APA Style: Highlights

The American Psychological Association developed APA style of documentation in the *APA Publication Manual*. APA style is used by the social sciences, including psychology, sociology, economics, nursing, counseling, and business marketing. Since the social sciences value the most recent research, APA style employs author and dating as first priority. APA uses brief author-date parenthetical citations in the text that direct readers to a reference list at the end of the text. Page numbers are only cited after direct quotations, not after paraphrases or summaries.

Format Papers Correctly

First impressions mean a lot, and it is important to make certain that research papers follow the formatting guidelines established in Chapter 5 of the *APA Publication Manual*:

- Use white 8½ by 11 inch paper and print in black.
- Use a standard serif typeface such as Times Roman. Avoid sans serif, except for figures.
- Use a 12 point font.
- Double-space between all lines of the document.
- Set uniform left, right, top, and bottom margins of at least 1 inch.
- Use flush-left lines of 6 ½ in. maximum length; do not justify.
- Do not break words at the ends of lines using a hyphen.
- See page 8 of this handout for location and spacing of document title, page numbers, page headers, and the running head.
- Make certain your paper has all the required parts (title page, text, references) and that all the parts are in the correct order (*APA*, p. 287).

Use the Correct Form for In-text Citations and for the Reference Page

You must cite material that you quote, paraphrase, or summarize in your paper. Document your paper throughout by citing the author and date of the works you have used in your research. This style of citation briefly identifies the source for readers and enables them to locate the source of information in the alphabetical reference list at the end of your paper. References cited in text must appear in the reference list; conversely, each entry in the reference list must be cited in text. Because the purpose of listing references is to enable readers to retrieve and use the sources, reference data must be correct and complete.

**In-text Citations**

**Summarized and paraphrased material**
Correct forms for in-text citations of paraphrased material are described on pages 207-214 of the *APA Manual*. In any case, author’s last name and date of publication must be included.

**Work by one author:**
**Examples:** Walker (2000) compared reactions times.
In a recent study of reaction times (Walker, 2000)

Within a paragraph, you need not include the year in subsequent references to a study as long as the study cannot be confused with other studies cited in the paper.

**Work by two or more authors:** When given in the text, two authors’ names are connected by *and*. In a parenthetical citation, they are connected by & , an ampersand. **Example:** Smith, Jones, and Rogers (1994) determined . . . or According to one study (Smith, Jones, & Rogers, 1994) . . .
When a work has **two authors**, always cite both names every time the reference occurs in text.

When a work has **three, four, or five authors**, cite all authors the first time the reference occurs; in subsequent citations, include only the surname of the first author followed by *et al.* (not italicized and with a period after “al”) and the year if it is the first citation in a paragraph.

When a work has **six or more authors**, cite only the surname of the first author followed by *et al.* and the year for the first and subsequent citations. (In the reference list, however, provide the initials and surnames of the first six authors and shorten any remaining authors to *et al.*

Work by groups (corporations, associations, government agencies): The names of groups that serve as authors are usually spelled out each time they appear in a text citation. However, the names of some group authors (associations, government agencies) are spelled out in the first citation and abbreviated thereafter.  
**Example:** According to one study (National Institute of mental Health [NIMH], 1991) one in four persons suffers from a mental health disorder. Subsequent text citations (NIMH, 1991).

Work with **no author**: Cite in text the first few words of the reference list entry (usually the title) and the year.  
**Example:** Research shows the dangers of drunk driving (“Study Finds,” 1997).

Works by **authors with the same surname** (include the first author’s initials in all text citation, even if the year of publication differs):  
**Example:** R. D. Luce (1959) and Luce (1986) also found that drinking while driving is dangerous.

Two or more **works by different authors**: List the sources in alphabetical order by the first author’s name. Insert a semicolon between sources.  
**Example:** Past research (Edeline & Weinberger, 1991; Hamblen, 1993) reflects the difficulty in determining responses.

Works by the same author with the same **publication date**: (identify works by the suffixes a, b, c, and so forth after the year. The suffixes are assigned in the reference list, where these kinds of references are ordered alphabetically by the title.  
**Example:** Several studies (Johnson, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c; Singh, 1983) have determined that cheating by college students is common.

Works **without date of publication**: When the work has no date of publication, cite in text with the author’s name, followed by a comma and n. d. for “no date.”  
**Example:** Work hours will continue to become longer for Americans (James, n.d.).

Works from the web or **online sources**: Cite these works in text by author (or keyword of title if there is no author) and date if a date is provided. If no date is provided, use n. d. to indicate no date.  
**Example:** Witchcraft is still practiced in contemporary America (“Witching,” n.d.).

Works from the **classics or the Bible** do not require reference entries. Simply identify in the first citation the text the version you used.  
**Example:** If one member suffers, all the members suffer (1. Cor. 13:1, Revised Standard Version).

An **indirect source or of a source cited within a quotation** must be cited in the text, but they do not need to be included in the list of references.  
**Example:** Supporting data appear in a study by Wong (as cited in Marconi & Hamblen, 1990).

The phrase “as cited in” indicates that the reference to Wong’s study was found in Marconi and Hamblen. You are obliged to acknowledge that you did not consult the original source (Wong) yourself. In the list of references, give only Marconi and Hamblen.
Material that is directly quoted
If the material is directly quoted, page numbers (or paragraph numbers with electronic sources) must be included in the citation. [Additional information in the A.P.A. manual, p. 118]

Example: Miele (1993) found that “the ‘placebo effect,’ which had been verified in previous studies, disappeared when behaviors were studied in this manner” (p. 276).

