

APA Style - 6th Edition

This handout is based on the 6th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) but is not a complete guide.

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What is APA format and why is it used?

The American Psychological Association is a professional organization representing psychologists in the United States. APA format is a set of rules developed to assist with writing and the citing of sources, a format which helps to prevent plagiarism and to acknowledge the original author of the information used. It is meant to provide a concise and standardized citation format for written assignments (e.g., essays, research papers, article critiques, etc.).

In educational institutions, plagiarism is a problem of great concern. According to Aaron (2007) in the *The Little, Brown Compact Handbook*, the word “plagiarism” is derived from a Latin word meaning to kidnap or to abduct (p. 424). Plagiarism is stealing someone else’s work and passing it off as one’s own. In many other cultures, plagiarizing is encouraged because it demonstrates familiarity and respect for the work of noted writers. However, in the United States and at Columbia Southern University, plagiarism is considered fraud and can have serious consequences.

Plagiarism usually comes in two forms: intentional and unintentional. Intentional/deliberate plagiarism includes directly copying, summarizing, or paraphrasing a source without giving credit to the author or putting it in quotation marks. This type of plagiarism also includes turning in a paper that has been bought, written by another student, or copied from another source. Unintentional plagiarism is when a writer uses another author’s thoughts or ideas without realizing credit must be provided. This includes working in groups and submitting the same answers as other students, forgetting to place quotation marks around a direct quotation, omitting a text citation for a summary or a paraphrase, and omitting a text citation for the ideas of another writer. Unintentional plagiarism also includes submitting an assignment that has already been previously submitted in another course. Unfortunately, both types of plagiarism can result in a failing grade, suspension from the university, or even expulsion.

There are a few ways students can avoid plagiarism. The primary, and perhaps the easiest, way to avoid plagiarism is to simply cite any ideas that are not one’s own. Citations help readers to locate the sources used in a paper. Citations should not only be used for direct quotes, but they should also be provided when information is paraphrased or summarized from another author. Paraphrasing a source’s material is a good way to avoid copying directly from an outside source and possibly being reprimanded.

REFERENCING

When writing a paper in APA 6th edition style, there are two specific ways to cite the information that is used: within the text and in the reference list at the end of the paper.

Citations are utilized when a phrase, a piece of specific information, or a sequence of sentences is drawn from an outside source. To meet APA requirements specified for CSU *written essay responses*, one must include text citations and a reference list (pp. 3-7) if any outside sources (e.g., textbook, internet site, journal, etc.) are used. For *formal papers* (e.g., research papers, article critiques, etc.), follow all guidelines listed in this handout.

Citations in Text

- A text citation should be used when a phrase, a piece of specific information, or a sequence of sentences is drawn from an outside source.
- Text citations are also required when putting the author's information in your own words (paraphrasing).
- Citing helps to prevent plagiarism, and it acknowledges the original author of the information used.
- Everything cited in text must appear on the reference page; likewise, everything cited on the reference page must appear within the text.
- APA uses the author-year method of citation.
- It is standard practice for the period at the end of the sentence to be placed after the last parentheses of the text citation. An exception is made if inserting a direct quote that contains more than 40 words; in this instance, the period is placed directly before the text citation.

Paraphrased Information

When paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting a source, provide the author's last name and year of publication (separated by a comma). While it is not required for paraphrased passages, providing a page number in addition to the author and year might help the reader locate the relevant information.

Direct Quotations

If utilizing a direct quote, the specific page number is *always* required. If there is no page number for the source you are using, as this is the case for many electronic sources, provide the paragraph number in its place. Use the abbreviation *para*.

