



American Psychological Association (APA) Style is used primarily in the social sciences—psychology, sociology, nursing, family studies, etc. It places emphasis on the date of publication, whereas other styles (MLA for example) emphasize the page number.

APA Style is a parenthetical documentation style. This means it uses in-text citation. Three pieces of information must be included in the in-text citations. **The author's last name and the date of publication must always appear.** The third piece of information, **the page number, appears only in a citation for a direct quotation.** The information contained in parentheses is separated by commas. For example: (Smith, 2000) or (Smith, 2000, p.23)

When writing about an event that occurred in the past, use the past tense (Smith showed). For an event that is continuous, the present perfect tense is used (Smith has shown). When results are given, the present tense is used (the experiment demonstrates).

Ways to use APA Citations

- **Idea-focused**

Place the author(s) and date(s) in parentheses at an appropriate place in or at the end of a sentence.

Example: Researchers have pointed out that the lack of trained staff is a common barrier to providing adequate health education (Fisher, 1999) and services (Weist & Christodulu, 2000).

- **Researcher-focused**

Include the names of the researcher(s) in the sentence. Place only the date in parentheses.

Example: Fisher (1999) recommended that health education be required for high school graduation in Florida.

- **Chronology-focused**

Integrate the author and the date into your sentence.

Example: In 2001, Weist proposed using the Child and Adolescent Planning Schema to analyze and develop community mental health programs for young people.

- **When citing a direct quotation, include the page numbers.**

Example: Lopez (1993) found that “the effect disappeared within minutes” (p. 311).

Formatting the References List

- **Title**

Type the word “References” at the top of a new page, centered.

- **Spacing**

All entries should be double-spaced, unless your assignment instructs you otherwise.

- **Indentation**

Use a hanging indent unless your final draft will be submitted for publication.

- **Capitalization**

Capitalize only the first word of titles of books and articles. If there is a subtitle, capitalize the first word after the colon. **Ex:** *Family meditation: Facts, myths, and future prospects.*

- **Organization**

All entries should be alphabetized by authors’ last names.

Sample Reference Entries

- **Book with a single author**

Baxter, C. (1997). *Race equality in health care and education*. Philadelphia: Balliere Tindall.

Author’s last name & first initial. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter for subtitle.*

Location: Publisher

- **Book with editors in place of authors**

Stock, G., and Campbell, J. (Eds.). (2000). *Engineering the human genome: An exploration of the science and ethics of altering the genes we pass to our children*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Authors’ last names & first initials (Eds.). (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter for subtitle.*

Location: Publisher.

- **Chapter in an edited work**

Roy, A. (1995). Psychiatric emergencies. In H.I. Kaplan and B.J. Sadock (Eds.). *Comprehensive textbook of Psychiatry*. (6th ed., pp. 1739-1752). Blatimore: Williams & Wilkins.

Author of chapter. (Year of publication). Chapter title. In Name(s) of editor(s) (Eds.). *Title of larger work*. (Edition information, pages of chapter). Location: Publisher.

- **Magazine article**

Greenberg, G. (2001, August 13). As good as dead: Is there really such a thing as brain death? *New Yorker*, 36-41.

Author of article. (Year and date of publication). Article title. *Magazine title*, pages of article.

Sample Reference Entries (Continued)

- **Journal article**

Roy, A. (1982). Suicide in chronic schizophrenia. *British Journal of Psychiatry*. 141, 171-177.

Author of article. (Year of publication). Title of article. *Title of journal*, volume number, pages of article.

- **Internet source created by a private organization:**

Greater New Milford (Ct) Area Healthy Community 2000, Task Force of Teen and Adolescent Issues. (n.d.). *Who has time for a family meal? You do!* Retrieved October 5, 2000, from [http:// www.familymealtime.org](http://www.familymealtime.org).

Title of website. (Date of last update). *Title of page or article*. Date you visited the site, web address of URL.

****If the website has a listed author, list the author before the title of the website.****

Notes

- At a minimum, the reference for an internet source should provide a **document title or description, a date (the date of publication or the date of retrieval), and the web address**. Whenever possible, identify the author as well. The web address (URL) is the most important element of the citation It is crucial to provide working web addresses.
- Unlike MLA, **APA Style does not require quotation marks around chapter titles or article titles in the References list.**

This page was adapted from:

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th edition, *The St. Martin's Handbook*, 6th edition, and the UW-Madison Writing Center Online

<<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/handbook/docAPA.html>>.