

The Basics of APA Style Citation

Citations

Whenever you borrow another person's ideas or words in your essays, you need to let the reader know where you got them from. In other words, you need to do *citations*. Whether you are quoting, paraphrasing (presenting the author's ideas in your own words), or summarizing, you must credit the source. Otherwise, it is the equivalent of stealing another person's thoughts and presenting them as your own, which is called *plagiarism*. APA style is only one way of doing citations and it consists of two parts: *in-text citations* and *a reference list*.

In-Text Citations

The in-text citations mention the source within the text, next to the borrowed idea or quote. There are two main ways to do this, both of which involve the author's last name and the date of the publication.

1. If the author is mentioned within the sentence, then only the year is put in brackets next to the name. With such citations you can use prepositions such as *according to*, *(the author) found that*, and *(the study) showed that*.

For example:

According to Hu (2017), "On the bridge this week, many pedestrians and cyclists said that something had to be done about the congestion."

2. If the author is not mentioned within the sentence, it must be mentioned in the brackets, next to the year.

For example:

"On the bridge this week, many pedestrians and cyclists said that something had to be done about the congestion" (Hu, 2017).

The same principles apply to paraphrased sentences, the only difference being that there are no quotation marks.

For example:

Hu (2017) found that both the pedestrians and cyclists agreed that the Brooklyn Bridge is overcrowded and something must be done to solve that problem.

3. If no author is mentioned, cite the first few words of the article's title. In the case of the article mentioned above, called "Want Fewer Crowds on the Brooklyn Bridge? You're Not Alone," the in-text citation would have been **("Want Fewer Crowds," 2017)** if no author had been identified.
4. Cite YouTube videos by writing (Author last name or Screen name, Year).

For example:

a YouTube video posted by "Ted" in 2007 would have the following format:

Tony Robbins says that the only thing that will fill us up is giving (TED, 2007).

5. For short works such as articles, chapters, or webpages use quotation marks and italicize titles of books, periodicals, brochures, and reports.
6. **If you have multiple works by the same author**
 - For works published in the same year by the same author, add alphabetic designators to the year both in the in-text reference and reference list.

For example:

(Anderson, 1997a, 1997b).

- For works published in different years by the same author, place years in chronological sequence separated by commas.

For example:

- (McBride, 2003, 2007).

7. **If you have authors with the same surname**

- When authors of 2 works published in the same year have the same surname, include the initials of the author in the in-text citation and separate the names by a semicolon and space. When using initials in the text of a sentence do not invert the first name.

For example:

J. Dawson (1986) and T. Dawson (1986) accept the...

(Dawson, J., 1986; Dawson, T., 1986)

8. **Organizations as authors**

If the author is an organization or a government agency, mention the organization in the signal phrase or in the parenthetical citation the first time you cite the source.

For example:

According to the American Psychological Association (2000),...

If the organization has a well-known abbreviation, include the abbreviation in brackets the first time the source is cited and then use only the abbreviation in later citations.

First citation: (Mothers Against Drunk Driving [MADD], 2000)

Second citation: (MADD, 2000)

9. **Works without dates**

Place the abbreviation n.d. (for no date) in place of the year for in-text citations and the reference list.

For example:

Brown (n.d.) associates...

(Brown, n.d.).

10. **Works without Pagination** (when using a direct quote)

Use the abbreviation *para.* to indicate a numbered paragraph rather than a page number.

For example:

Smith (2011) says, "those who..." (para. 3).

He says, "those who..." (Smith, 2011, para. 3).

Reference List

The reference list, on the other hand, comes after the essay. On a separate page, write the word "References" at the top center, and list all of the works you have referred to in an *alphabetical order*. The most important information to mention involves the author's last name and initials (the first letters of his/her name(s)), the date of publication, the title of the work, and the publication information.

- **Books**

In the case of books and periodicals, italicize the title of the work and end with the publication city and publication company.

Author last name, initial(s). (date of publication). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher.

Austen, J. (2002, December 31). *Pride and prejudice*. London, England: Penguin Books.

- **Articles**

In the case of articles, italicize the name of the magazine or newspaper and add the link of the article after "Retrieved from."

