

American Psychological Association (APA) Documentation

This handout begins with general guidelines about the parts of a paper you need to document, and then presents a brief overview of the APA documentation system as described in the 6th edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2009). The sections that follow describe and illustrate (I) the reference list and (II) text citations. The handout ends with a list of additional resources on APA style.

What to Document

Be sure to document all the sources you've used in writing your paper. You'll need to cite sources for

- direct quotations
- paraphrases and summaries of ideas and information from sources,
- information and ideas that are not common knowledge or are not available in a standard reference work, and
- any other borrowed material that might appear to be your own if there were no citation.

For more information on what needs to be documented, ask your course instructor, and consult the Writing Center's handout on quoting, paraphrasing, and acknowledging sources.

Overview of APA Documentation

The APA documentation system is commonly used in the social sciences and education, as well as in fields such as nursing. It is a parenthetical documentation system. That means you will place citations to sources in parentheses within your own sentences (usually the author's last name and the year of publication) to indicate you have used ideas, information, and quotations from sources at that particular spot in your paper. The parenthetical information points to specific sources in an alphabetized list of references (titled *References*, not *Bibliography*) at the end of your paper.

I. Creating the Reference List for Your Paper

Begin the reference list on a new page, and title that page *References* (do not use italics). List only sources you have cited, and list all of these except for personal communications (e.g., interviews, letters, e-mails, messages from unarchived discussion groups, or any other material not accessible to your readers). Double-space all text (not as spaced in the examples in this handout) unless your instructor advises otherwise.

In general, order the reference list alphabetically by authors' surnames, but follow these guidelines for special cases:

- Same author(s), different years: order by year of publication, earliest to latest.

Alibali, M. W. (1999). How children
Alibali, M. W. (2005). Mechanisms of change
- Same author(s), same year: order alphabetically by first word of the title (excluding *a*, *an*, or *the*), and add a lower-case a, b, etc., to the year.

Weist, M. D., & Christodulu, K. V. (2000a). Better mental health care. . . .
Weist, M. D., & Christodulu, K. V. (2000b). Expanded school mental health programs. . . .
- Same initial name(s) in multiple-author entries: alphabetize according to the first surname that differs.

Harper, G. F., Mallette, B., Maheady, L., Bentley, A., & Moore, J. (1995)
Harper, G. F., Mallette, B., Maheady, L., Parkes, V., & Moore, J. (1993)

General Principles About References for Electronic Sources

The general principle in APA style is to include the same information as you would for a print source, in the same order, and add just enough information about finding the source electronically to help the reader of your paper find that reference. If an online source has a digital object identifier (DOI), a permanent identifier for an electronic publication, you should use that instead of a URL.

if . . .	you should . . .	here are examples . . .
if a publication includes a digital object identifier (DOI) , a permanent identifier for an electronic publication	use the DOI <i>instead of</i> a URL	Gaudio, J. L., & Snowdon, C. T. (2008). Spatial cues more salient than color cues in cotton-top tamarins (<i>Saguinus oedipus</i>) reversal learning. <i>Journal of Comparative Psychology</i> , 122, 441-444. doi: 10.1037/0735-7036.122.4.441
if you retrieved a journal or newspaper article online but it <i>does not have a DOI</i>	use "Retrieved from http:// . . .," using the URL for the journal or newspaper's home page	Barringer, F. (2009, Sept. 14). Hawaii tries green tools in remaking power grid. <i>The New York Times</i> . Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com Park, A. (2009, Sept. 14). A shot at cancer. <i>Time</i> 174(10), 32-39. Retrieved from www.time.com/
if you're referencing an electronic version of a journal article that appears in print and <i>has page numbers</i> (in a PDF, for example)	use page numbers; no URL	Alibali, M. W., Phillips, K. M. O., & Fischer, A. D. (2009). Learning new problem-solving strategies leads to changes in problem representation. <i>Cognitive Development</i> , 24, 89-101. doi:10.1016
if you found a source through an online database	<i>do not</i> list the database (such as PsycARTICLES, ScienceDirect, EBSCO, LexisNexis, ProQuest) you used to find an article; use "Retrieved from http:// . . ." using the URL for the magazine, journal, or newspaper's home page	Alibali, M. W., Phillips, K. M. O., & Fischer, A. D. (2009). Learning new problem-solving strategies leads to changes in problem representation. <i>Cognitive Development</i> , 24, 89-101. doi:10.1016/j.cogdev.2008.12.005 Park, A. (2009, Sept. 14). A shot at cancer. <i>Time</i> 174(10), 32-39. Retrieved from www.time.com/
you're wondering whether to include a retrieval date	<i>do not</i> list a retrieval date <i>unless</i> the source is likely to change over time (a home page, a wiki, or a discussion board, for example)	<i>Research Initiatives</i> . (n.d.). Retrieved January 11, 2007, from MIT, Comparative Media Studies website, http://cms.mit.edu/research/index.php

See more examples of electronic sources in the sample reference list on the following pages.

