

APA Style 7th Edition: In-Text Citations

The American Psychological Association (APA) citation style is an author-date referencing system whereby sources are briefly identified within the text of a paper using the author's surname (family name), year of publication, and location reference (e.g., page number) at the point where the information is used. This is called an in-text citation. All in-text citations have a corresponding entry in the reference list at the end of the paper. For help with how to prepare your reference list, please consult the Patrick Power Library guide: *APA Style 7th Edition: The Reference List*.

There are two formats for in-text citations: **parenthetical** and **narrative**. A parenthetical citation includes the author name and publication date in parentheses and can appear within or at the end of a sentence. In a narrative citation, the author name appears as part of the sentence and the date immediately follows in parentheses. You may also see both the author name and date incorporated into the text of the sentence, but this is less common. Examples:

Parenthetical Citation: (Nichols, 2017)

Narrative Citation: Nichols (2017) argued ...
In 2017, Nichols argued ...

In-Text Citations for Paraphrases and Quotations

When **quoting** from a source, cite the author(s), year of publication, and page number in the in-text citation using the parenthetical or narrative format. If the work does not contain page numbers, use another method to indicate the location (e.g., a heading or section name, paragraph number, or a combination of both). Please refer to the section on [Quotations](#) for more information.

When **paraphrasing**, cite the author(s) and the year of publication using the parenthetical or narrative forms of in-text citation. APA style does not require you to include page or paragraph numbers for paraphrases, but you may want to if it will help your reader to locate a specific passage. Some instructors may require that you always include a page or paragraph number when paraphrasing information from a specific location within a source. Always check with your instructor if in doubt.

The following examples briefly illustrate how to create in-text citations using APA style (7th edition). More information and examples can be found in Chapter eight of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th ed. (call number: BF 76.7 P83 2020).

[One author](#)
[Two authors](#)
[Three or more authors](#)
[Group author with abbreviation](#)
[Group author without abbreviation](#)
[Unknown or anonymous author](#)
[Work without a date](#)
[Multiple works](#)
[Secondary sources](#)
[Personal communications](#)
[Quotations](#)
[Citing specific parts of a source](#)
[Additional resources](#)

One author

Parenthetical Citation: The average citizen is wary of expert advice (Nichols, 2017, p. 23).

Narrative Citation: Nichols (2017) argued that the average citizen is wary of expert advice (p. 23).

Note: APA does not require page numbers in in-text citations for paraphrased material, however, you may include them if it will help your reader to locate the specific passage.

Two authors

When a work has two authors, cite both authors in the first and all subsequent citations. In parenthetical citations use an ampersand (&) between names. In narrative citations use the word “and” between names.

Parenthetical Citation:

Hospitalized patients reported improvements to mood following pet therapy visits (Coakley & Mahoney, 2009, p. 144).

Narrative Citation:

Coakley and Mahoney (2009) found that hospitalized patients reported improvements to mood following pet therapy visits (p. 144).

Three or more authors

When a work has three or more authors, include the first author’s name only, followed by “et al.” in the first and all subsequent citations.

Examples:

Parenthetical Citation: (Adams et al., 2014)

Narrative Citation: Adams et al. (2014)

Group author with abbreviation

If the group or organization has a well-known abbreviation, you can abbreviate the name in the text. The first time the group is mentioned, provide the name in full followed by the abbreviation. Use the abbreviation for subsequent mentions of the group.

Parenthetical Citation:

First citation: (Canadian Association of University Teachers [CAUT], 2020)
Subsequent citations: (CAUT, 2020)

Narrative Citation:

First citation: Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT, 2020)
Subsequent citations: CAUT (2020)

If you are citing two different groups that have the same abbreviation within your paper (e.g., both the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association abbreviate to “APA”), provide the full name for each group every time you cite.

Group author without abbreviation

Parenthetical Citation: (Statistics Canada, 2020)

Narrative Citation: Statistics Canada (2020)

Unknown or anonymous author

If the author of a work is unknown or cannot be determined, include the title and year of publication in the in-text citation. Capitalize major words in the title, and italicize the title if it is italicized in the reference list entry. If the title of the work is not italicized in the reference list entry, enclose the title in double quotation marks.

Parenthetical Citation: (“Confirmation Bias,” 2020)

Narrative Citation: “Confirmation Bias” (2020)

If the author of a source is identified as “Anonymous”, use “Anonymous” in place of the author name. Otherwise, if there is no author, use the title in the author position, as explained above.

Parenthetical Citation: (Anonymous, 2013)

Work without a date

The date used in the in-text citation should correspond to the publication date used in the reference list entry. Only include the year in the in-text citation, even if the reference list entry contains a more specific date (e.g., month and year). For references that have no date (n.d.), format the in-text citation as follows:

Parenthetical Citation: (Moreau, n.d.)

Narrative Citation: Moreau (n.d.)

