").

Examples

(Myers, 2000, para. 5)

(Beutler, 2000, Conclusion section, para. 1)

(Smith, n.d.)

(Dyslexia and foreign language learning, n.d.)

If you cite an entire website in your text, give the electronic address in the text. Do not cite in the reference list.

Example

The APA's website provides answers to frequently asked questions about style (<http://www.apa.org>).

Reference citations for electronic media

There are two main guidelines:

1. Direct readers as closely as possible to the information being cited (i.e., the specific document instead of the homepage).
2. Make sure the address works! Check that you have transcribed it correctly. The best way is to copy it directly from the address window in the browser and paste it into your paper. Also, test the address regularly.

The basic information that needs to be included is the **author** (if possible), the **document title** or description, an **address** and a **date** (of publication or retrieval). If the document has a DOI, please use that instead of the webaddress.

Here are the general forms:

Online periodical	Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). Title of article. <i>Title of Online Periodical</i> , volume number (issue number if available). Retrieved from http://www.someaddress.com/full/url/ (or doi: http://dx.doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy)
Online document	Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). Title of document. Retrieved from http://Web address

Some of the more important points to remember:

- If the retrieval element is an internet address, DO NOT end with a period.

Article in an Internet-only journal

Bernstein, M. (2002). 10 tips on writing the living Web. *A list apart: For people who make websites*, 149. Retrieved from <http://www.alistapart.com/articles/writeliving>

- If the information is retrieved from an aggregated database, give the database name (no address necessary).

Electronic copy of a journal article, three to five authors, retrieved from database

Borman, W. C., Hanson, M. A., Oppler, S. H., Pulakos, E. D., & White, L. A. (1993). Role of early supervisory experience in supervisor performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78, 443-449. Retrieved from the PsycARTICLES database.

- Use n.d. when a publication date is not available (meaning no date). Note that you do still have to give the retrieval date.

Stand-alone document, no author identified, no date

GVU's 8th WWW user survey. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/usersurveys/survey1997-10/>

- E-mail should be cited as personal communication in the text, and should NOT be included in the reference list.

PUBLISHERS' LOCATIONS

The following locations can be listed without a state abbreviation or country because they are major cities that are well known for publishing:

Baltimore
Boston
Chicago
Los Angeles
New York
Philadelphia
San Francisco

Amsterdam
Jerusalem
London
Milan
Moscow

Paris
Rome
Stockholm
Tokyo
Vienna

Common Mistakes

- **Punctuation**

1. Single space after terminal punctuation.
2. Use of comma before *and* in a three-element parallel structure: A, B, *and* C

- **Abbreviations:** Latin abbreviations used only in parenthetical material; in nonparenthetical material, use the English translation; no space between letters and punctuation

1. e.g., = for example
2. i.e., = that is
3. cf. = compare
4. etc. = and so forth
5. vs. = versus, against
6. et al. = and others

- **Seriation**

Within a paragraph or sentence, identify elements in a series by lowercase letters (or numbers) in parentheses

“The participant’s three choices were (a) working with one other participant, (b) working with a team, and (c) working alone.”

Separate paragraphs in a series, such as itemized conclusions or steps in a procedure, are identified by an Arabic numeral followed by a period but not enclosed in or followed by parentheses.

In any series, with or without enumeration, any item should be syntactically and conceptually parallel to the other items in the series.

- **Italics**

1. Introduction of a new, technical, or key term
2. Letter, word, or phrase cited as a linguistic example
3. Letters used as statistical symbols or algebraic variables

- **Preferred Spelling**

Plural forms of some words of Latin or Greek origin can be troublesome. Note that plural nouns take plural verbs:

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
appendix	appendixes
datum	data
matrix	matrices
phenomenon	phenomena
schema	schemas