Basic Guidelines for APA, 6th Edition

Overview of APA
The American Psychological Association (APA) established writing and reference guidelines in 1929 so readers could easily understand the major points and findings in social sciences research (APA, 2010). Today APA style is used by many disciplines, schools, and college-level writers as a standard for formatting and documentation of sources in research projects. As of 2009, the most current Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association is the sixth edition. Beginning May 1, 2010, the Writing Center will refer to the 6th edition in all of their services and resources.

In-text and Reference Page Citations
APA documentation style includes an in-text and reference page system. In the text, the author’s name and date are included for any references from outside sources so readers can easily see when a source is being used. The format for reference page citations depends on the source type and it is important to refer to the official manual or Web site for proper formatting guidelines. Essentially, the reference citation includes enough information to allow the reader to easily find the original source. These citations also begin with the author and date, and the list of references is alphabetized. APA provides guidance for exceptions to these rules as well. For instance, when no author is provided for a source, the title of the work and date are used as the in-text citation and at the beginning of the reference citation. Click here to see an example reference page.

Parenthetical Citations and Signal Phrases
In-text citations can either be included using a signal phrase before the cited material or a parenthetical citation at the end of the cited material.

A signal phrase introduces quoted, paraphrased, or summarized information using the author’s name and publication year. The page or paragraph numbers should be included in citations for specific parts of a source, such as a quotation, if these numbers are provided in the original source. If these numbers are not used in the original source, please refer to the official APA publications listed at the end of this document for more information. Here is an example of a signal phrase citation for a paraphrase:

Smith (2010) recognizes that more online learning opportunities are needed to reach marginalized high school students and decrease the dropout rate.
If a signal phrase is not used, a parenthetical citation is included after the quoted, paraphrased, or summarized material as shown below.

Online learning opportunities are needed to reach marginalized high school students and decrease the dropout rate (Smith, 2010).

**Most Common Citations** (in-text and references page)

**Books**

In-text citations for paraphrases
(Martinez, 2009)
Martinez (2009) stated...

In-text citations for quotes (include the page number where you found the quote)
(Martinez, 2009, p. 3)
Martinez (2009) said “...” (p. 3).

General reference citation format for books:

Author, A.A. (year of publication). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher.


Reference for a chapter in a book:

Author, A.A. (year of publication). Title of chapter. In A. Editor (Ed.), *Title of book* (pp. xx-xx). Location: Publisher.


Reference for an edited book:

Editor, A.A. (Ed.). (year of publication). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher.


Reference for an electronic book with a Digital Object Identifier (DOI): [Click link]

Author, A.A. (year of publication). *Title of work*. doi: xxxxx

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Journal article from an online database

In-text citations for paraphrases
(Jones, 2009)
Jones (2009) said...

In-text citations for quotes (include the page number where you found the quote)
(Martinez, 2009, p. 3)
Martinez (2009) said “…” (p. 3).

When there is no author
Use a shortened version of the title in place of the author's last name.
(“How to eat,” 1990)

Reference entry for a journal article from an online database with no doi:


• Give URL for library or the journal home page if retrieved from a journal Web site
• No retrieval date is needed.

Reference entry for a journal article with a doi:

Web page

In-text citations
Follow the same rules as above for author and no author.

With author


Without author
Move the title in place of the author.

**Newspaper article (print and online)**

**In-text citations**
Follow the same rules as above for author and no author.

*Author, A.* (year, month day). *Story title. Title of Newspaper, pp. x-x.*

**Print**


**Online newspaper**


**Corporate Author/Government Report**

**In-text citations**

(Name of government agency, year of publication)

**Government Web site**

*Name of government agency. (year of publication). Title of publication (publication or document number). Retrieved from URL*


**Corporate author**

*Title of company. (year of publication). Title of report. Retrieved from URL*


**Citing graphics**

*Creator Surname, Initials (Contribution), and Copyright Holder (Contribution). (Copyright year). Title of Image [Media type]. Retrieved From Homepage URL*

Most Common Differences between APA 5\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th} Editions

1. The running head. The basic general formatting for APA remains the same with one notable exception—the new positioning of the running head. The running head is the form of the title that appears at the top of every page. In the upper left-hand corner and flush left of the title page include the words Running head (capitalized as indicated) followed by a colon (Running head:). After the colon insert one space and then in all capital letters include the title of the paper not to exceed 50 characters including spaces (see page 229 in Publication Manual). If the title is longer, then use a shortened version for the running header. Click here to see an example title page.

For each page after the title page, include in the upper left-hand corner and flush left only the title of the paper in all caps as appears on the title page.

\textbf{Running head on title page:}

Running head: TITLE OF PAPER

\textbf{Running head on all subsequent pages:}

TITLE OF PAPER

\textbf{NOTE:} While the above information is accurate per the 6\textsuperscript{th} edition of the APA Manual, such requirements are for papers intended for publication.

2. Spacing after a period. With the 6\textsuperscript{th} edition, use two spaces after each period that appears at the end of a sentence. Consult section 4.01 of the publication manual for more information.

3. Retrieval Date. The 6\textsuperscript{th} edition does not require the inclusion of a retrieval date for online sources unless those sources are likely to change.

\textbf{With the 5\textsuperscript{th} edition, the reference citation for an online source would look like this:}


\textbf{With the 6\textsuperscript{th} edition, the reference citation for an online source would look like this:}

4. **Eight or more authors on the references page.** In the 6th edition, if a reference page entry has eight or more authors, include the first six authors, insert ellipsis marks (three spaced periods) and then include the last author’s name. Consult section 6.27 in the Publication Manual for more information. An example is shown below:


5. **Use of Digital Object Identifier (DOI) on references page.** In the 6th edition of the APA Publication Manual, the DOI method is the preferred way to identify electronic content on the references page without the use of other retrieval information required in the 5th edition. When the DOI is used, no further retrieval information is required. If a DOI is not available, use the URL of the source in the reference citation. For more information, consult section 6.32 in the Publication Manual. An example is shown below:


**Official APA Website and Publication Manual**

For information about the newest edition of the *Publication Manual*, resources, and answers to frequently asked questions, visit the official APA Style website at [http://www.apastyle.org/](http://www.apastyle.org/) or you can consult the hardcopy version:

Reference Page Example

Dealing With Depression In Positive Ways

References


- References are cited in full on a separate page, the last page of the document.
- Notice the word “References” is centered on the page.
- Notice the citations are formatted using a “hanging indent” where the second line is indented five spaces under the first line in order to improve readability.

Title Page Example

Running head: THE IMPORTANCE OF CITATIONS

The Importance of Citations

Sueie Student
Kaplan University

- In the header, the title of the document follows the phrase: “Running head:”
- A page number is placed at the top of the right-hand corner.
- The title is centered on the page, followed by the student’s name and Kaplan University
- Separate this page from the rest of the document by using a section break. In the header on the rest of the pages of the document, use only the document title. The phrase “Running head:” is not used after this title page.