APA Style: Beginner’s Guide

APA (American Psychological Association) Style is a documentation style used for writing papers and citing sources. It is frequently used in the behavioral and social sciences.


For additional resources on APA style, see the Eckerd Library’s Reference Shelf: Citations and Style Guides at http://libguides.eckerd.edu/reference.

Part A  Create In-Text or Parenthetical Citations

In-text citations (or parenthetical citations) point your reader to specific entries on the References page. These are located throughout the body of your paper, and are used whenever you quote, paraphrase, or summarize information from a source listed on your References page. The in-text citation is generally located at the end of the sentence, or as close as possible to the text in which you quote, paraphrase, or summarize information from a source.

In-text citations include:

- Last name(s) of the author(s) – see the examples below for how to handle multiple authors.
- Year of publication – this comes after the author(s).
- Page ranges – required for quotes, suggested for paraphrasing. Use paragraph # for web sources (e.g. para. 4)

You can cite references either within the text, or at the end of a sentence using parentheses:

- Author name as part of narrative: Smith and Jones dispute the Committee’s conclusion (2004).
- Citation within parentheses: Some researchers strongly dispute the Committee’s conclusion (Smith & Jones, 2004).
- Source cited within an article: Clark’s study (as cited in Smith & Jones, 2004, p. 232), indicates that… (In this situation, your References page will contain the article by Smith & Jones. Clark is merely credited in the signal phrase of your paper.)

Examples (see APA manual pg. 177 for more scenarios):

One or two authors: Jones states that…(2004) OR (Jones, 2004); (Dunn & Diaz, 2003)
Three or more authors: first citation: (Phipps, Jones, & Blake, 2006); subsequent (Phipps et al., 2006)
No author (for an article): (“Economy Perks Up,” 2009) *use first few words of the Title (in quotes)
With page number: (Jones, 2004, p.102) OR Jones states that…(2004, p.102)
Personal Interviews: Mark Smith (personal communication, April 21, 2009) – cite in text only

Part B  Formatting a References Page

The References page is an alphabetical list of all the sources you cite in your paper, using the formats described below. Every source you want to use in your paper must be listed on the references page.

Here are some basic rules to follow when making your References page:

- The References page should be placed at the end of your paper.
- The References page should begin on a new page.
- The References page should be double spaced and the second line of each entry should be a hanging indent (see example on right). To get this in MS Word:
  - Select all references, and then right-click.
  - From the pop-up menu, select Paragraph.
  - To double-space the text, under Spacing, Line Spacing, select Double.
  - To add a hanging indent, under Indentation > Special > select Hanging. This indents the lower lines of each entry 0.5” from the left.
- Alphabetize each entry/reference on your References page by author’s last name, or if the author’s name is not given, by the title of the first work.

Example:

References
Helfer, M. E., Kempe, R. S., & Krugman, ......
Part C  Create Individual References for Your Sources

This section briefly explains how to cite the most commonly used resources as part of an APA References page. For more information, contact an Eckerd Librarian, or find the Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th ed., at your Eckerd Library (Call number: REF PE 1478.P63).

General rules

- If your source lacks one of the elements in the citation, you can ignore that element and continue. For instance, if your book doesn’t list an author, you can skip it and go on to the title.
- Pay close attention to capitalization and italicized text:
  - Book titles – Capitalize first word of title and subtitle that comes after a colon. Capitalize proper nouns. Italicize entire title.
    Example: Making learning whole: How seven principles of teaching can transform education
  - Article titles – capitalize first word of title and subtitle only. No italics. No quotation marks. No underlining.
    Example: Appraising, researching and conceptualizing criminal thinking: A personal view
  - Journal titles – capitalize major words and italicize entire title.
    Example: Journal of Psychology
- For correct information, such as the book title, place of publication, and publisher, consult the title page of the book (not the book’s cover). The copyright date is found on the next page, next to the © symbol, for example, © 2009

1. FORMATTING FOR AUTHOR NAMES

When listing the author(s) of a source, a number of general rules should be followed across all publication formats. List an author’s last name and use initials for the first and middle names. Include a space between the first and middle initial. Refer to the adjacent examples for different author conditions.

One Author
Lopez, M. T.
Two Authors
Lopez, M. T., & Fox, J.
Three to Six Authors
Lopez, M. T., Fox, J., Moran, A., Jones, T. M., & Chen, S. L.
Seven or More Authors
List first 6 authors as above, add ellipsis . . . then list last author.
Organization as Author
National Institute of Mental Health.
No Author
<skip the author and begin with title>

2. BOOKS

PRINTED BOOKS
Author(s). (Year of publication). Title of book: Subtitle of book. Place of publication: Publisher.

ELECTRONIC BOOKS (E-BOOKS)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Type of Book</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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HINT: Many library databases have citation tools that automatically generate citations that you can copy and paste into your paper. This is a good starting point for your citation.
3. ARTICLE OR CHAPTER IN A BOOK (Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, and Anthologies)

PRINT ARTICLE OR CHAPTER IN A BOOK OR ANTHOLOGY:

Author(s). (Year of publication). Title of article/chapter. In Editors (Eds.), Title of book (pp. <insert page range>). Location: Publisher.

ELECTRONIC ARTICLE OR CHAPTER IN A BOOK (found in library databases):

Author(s). (Year of publication). Title of article/chapter. In Title of book (chapter or section number). Retrieved from <insert URL of database>

PRINT MULTI-VOLUME BOOKS (e.g. encyclopedias):

Author(s). (Year of publication). Title of article/chapter. In Title of book/encyclopedia (volume, pp. <insert page range>). Location: Publisher.

ELECTRONIC MULTI-VOLUME BOOKS (e.g. encyclopedias):

Author(s). (Year of publication). Title of article. In Editor (Ed.), Title of book/encyclopedia (volume, pp. <insert page range>). Retrieved from <insert URL of database>

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<th>Example</th>
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4. ARTICLE IN A JOURNAL, MAGAZINE, OR NEWSPAPER

ELECTRONIC ARTICLES (found in library databases):

Author(s). (Year, Month Day if available). Title of article. Title of Publication, volume number(issue number), pp. <insert page range>. doi:<insert DOI if available>

Author(s). (Year, Month Day if available). Title of article. Title of Publication, volume number(issue number), pp. <insert page range>. Retrieved from <insert URL of journal homepage>

- The “doi” is a Digital Object Identifier assigned to online articles. This is usually listed in the database record for the article.
- If your article does not have a “doi”, provide the URL of the journal homepage (see second example above). You may need to search on the journal title in google or another search engine to find the URL.

PRINTED ARTICLES:

If you have a source in printed format, use the following basic format:

Author(s). (Year). Title of article. Title of Periodical, Volume number (issue number if available), <insert page range>.

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<td>Web site with no author or date</td>
<td>International adoption: Getting started with international adoption. (n.d.) Retrieved from <a href="http://international.adoption.com/">http://international.adoption.com/</a></td>
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6. OTHER SITUATIONS

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<tr>
<td>Film (in DVD format)</td>
<td>McQueen, S. (Producer, Director), &amp; Ridley, J. (Producer). (2014). 12 years a slave [Motion picture]. United States: Fox Searchlight Pictures. For films, include the producers, director, year of publication, title of the film, followed by [Motion picture], country of publication, and distributor.</td>
</tr>
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