- Incorporate a short quotation of fewer than 40 words in text and enclose the quotation with double quotation marks. Display a quotation of 40 or more words in a free-standing block of lines, and omit the quotation marks. Start such a block quotation on a new line, and indent it five spaces from the left margin (in the same position as a new paragraph). Parenthetical citations go outside the period with block quotes.
- Use brackets, not parentheses, to enclose material (additions or explanations) inserted in a quotation.
- Use double quotation marks for quotations in text. Use single quotation marks within double quotation marks to set off material that in the original source was enclosed in double quotations. Do not use any quotation marks to set off block quotations.
- For electronic sources that do not provide page numbers, use the paragraph number, if available, preceded by the abbreviation para. or by the symbol for a paragraph (¶).

Reference Page
The sources you cite in text must be fully documented on a page titled References at the end of the research paper. Exact forms for the reference page entries are provided in the APA Manual, pages 215-281. Appendix D provides samples for citation of legal sources other than government reports, which are covered in pages 215-281.

Order and Components of Entries on the Reference Page
- Alphabetize entries by name of author or by title if there is no author. Use the author’s last name, then initials. (APA, p. 219).
- After the author’s name comes the date of publication in parentheses.
- For papers and posters presented at meetings, give the year and month of the meeting separated by a comma.
- If there is no date, write n.d. in parentheses.
- Capitalize only the first word of the title and subtitle of books, articles, and chapter names. Also capitalize proper nouns. Do not underline or place quotations marks around the titles of articles or chapters.
- Enclose non-routine information that is important for identification purposes in brackets immediately after the title
- Next give periodical title in full, in upper and lower case letters.
- Give volume number of journals, magazines and newsletters, but do not use Vol. before number. Example: Time, 135, 28-31.
- Underline (or italicize) the name and volume number of the periodical.
- If the journal does not use volume numbers, include month or season with date.
- Give inclusive page numbers. Use pp. before the page numbers
- Next comes the place of publication, followed by the publisher’s name
• With anthologies and edited books, follow title of the chapter with an abbreviation for editor (Ed.) and name of editor; then follow with the book title underlined, the pages in parenthetical, and place and name of publisher.
• Close each element of the citation, including the last element, with a period.

Complete description of this format for listing periodicals on the reference page is offered on pages 239-247 of the APA Manual.

Finally, if the reference you need to cite is not exemplified in the APA Manual, model your citation after the example that most closely matches your source.

Here is a brief list of types of sources commonly used and examples of how they should appear on the reference page. Note that each entry begins at the flush left margin and that subsequent lines of the entry are indented five spaces from the left margin. All entries are double-spaced.

• **personal communications** (APA, p. 214). Because personal communications (letters, memos, phone calls, personal interviews—but not print or broadcast interviews) do not provide recoverable data, **personal communications are not included in the reference list**. Cite personal communications in text only. Give the initials as well as the surname of the communicator, and provide as exact a date as possible.

  **Example:** K. W. Schaie (personal communication, April 18, 1993) notes that attendance is dropping at public universities.

• **books** by single and multiple authors (APA, pp. 248-254).


  **Example** article or chapter in an edited book, two editors:

  Note that page numbers of the article or chapter title are required in this listing.

• **brochures** (format references to brochures in the same way as those to entire books and in brackets identify the publication as a brochure—APA, p. 251).

  **Example brochure with a corporate author:** Research and Training Center on Independent Living. (1993). *Guidelines for reporting and writing about people with disabilities*. [Brochure]. Lawrence, KS: Author. (Note that in this example the publisher is also the author.)


• **journals with continuous pagination**.


• **journals paginated by issue** (APA, pp. 240).

• newsletters (APA, p.242).


• magazine articles (APA, p.241).


• newspaper articles with and without authors (APA, p. 242-243) Alphabetize by last name of author or by first significant word in the title. If an article appears on discontinuous pages, give all page numbers, and separate the numbers with a comma (e.g., pp. B1, B3, B5-B7).


• e-mail messages and bulletin board postings and list servers are treated as personal communications

Citation of Electronic Sources

At the minimum for an online source provide:
• author’s name (if known)
• date of publication or revision (if known)
• title of document
• title of complete work (if applicable), italicized
• retrieval date and URL (exercise care in transcription)

Internet articles based on a print source (APA, p. 271) Add in brackets after article title “[Electronic version].”


Chapter or section in an Internet document (APA, p. 273)

Example:

Electronic copy of a journal article, three to five authors, retrieved from database (APA, p. 279)

Example:

Daily newspaper article, electronic version available by search (APA, p. 279)

Example:
Sample Reference Page

References


Sample pages from an APA style paper

Title Page

Running head: AN ASSESSMENT OF DATING VIOLENCE

An Assessment of Dating Violence on Campus
Karen M. Tarczyk
Texas Christian University

Abstract

Little research has examined the patterns of abuse and violence occurring within couples during courtship. With a questionnaire administered to a sample of college students, the extent and nature of such abuse and violence

First page of body

In recent years, a great deal of attention has been devoted to family violence. Numerous studies have been done

Later page of body

All the studies indicate a problem that is being neglected.

Sample

I conducted a survey of 200 students (134 females, 66 males, and ....