Sample References, by Type

The sample reference list below illustrates the most common types of references. PLEASE NOTE: In your paper, the list of references should be in alphabetical order according to the first author's last name. Here, to make it easier for you to find particular examples, the items are arranged by type of reference, starting with book-length publications and moving to chapters and articles and then conference papers and posters and then multimedia and informal online publications.

In your reference list, you should include every recoverable (published) source that you actually refer to in your paper. If you do not refer to a source in your paper, it does not belong on your reference list.

Non-recoverable sources or personal communications—that is material that is not published and not available on the web, material such as conversations, emails, interviews, unarchived discussions—should be acknowledged in parenthetical citation within the body of your paper (see the section below on citing sources in your paper for an example), but personal communications should NOT be listed in your reference list.

Type of Reference	References (Be sure to double-space within and between items in your actual reference list.)
1. Book: basic form; first edition, single author, read in print	Baxter, C. (1997). <i>Race equality in health care and education</i> . Philadelphia: Ballière Tindall.
2. Book: basic form, later edition, two authors, read in print	Hyde, J. S., & Delamater, J. (2008). <i>Human Sexuality</i> (10 th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
3. Book: editors in place of authors	Castellanos, J., Gloria, A. M., & Kamimura, M. (Eds.). (2006). <i>The Latina/o pathway to the Ph.D.: Abriendo caminos</i> . Sterling, VA: Stylus.
4. Book review: basic form; 2 authors; read in print	Grabill, C. M., & Kaslow, N. J. (1999). An ounce of prevention: Improving children's mental health for the 21 st century [Review of the book <i>Handbook of prevention and treatment with children and adolescents</i>]. <i>Journal of Clinical Child Psychology</i> , 28, 115-116.
5. Brochure [pamphlet]: no date; no author; print	<i>Inside these doors: A guidebook of Elfreth's Alley homes</i> [Brochure]. (n.d). Philadelphia: Elfreth's Alley Association.
6. Chapter in edited work: print	Alibali, M. W. (2005). Mechanisms of change in the development of mathematical reasoning. In R. V. Kail (Ed.), <i>Advances in child development and behavior</i> (pp. 79-123). New York: Academic Press.
7. Chapter in edited work: second or later edition; print	Curtin, J. J., & Lang, A. R. (2007). Alcohol and emotion: Insights and directives from affective science. In J. Rottenberg & S. L. Johnson (Eds.), <i>Emotion and psychopathology: Bridging affective and clinical science</i> (pp. 191-213). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
8. Dissertation: unpublished dissertation, obtained from database	Hostetter, Autumn B. (2008). Mind in motion: The gesture as simulated action framework (Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis database. (UMI No. 3327832)
9. Government report, corporate author; read online	National Institute of Mental Health. (2009). <i>Anxiety disorders</i> (NIH Publication No. 09-3879). Retrieved from National Institute of Mental Health website: http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/anxiety-disorders/nimhanxiety.pdf

