

RES 5: APA Style Quick Guide (7th Edition)

What is APA Style?

The American Psychological Association (APA) is an international organization that determines formatting standards for work in the sciences. This guide provides some APA style format and citation basics. You may find more detailed instructions about APA in the style guide.

7th Edition: The newest edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) style guide, published in October 2019, addresses many changes in writing since the 6th edition's publication in 2009. Specifically, "[c]iting online material has become more common, the use of inclusive and bias-free language is increasingly important, and the technology used by researchers and students has changed."

¹ See the **RES 7: Changes in APA 7th Edition** handout for additional information.

Why do citations matter?

Whenever you refer to someone's words or ideas, whether you are paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting, you have a responsibility to your readers to cite your source. If you do not cite your source's words or information, you are plagiarizing. Whether intentional or accidental, plagiarism has consequences (see [MTSU's definition of plagiarism](#)). Understanding your citation style can go a long way toward helping you write responsibly.

What is an in-text citation?

This type of citation is used when writers make reference to someone else's idea(s) through paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting.

In-text citations in APA are formatted in the *author-date* style and include:

- The name(s) of the author(s)—parenthetical or narrative form (Section 8.1)²
- The year of publication
- The page number(s) being referenced (required if you are using a direct quote)

Example: (Author(s), Year, p. #)

Additional in-text citation information:

- The in-text citation for works with three or more authors is abbreviated from the first citation: (first author's last name et al., year).
- In in-text citations, the year can be omitted if the citation when multiple **narrative citations** appear consecutively in a single paragraph.
- If the source has no author and still is reliable, use title and year of the publication. If the title is long, it is recommended to shorten it. The Title should be in title case.
- If the source does not have a date listed use "n.d."; if the source has been accepted for publication but is not yet published use "in press".
- When citing multiple works in a single sentence, list them in alphabetical order and separate with a semicolon.

What is a "References" page?

The References page lists, in alphabetical order, every source cited in-text. The purpose of the References page is to provide a roadmap to your sources so that other scholars or researchers can find them. This means that, as a writer, you need to provide as much information as you can about where to find a source.



References entries should include:

- Author(s)—Last name, First initial
- Date of publication—formatted as: year, month day
- Title (of the book, article, chapter, etc.)
- Title of the container (if applicable: journal, book title of the chapter, magazine, etc.)
- Volume(Issue) (if applicable)
- Pages (if in a container)
- Source link (if applicable: doi or URL)

Examples:

- No container: Author(s). (Date). *Title*. Publisher.
- Container: Author(s). (Date). *Title*. Container Source. Doi or URL.

Additional References information:

- On the References page, the title is italicized and **only** the first word in the title is capitalized (proper nouns and words after colons will be capitalized as well)
- On the References page, it is no longer necessary to include the format, platform, or device for eBooks, but the publisher is included (See the “Differences in APA 6th and 7th Editions” handout for additional information)
- On the References page, “Retrieved from” or “Accessed from” is no longer used before DOIs and URLs because they are formatted as hyperlinks. These links are to remain active if the document is read/published online.

Visit the Writing Center for more help on your writing project! Stop by LIB 362 or visit us online at mtsu.mywconline.com to schedule an appointment.

¹ Streefkerk, R. (2019, November 26). *APA Manual 7th edition: The most notable changes*. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/apa-style/apa-seventh-edition-changes/>

² All section numbers are in reference to the APA Manual