

## RES 8: APSA Quick Guide

### What is APSA style?

American Political Science Association (APSA style) is the official style for students, professors, scholars, editors, and publishers in the field of political science, and the style pays special attention to government documents. According to the *APSA Style Manual*, this style, for the most part, mirrors guidelines in the 17<sup>th</sup> Edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS). The style aims to streamline publications in the field of political science, while allowing for specific journals to vary in their style requirements.

### 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 If you do not cite your source's words or information, you are plagiarizing.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.

### In-text citations:

The APSA style uses the *author-date* citation style as detailed in CMS, also known as a parenthetical citation. This citation format appears at the end of the sentence and is set off by parentheses.

If using a **summary** or **paraphrase**, the in-text citations require the:

- Last name of the author(s), editors(s), OR translator(s)
- Year of publication (*n.d.* if there is no date, *forthcoming* if it is not yet published)
- There is no comma between the last name and the year; the use of the terms *ed.* or *eds.* or *trans.* are not used in the parenthetical citation.

If using a **direct quote**, you must include a page or chapter number.

- The numbers can be cited as inclusive or nonconsecutive
- There is no comma between the last name and the year, but there is a comma after the year and before the page or chapter number.

Multiple authors:

- With two or three authors, cite all names each time—use *and*, not an ampersand (&)
- With four or more authors, use *et al.* after the first author's last name—if there are multiple authors with the same last name, use the first and second authors' last names.

Additional in-text citation rules:

- When citing multiple sources together, include them in the same parentheses but separate the sources by a semicolon. They should be in alphabetical order. Example (Gygax 1965; Howl 2015; Wolfe 1923)
- Multiple sources by the same author, that are published in different years, are cited in one parenthetical citation. Example: (author's last name year; year) or (author's last name year, page; year, page)
- When using the author's name in the sentence, include the year of publication immediately after the name. Example: "Stark (2008) analyzed data surrounding..."
- A parenthetical citation for a statute or a court case should include the name of the case or the statute and the year.



### (In-text citations cont.)

- When citing two authors with the same last name, include the authors' first initials to distinguish between the two. Example: "B. Baggins (2012) and F. Baggins (2013) believed that..."
- If the same source is being used in a single paragraph multiple times, only page numbers are needed after the first reference.
- Abbreviate organizations after the first citation. Example: *First use* "Ministry of Magic (1978, 12; hereafter MoM) ..." *Second use* ". . . (MoM 1978, 16)."

### References:

The *author-date* style is used for both in-text citations and the References page.

#### General format:

- The name(s) of the author, editor, or translator should be written as it appears in the text.
- The first author, editor, or translator's name is inverted (last name, first name) but every other name is not inverted (first name last name). In addition, use *and* not the ampersand (&) when listing two or more authors. Example: Picard, Jean-Luc and James Kirk...
- Only use *et al.* in a Reference citation when there are 10 or more authors—in this case, you would list the first seven authors and then use *et al.*
- Organization titles are used if an author is not available, even if the organization is also the publisher.
- When using an editor or translator, because there is no author listed, the abbreviation *ed.*, *eds.* or *trans.* follows the name of the editor(s) or translator(s) and is preceded by a comma.
- The work title should only be used in place of the author's name if there is no author, editor, translator, organization, association, or corporation listed.

#### Dates and pages:

- Year of publication is the only part of the date needed on the References page; the most recent year should be used; if there is not a year, use *n.d.*; if the work is not yet published, use *forthcoming*.
- *p.* and *pp.* should be omitted
- For eBooks or other scrollable text sources, a chapter number or heading title should be used in place of a page number.
- **Access dates** are only necessary if a publication or revision date is unavailable, but it is not incorrect to include the access date.

#### DOIs and URLs

- For all online sources, include a digital object identifier (DOI), if available. If a DOI is unavailable, use the URL.
- The DOI is formatted as: doi: *number here*

#### Examples:

- Book: Author(s). Year. Title of the Work. Publication Location: Publisher.
- Journal: Author(s). Year. "Article Title." *Journal Title* Volume #(Issue # OR Month): Pages.
- DOI/URL: Author(s). Year. "Title of Article." *Journal Title* Volume # (Issue # OR Month): Pages. DOI/URL. Accessed date.



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### Miscellaneous style rules:

- Block quotes: a quote consisting of more than a hundred words, roughly two or more paragraphs, is in need of general emphasis and should be set apart in a block quote.
- Omit the periods in the abbreviations for academic degrees (PhD, MA, MBA); the spelled-out terms should always be lowercase.
- Abbreviate civil and military titles, unless proceeding only the surname. Example: Sen. Sheev Palpatine, Senator Palpatine
- Numbers zero through nine should be written out; use Arabic numerals for the number 10 and above; however, spell out well rounded numbers. Example: "At age 62, Sherlock Holmes could still spot one hundred minuscule details of a crime scene in two minutes."

For additional formatting and citation questions, please see the official *APSA Style Manual* at <https://connect.apsanet.org/stylemanual/>