<p>10. Journal article: basic form; two authors; read online, with doi</p>	<p>Gaudio, J. L., & Snowdon, C. T. (2008). Spatial cues more salient than color cues in cotton-top tamarins (<i>Saguinus oedipus</i>) reversal learning. <i>Journal of Comparative Psychology</i>, 122, 441-444. doi: 10.1037/0735-7036.122.4.441</p>
<p>11. Journal article, basic form; single author; print</p>	<p>Alibali, M. W. (1999). How children change their minds: Strategy change can be gradual or abrupt. <i>Developmental Psychology</i>, 35, 127-145.</p> <p>Murray, M. E. (2001). Outcomes of concurrent utilization review. <i>Nursing Economics</i>, 19, 17-23.</p>
<p>12. Journal article, basic form, two authors; read online, with doi</p>	<p>Hamilton, R. J., & Bowers, B. (2007). The theory of genetic vulnerability: A Roy model exemplar. <i>Nursing Science Quarterly</i>, 20, 254-264. doi: 10.1177/0894318407303127</p>
<p>13. Journal article; two authors; read online from journal website; a webtext; no page numbers; no doi</p>	<p>Carter, S., & Dunbar-Odom, D. (2009). The converging literacies center: An integrated model for writing programs. <i>Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy</i>, 14.1. Retrieved from http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/</p>
<p>14. Journal article: journal paginated by issue; 3-6 authors; read online, with doi</p>	<p>Alibali, M. W., Phillips, K. M. O., & Fischer, A. D. (2009). Learning new problem-solving strategies leads to changes in problem representation. <i>Cognitive Development</i>, 24, 89-101. doi:10.1016/j.cogdev.2008.12.005</p>
<p>15. Journal article: 7 or more authors; print</p>	<p>Yawn, B. P., Algatt-Bergstrom, P. J., Yawn, R. A., Wollan, P., Greco, M., Gleason, M., et al. (2000). An in-school CD-ROM asthma education program. <i>Journal of School Health</i>, 70, 153-159.</p>
<p>16. Journal article: in Internet-only journal; secondary reference</p>	<p>Greenberg, M. T., Domitrovich, C., & Bumbarger, B. (2000, March 30). Prevention of mental disorders in school-aged children: Current state of the field. <i>Prevention and Treatment</i>, 4, Article 1. Retrieved from http://journals.apa.org/prevention/volume4/pre0040001a.htm</p>
<p>17. Magazine article: print</p>	<p>Park, A. (2009, Sept. 14). A shot at cancer. <i>Time</i> 174(10), 32-39.</p>
<p>18. Magazine article: read online, found through a database (EBSCO)—do <i>not</i> list the database; list the home page for the magazine; this article has no doi</p>	<p>Park, A. (2009, Sept. 14). A shot at cancer. <i>Time</i> 174(10), 32-39. Retrieved from www.time.com/</p>
<p>19. Video or DVD</p>	<p>Arledge, E. (Producer & Director). (2009). <i>Autism genes</i> [DVD]. Available from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/sciencenow/</p>
<p>20. Newspaper article: read online, no doi</p>	<p>Barringer, F. (2009, Sept. 14). Hawaii tries green tools in remaking power grid. <i>The New York Times</i>. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com</p>
<p>21. Paper or poster presented at a meeting; for a paper, substitute paper title for poster title, italicized; use the word <i>paper</i> instead of <i>poster</i></p>	<p>Lindberg, S. M., & Hyde, J. S. (2007, March). <i>Mother-child interactions during mathematics homework: Socialization of gender differentiation?</i> Poster presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, Chicago, IL.</p>
<p>22. Paper presented at a meeting or conference, abstract retrieved online; no doi</p>	<p>Seibel, R., & Saffran, J. (2006, June). Tune or text: The effect of text on melody recognition. Paper presented at the annual meeting of XVth Biennial International Conference on Infant Studies, Kyoto, Japan. Abstract retrieved from http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p94581_index.html</p>

23. **Web site:** no author, no date of publication. If there is no author, title moves to the first spot. Use retrieval date only because the content at that address likely changes.

Research Initiatives. (n.d.). Retrieved January 11, 2007, from MIT, Comparative Media Studies website, <http://cms.mit.edu/research/index.php>

24. **Online discussion list**

Kahn, S. (2009, September 5). Re: Composition-rhetoric labor caucus [electronic mailing list message]. Retrieved from h-rhetor mailing list, <http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=lm&list=h-rhetor>

25. **Blog posting**

Lopez-Duran, N. (2009, August 27). Re: Gender and age differences in the symptomatology of child depression [Web log message]. Retrieved from Child Psychology Research Blog, <http://www.child-psych.org/>

26. **Email** (falls under the APA category of personal communications)

Personal communications should *not* be included in your reference list. See the explanation above, near the top of p. 3 of this handout. For an example of how to cite an email (or other personal communication) within sentences in your paper, see the example # 10 below, on p. 7 of this handout.

II. Citing Sources in Your Paper

Text citations are basically the same for print and electronic sources. The main considerations in using text citations are **placement** and **content** of source material.

Placement of citations

You have three options for placing citations in relation to your text.

1. Place the author(s) and date(s) within parentheses at an appropriate place within or at the end of a sentence:
Example: Researchers have studied how children represent mathematical problems (Alibali, Phillips, & Fischer, 2009; Siegler, 1976).

2. Place only the date within parentheses:
Example: Alibali, Phillips, and Fischer (2009) asked, "Did the participants adopt the taught strategies?" (p. 96).
 [Note that you need to provide (a) page number(s) in parentheses for direct quotations. You do not need to provide a page number if you are summarizing or paraphrasing a source, rather than quoting.]

