Citing Sources: APA Format

The following are examples of in-text citations using the American Psychological Association (APA) format. The most common APA citation includes the author’s surname and date of publication. This information is always presented together.


When you paraphrase, cite the author and date of the source:

Duffy (1988) examined sleep deprivation.

If the author’s name is not mentioned in the text, put it in parentheses:

A major study on sleep deprivation did not evaluate the effects of sleep loss in great depth (Duffy, 1988).

If you refer to two authors in the text, use the word “and” between names:

Smith and Spencer (1990) believed that sleep deprivation resulted in slower reaction times.

However, when the authors’ names appear in the citation use an ampersand (&) between them:

Sleep deprivation results in slower reaction times (Smith & Spencer, 1990).

If you are citing an article written by three, four or five authors, each author’s name must appear in the first citation.

Weiss, Carroll, and Fox (1991) discussed colic in infants.

Or:

They discussed colic in infants (Weiss, Carroll, & Fox, 1991).
Subsequent references to three, four or five authors may be abbreviated to include only the first author’s name and “et al.”:

Weiss et al. (1991) found that infant colic may be caused by mental, as well as physical distress.

Or:

The researchers found that infant colic may be caused by mental, as well as physical distress (Weiss et al., 1991).

When mentioning six or more authors you may use “et al.” after the first author’s name for every citation. On the reference page, include the first six authors and use “et al.” for additional authors listed.

Chiasson et al. (1989) observe that good-looking children receive more attention in elementary school.

Or:

They observed that good-looking children received more attention in elementary school (Chiasson et al., 1989).

More than one work by the same author, cite in order of publication:

Grey and LeBlanc (1990, 1993) stated that ...

Several studies should be ordered alphabetically and divided by semi-colons:

Other studies (Clark, 1986; Jeffries & Mullholland, 1988; Levy, 1991) did not show this.

Citation of a work discussed in a secondary source (e.g. Seidenberg and McClelland’s work found in Coltheart et al.’s book):

Seidenberg and McClelland (as cited in Coltheart et al., 1993) described . . .

Use the secondary source only (Coltheart et al.) in the reference list. If the information is critical to your paper, seek out the original source rather than quoting it second-hand.
Paraphrasing: APA Format

Paraphrasing is the preferred documenting style for APA, and direct quotations should be used sparingly. When quoting directly from a source always include the author, year and specific page citation in the text. Note the following examples from The publication manual of the American Psychological Association (2001, p. 118):

Example 1:

She stated, “The ‘placebo effect’ . . . disappeared when behaviors were studied in this manner” (Miele, 1993, p. 276), but she did not clarify which behaviors were studied.

Example 2:

Miele (1993) found that “the ‘placebo effect,’ which had been verified in previous studies, disappeared when [only the first group’s] behaviors were studied in this manner” (p. 276).

Example 3:

Miele (1993) found the following:

The “placebo effect,” which had been verified in previous studies, disappeared when behaviors were studied in this manner. Furthermore, the behaviors were never exhibited again, even when reel [sic] drugs were administered. Earlier studies (e.g., Abdulla, 1984; Fox, 1979) were clearly premature in attributing the results to a placebo effect. (p. 276)
Basic Rules for References: APA Format

- The word “References” is centred on the page but is not underlined, in bold, or italics.
- Author(s) name appears flush left; subsequent lines of the reference are indented.
- Authors’ names are inverted (last name first); give last name and initials for all authors of a particular work. This maintains the gender neutrality standard of APA.
- The reference list should be alphabetized by authors’ last names.
  - If you have more than one work by a particular author, order them by publication date, oldest to newest (A 1991 article would appear before a 1996 article):
    MacDonald, A. (2001). The effects of…….
  - If the author has several works published in the same year, add a letter to the date:
- When an author appears as a sole author of an article and also as the first author of a group, list the single author entry first.
- If no author is given for a particular source, alphabetize by the title of the piece and use a shortened version of the title for in-text citations.
- Use “&” instead of “and” when listing multiple authors of a single work.
- Capitalize only the first word of a title or subtitle of a book. Capitalize all major words of a journal. *Italicize* titles of books and journals including the volume number. Do not italicize the issue number.
- Quotation marks are no longer required around an article title.
- Each entry is separated from the next by a double space and the entire reference list is double-spaced.


Electronic References: APA Format

APA has made many changes to electronic references to make them more complete and uniform. Web documents share many of the same elements found in a print document (e.g., authors, dates, titles). Therefore, the citation for a Web document follows a format similar to that for print, with some information omitted and some added.

Journal article with DOI (digital object identifier) assigned, which replaces the Database and URL:


Article with no DOI assigned:


Online handbook:


Consumer brochure:


Newspaper article:

Sample References: APA Format

References