Hu, W. (2017, December 8). *Want fewer crowds on the Brooklyn bridge? You're not alone*. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/08/nyregion/brooklyn-bridge-crossing.html? r=0>

If no author is mentioned, the name of the article is written in the place of the author's name.

***Want fewer crowds on the Brooklyn bridge? You're not alone.* (2017, December 8). *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/08/nyregion/brooklyn-bridge-crossing.html? r=0>**

- **YouTube Videos**

In the case of YouTube Videos, if both the real name of the person who posted the video and the screen name are known, cite the video in the reference list with this format:

Author last name, initial(s). [Screen name]. (year, month-day of video post). *Title of video* [Video file]. Retrieved from URL

If only the screen name of the person who posted the video is known, follow this format:

Screen name. (year, month-day of video post). *Title of video* [Video file]. Retrieved from URL
TED. (2007, January 16). Tony Robbins: Why we do what we do [Video file]. Retrieved
from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cpc-t-Uwv1I>

*Note that in the reference list, only the first word and the proper nouns in the titles are capitalized.

References: American Psychological Associations. (2010). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.).

Exercises

Use the following citation elements to make the appropriate citations, both in-text and the reference list. For this exercise, simply write "URL" instead of the link where necessary.

1. Type of source: book
Title: The Road to Character
Author: David Brooks
Publication date: September 12, 2016
Publisher: Random House (located in New York, NY)

Reference list: _____

In-text citation: _____

2. Type of source: magazine article
Title: The Soviet Era's Deadliest Scientist Is Regaining Popularity in Russia
Author: Sam Kean
Publication date: December 19, 2017
Magazine name: The Atlantic

Reference list: _____

In-text citation: _____

3. Type of source: YouTube video
Title: Jennifer Aniston's Powerful Message to Tabloids

Author: Ellen DeGeneres
Author screen name: TheEllenShow
Date: November 30, 2016

Reference list: _____

In-text citation: _____

Find the mistakes in the following examples of citations and write what must be changed below.

1. Type of source: magazine article
Title: Fear is Nothing to Be Feared
Author: Noam Shpancer
Publication date: December 26, 2017
Magazine name: Psychology Today

Fear is nothing to be feared. (December 26, 2017). *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from URL

2. Type of source: news article
Title: Mohamed Bin Zayed Gets Phone Call from Bill Gates
Author: No author mentioned
Publication date: June 6, 2017
Website name: UAE Interact

Mohamed Bin Zayed Gets Phone Call from Bill Gates. (2017, June 6). UAE Interact. Retrieved from URL

In-text citation: "The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi thanked Bill Gates for his congratulations and good feelings" (UAE Interact, June 6, 2017).

3. Type of source: YouTube video
Title: Black Holes
Author: No author mentioned
Author screen name: Naked Science
Date: February 24, 2016

Naked Science. (2016, February 24). Black holes. Retrieved from URL

In-text citation: (Black Holes, 2016)

4. Type of source: book
Title: Einstein: His Life and Universe
Author: Walter Isaacson
Publication date: 2007
Publisher: Simon & Schuster (located in New York, NY)

Walter, I. (2007). *Einstein: His life and universe*. Simon & Schuster: New York, NY.

Answers

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Exercise 1

1. Brooks, D. (2016, September 12). *The road to character*. New York, NY: Random House.
2. Kean, S. (2017, December 19). The soviet era's deadliest scientist is regaining popularity in Russia. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from URL
3. DeGeneres, E. [TheEllenShow]. (2016, November 30). *Jennifer Aniston's powerful message to Tabloids* [Video file]. Retrieved from URL

Exercise 2

1. Shpancer, N. (2017, December 26). Fear is nothing to be feared. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from URL
2. Mohamed Bin Zayed gets phone call from Bill Gates. (2017, June 6). *UAE Interact*. Retrieved from URL
In-text citation: ("Mohamed Bin Zayed Gets," 2017)
3. Naked Science. (2016, February 24). *Black holes* [Video file]. Retrieved from URL
In-text citation: (Naked Science, 2016)
4. Isaacson, W. (2007). *Einstein: His life and universe*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.