Examples of text citations:

Reference Source	Examples of text citations
Paraphrased information from one author	It has been found ... can be concluded (Simpson, 2007). According to Simpson (2007), ... can cause problems. Other people say... based on Simpson (2007).
Paraphrased information from two authors	There are ... at this point (Stemmer & Tisdale, 2008). Stemmer and Tisdale (2008) mention a set of styles. This plan will according to Stemmer and Tisdale (2008).
Paraphrased	A meal can be tasted (Brown, Collins, & Makel, 2001). **After the first citation is used, shorten to first author's last name et al.

information from three to five authors	Once decided....can be taught (Brown et al., 2001).
Paraphrased information from six to seven authors	**For more than five authors, use first author's last name et al. each time. When stating.... can be located (Padgett et al., 2004). Padgett et al. (2004) explains...is further noted.
Direct quotation less than 40 words	"It is amazing...with confidence" (OSHA, 2010, p. 121). According to Davis and Dudley (2005), "We are....to save" (para. 5). "What is lost...come at all" (Ingram et al., 2001, pp. 8-9).
Paraphrased information with no author listed	When using data can be seen ("Title of Document," 2003). If information is ... was conquered ("Driving and Talking," 2004). According to "Leadership versus Management" (2001), is an art form.
Information from a secondary source	According to Stemmer's work (as cited in Pratt, 2008), it can be found... **Add the page number to the end if Stemmer's work if a direct quote. It can be found ... in Stemmer's work (as cited in Pratt, 2008, p. 65).
Information via personal communication	**Personal communication should only be listed in the text, not on the reference list. J. M. Newsome (personal communication, May 30, 2008) expressedof time (V. P. DeLuca, personal communication, November 9, 2007).
Information found in classical works	**Classical works should only be listed in the text, not on the reference list. ...will have everlasting life (John 3:16 New Revised Standard Version). ...as read in the Bible in John 3:16 (New Revised Standard Version).

Direct Quotations more than 40 words:

Block quotations (quotes that are 40 words or more) are formatted differently, as they have no quotation marks. In formal writing, block quotations are acceptable, although their use should not be in excess. While block quotes are accepted in formal writing, the use of them in essay responses is not encouraged due to the length of the assignment. Block quotations are indented an additional .5". As previously mentioned, the period is placed *before* the citation. Here is an example:

The solutions proposed by a number of advocacy groups underscore this interest in political and cultural change. A report outlined trends that may have contributed to the childhood obesity crisis.

This includes food advertising for children as well as a reduction in physical education classes and after-school athletic programs, an increase in the availability of sodas and snacks in public schools, the growth in the number of fast-food outlets, and the increasing number of highly processed high-calorie and high-fat grocery products.
(Kaiser, 2004, p. 1-2)

Reference List

The reference list is of the utmost importance, as it allows the reader to access the sources cited in the text and enables the student writer to give credit where credit is due. For this reason, the references should contain accurate information, as well as proper punctuation and spelling. References will follow the conclusion of any APA document, including essay responses. For

each reference listed, there should be at least one corresponding text citation in the document. To see example formats for each type of reference, see page 6.

General Reference List Information

- When listing the author on the reference list, the last name should be first, followed by the author's first and middle (if applicable) initials. Ex: Smith, J. R.
- References should be placed in alphabetical order by the first author's last name, by associates (if the work is authorized by an organization), or by anonymous. Anonymous should only be listed as the author if it is signed as such.
- If a particular person did not create the document being cited, use the organization that created the document.
- The document title can be substituted as the author if no author is provided. In this case, the first word of the title will dictate the alphabetical placement (*a*, *an*, and *the* notwithstanding).
- The letters "n.d." (no date) can be utilized if the source listed has no listed date. Substitute "n.d." where the date would normally go. Ex: Smith, R. T. (n.d.)...
- Professional credentials should not be used on the reference page (i.e., Ph.D.).
- References beginning with numerals should have the numerals spelled out.
- When listing the location of the publisher, states should be identified with their two letter abbreviations (e.g., AL, MS, and NY).
- Cities and countries outside the United States should be spelled out.
- There is no need to include a retrieval date with each individual reference unless the source material may change over time (e.g., Wikis).

Books

- For book titles listed on the reference list, only capitalize the first word of the title, proper nouns, and the first word after a colon or dash. Ex: *Addiction and environmental change: A study in New Zealand*.
- Books only require the listing of the year, rather than the entire date.
- Book titles should be italicized within the reference list.