3. Integrate both the author and date into your sentence:
Example: In 2009 Alibali, Phillips, and Fischer reported that third- and fourth-grade students improved their problem representation when they were taught the equalize strategy but did not improve their problem representation when they were taught the add-subtract strategy.

Content of citations

Composing parenthetical citations can seem like a balancing act between two contradictory requirements. On the one hand, you need to give enough information for your reader to find the corresponding reference list item. On the other hand, you need to avoid distracting your reader with unnecessary citations or with long lists of multiple authors. The APA guidelines address both of these requirements, as illustrated in the examples below.

Note: (a) The term *author(s)* as used below includes editor(s) that appear in the reference list entry in place of authors.
 (b) Use an ampersand (&) before the final name in multiple-author citations inside parentheses; use *and* outside.

(1) Year: Within a paragraph , omit the year in citations after the first one if no confusion with other studies will result.	Alibali, Phillips, and Fischer (2009) administered a posttest. . . . Alibali et al.'s results indicated. . . . [new paragraph] The posttest administered by Alibali et al. (2009) was used by. . . .
(2) 1 or 2 authors: Cite name(s) in first and all subsequent citations.	(Carter & Dunbar-Odom, 2009) Carter and Dunbar-Odom (2009)
(3) 3-5 authors: Cite all authors in your first citation. In all citations after the first, use the first author's name followed by <i>et al.</i> [no italics; period after <i>al</i>]	First citation: (Alibali, Phillips, & Fischer, 2009) Subsequent citations: (Alibali et al., 2009)
(4) 6 or more authors: Use the first author's name followed by <i>et al.</i> in all citations.	7 authors: (Yawn et al., 2000)
(5) Group authors: Abbreviate the name of an organization in references after the first if the abbreviation is familiar to readers.	First reference: (National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2009) Subsequent reference: (NIMH, 2009)
(6) No author: Use the first few words of the title—in quotation marks for article or chapter, in italics for self-contained item.	(<i>Research initiatives</i> , n.d.)

(7) 2 or more works within parentheses: Arrange by order of the reference list; use a semicolon between works.	(Alibali, Phillips, & Fischer, 2009; Siegler, 1976).
(8) 2 or more works by same author(s): Don't repeat name(s); earliest year first.	(Alibali, 1999, 2005)
(9) Secondary reference (only the secondary reference goes in reference list)	Racial injustice is one of the ecological risk factors for child psychopathology, according to Coie et al. (as cited in Greenberg, Domitrovich, & Bumbarger, 2000).
(10) Personal communication (any non- recoverable data, such as an email, an interview, a conversation): Cite within your paper as illustrated on the right, but do <i>not</i> put on your reference list.	(R. Rodriguez, personal communication, September 21, 2009) R. Rodriguez (personal communication, September 21, 2009) explained that
(11) Entire website: Do <i>not</i> put on reference list.	The University of Wisconsin-Madison's Writing Center website is an excellent source of information on writing (http://www.writing.wisc.edu/).
(12) Direct quotation of fewer than 40 words: integrate the quotation into your sentence, use quotation marks, and cite page(s).	Reflecting on their results, Alibali, Phillips, and Fischer (2009) explain, "This study has shown that learning a new strategy can lead to improvements in problem representation. However, learning a new strategy is certainly not the only source of improved problem representation" (p. 99).
(13) Direct quotation of 40 words or more: use an indented block quotation, which begins on a new line; the entire block quotation should be indented half an inch; double-space the block quotation; do <i>not</i> use quotation marks; put the citation in parentheses after the final punctuation of the quote. Do not place a period after the closing parenthesis.	. . . your sentence introducing the quotation: asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl asdfghjk adfjl asdfghjkl. (Author, 2010, p. 234)

Additional Resources on APA Documentation and Style

- See the *Publication Manual*, available for consultation at the Writing Center and in many campus libraries. You can purchase the *Manual* online from the APA organization website (www.apa.org).
- Attend the Writing Center class "The Basics of APA Documentation." Go to the Writing Center's website (writing.wisc.edu/) and click on [Classes](#) for dates and times, and for an online registration form.
- Consult the Writing Center's handouts "APA Headings and Page Formatting" and "APA Guidelines for Style," available at the Writing Center or on the Center Web site (<http://writing.wisc.edu/>).
- Check the APA style Web site (<http://www.apastyle.org/>), where you will find links to the following:
 - ▶ FAQs about APA style
 - ▶ a blog about APA style
 - ▶ an online tutorial, "The Basics of APA style"