Periodicals: Journals, magazines, and newspaper articles

- For the title of the actual journal, magazine, or newspaper, use standard title capitalization. Capitalize all words with the exception of conjunctions, articles, and short prepositions; however, capitalize all words that have four letters or more.
- Periodical titles should be italicized within the reference list.
- For a journal, magazine, and newspaper article title on the reference list, only capitalize the first word of the title, proper nouns, and the first word after a colon or dash.
- Magazine articles, newsletters, and newspaper articles require the listing of the entire date (month or month and day). Ex: (2001, May) or (2001, May 2)
- Journal articles only require the year.
- For journal articles, there is no need to write out the words *volume*, *issue*, *p.*, or *pp.* Providing the actual numbers in correct order will suffice.

Personal conversations, emails, interviews, and letters

- Due to retrieval inability, personal conversations, emails, interviews, and letters should not be listed on the reference page. Instead, cite *personal communication* in the text. For an example, see the chart on page 4 (information via personal communication).

Websites

- For internet sources that end with a URL, do not add a period after the URL. Otherwise, the period might be mistaken as part of the URL.
- To ensure accuracy, the direct URL should always be tested prior to submission.

Examples of reference list entries:

Source	What to include	Reference Example
Book	Author(s), date of publication, book title, city and state of publication, and publisher	Duenwald, M., Ronald, R. P., & Smith, J. W. (2004). <i>Addiction and environmental change</i> . Boston, MA: Pearson Education. Norman, D. J. (2002). <i>The cat in the hat: Psychological process of younglings</i> . New York, NY: Grumble & Grumble.
Online journal from a database	Author(s), date of publication, article title, journal title, volume (issue), page numbers, and doi or retrieval information	Smith, J. E. (2003). Addiction and environmental change. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i> , 66(3), 47-68. Retrieved from Business Source Complete database. Geller, F., & Frank, P. T. (2005). North land icebergs. <i>Science Weekly</i> , 5(8), 55-70. doi: 10.1123/j.2354-6970.2005.29384.x
Journal	Author(s), date of publication, article title, journal title, volume (issue), and page numbers	Stanton, G. C. (2008). Education in the minds of millions. <i>Education Quarterly</i> , 5(13), 567-580.
Web Site	Author(s), date of publication, title of page, and retrieval information (including direct URL)	Cain, A., & Burris, M. (1999). Investigation of the use of mobile phones while driving. Retrieved from http://www.cutr.eng.usf.edu/its/mobile_phone_text.htm <i>**If there is not an author listed, you can use the company that created the website.</i> Occupational Safety & Health Administration [OSHA]. (2004). OSHA directorate of training and education. Retrieved from http://www.osha.gov/index.html
PowerPoint slides	Author(s), date of publication, title of	Sprott, J. C. (2000). Is global warming for real? [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from

	slideshow, format of document, and retrieval information	http://sprott.physics.wisc.edu/lectures.ppt <i>**If there is no author, list the title of the document first.</i> How to succeed in business [PowerPoint slides]. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://online.columbiasouthern.edu/webapps.jsp
Newspaper	Author(s), exact date of publication, title of article, newspaper title, and page number	Schwartz, J. (1993, September 30). Obesity affects economic social status. <i>The Washington Post</i> , pp. A1, A4.

- If there is a digital object identifier (DOI) available, include that in the reference. The DOI is precisely used to give the reader information about where the document can be found on the Internet. The DOI is typically located near the copyright notice on the first page of the electronic journal article. In the case that there is no DOI, provide the name of the database or homepage URL of the web page where you found the article. Note on the example on page 6 that the doi is not capitalized when listed on the reference list.
- Multiple citations containing the same author and year should be listed alphabetically by the title of the book or article. A lowercase *a*, *b*, *c*, etc. should be placed after the year to distinguish between the entries. This is also used in the text citations. For example:

Munson, R. (2006a). *Human psychology at home*. Chicago, IL: Hawthorne Press.

Munson, R. (2006b). *Human socialization at work*. Chicago, IL: Hawthorne Press.

Selecting Appropriate Research Sources

In academic writing, certain types of resources are considered acceptable. All sources mentioned in this guide are sources that are considered to be academic sources. If you have any questions regarding acceptable and unacceptable sources or how different types of sources (e.g., databases, journals, peer reviews, etc.) can be used, please contact the CSU Library. Additional information about the CSU Library can be found on page 14 of this guide.