Multiple works

For parenthetical citations that contain two or more works by different authors, list the works alphabetically and separate them with a semi-colon. Multiple works that are incorporated into the narrative of a sentence, can appear in any order.

Parenthetical Citation: (Gold et al., 2018; Murphy, 2012; Sun & Yang, 2016)

Narrative Citation: Sun and Yang (2016), Gold et al. (2018), and Murphy (2012) found that ...

If your citation contains two or more works by the same author, include the author's name only once, followed by the dates in chronological order. If the citation contains works by the same author and date, add a lowercase letter after the date.

Parenthetical Citation: (Gonzalez, 2007, 2013)
(Nazari, 2017a, 2017b)

In multiple references where the first authors have the same surname, but different initials, include the first author's initials to avoid confusion.

Parenthetical Citation: (K. Singh, 2018; M. Singh & Kumar, 2020)

- For more information about how to avoid ambiguity in in-text citations, please refer to Chapter eight, pp. 267-268 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th ed.

Secondary sources

If you want to cite a work that is discussed in another work, it is always best to try and locate, read, and cite the original work (the primary source). If the original work is unavailable or difficult to access, cite the work that you used (the secondary source) in your reference list. For the in-text citation, identify the original author and cite the source where you found the information (the secondary source), as illustrated in the following examples:

Parenthetical Citation: (Turowski, 2010, as cited in Ancey et al., 2014)

Narrative Citation: According to a study by Turowski (2010; as cited in Ancey et al., 2014) ...

Note: Only the work by Ancey appears in the reference list, as it is the source that you read.

Personal communications

Personal communications include sources that are not recoverable by readers such as e-mail messages, private letters, telephone conversations, and notes taken during a class lecture. These types of sources are not included in the reference list, but are cited in the text of the paper only. Include the initials and surname of the communicator and the exact date.

Parenthetical Citation: (H. Klein, personal communication, May 31, 2020)

Narrative Citation: H. Klein (personal communication, May 31, 2020)

A variation of the personal communication citation is used to cite **Traditional Knowledge or Oral Traditions of Indigenous Peoples**. For information that is not recorded and cannot be recovered by readers, cite the information in the text only as a personal communication, providing sufficient detail to describe the content and origin of the information. In the citation, include the communicator's full name, the nation or indigenous group to which they belong, their location, and any other relevant details, followed by "personal communication", and the date that the communication took place.

- Capitalize most terms relating to Indigenous Peoples or Indigenous culture (e.g., Indigenous, Elder, Traditional Knowledge, etc.).
- For more information about how to cite Traditional Knowledge or Oral Traditions of Indigenous Peoples, please refer to Chapter 8, pp. 260-261 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th ed.

Quotations

In general, when incorporating the ideas of other authors into your own writing, paraphrasing should be used more often than direct quotation. Paraphrasing allows you to restate the ideas of others in your own words. However, there are times when it may be more appropriate to use a direct quotation. For example, you may want to use a direct quotation when you want to preserve the author's original wording because it is particularly impactful or persuasive, or you want to analyze or comment on a particular piece of text.

Short quotations (fewer than 40 words)

When quoting a short passage, incorporate the quotation into the text of your paper, placing the quoted words in double quotation marks. Add a parenthetical citation, including a page number or location information, immediately following the quotation or at the end of the sentence. For narrative citations, incorporate the author and year into the sentence and add the page number/location information in parentheses following the quotation. If the narrative citation follows the quotation, include the page number/location information with the year in the same set of parentheses. The following examples illustrate various ways of citing short quotations:

Parenthetical Citation:

Others have suggested that the pressure to be busy extends to leisure time: "To the long-evolving demands of productivity at work we must now add the burden of productivity everywhere else" (Poole, 2013, p. 23).

Narrative Citation:

Poole (2013) suggested that the pressure to be busy extends to leisure time: "To the long-evolving demands of productivity at work we must now add the burden of productivity everywhere else" (p. 23).

Parenthetical Citation:

When workplace teams encounter incivility "it has catastrophic effects on the team's collaborative processes and severely impacts the way team members perform their tasks" (Porath et al., 2015, p. 260).

Narrative Citation:

Porath et al. (2015) found that when workplace teams encounter incivility "it has catastrophic effects on the team's collaborative processes and severely impacts the way team members perform their tasks" (p. 260).

Parenthetical Citation:

Researchers found "short-term weather, multiyear warming, and tropical cyclone exposure each relate to worsened mental health outcomes" (Obradovich et al., 2018, p. 10955).

Narrative Citation:

"Short-term weather, multiyear warming, and tropical cyclone exposure each relate to worsened mental health outcomes," according to Obradovich et al. (2018, p. 10955).

Block quotations (40 words or more)

When quoting a passage of 40 words or longer, start the quotation on a new line, indented 1.27 cm (0.5 in.) from the left margin, and double-space the text. Do not use quotation marks. This is called a block quotation.

Parenthetical Citation:

Regarding the relationship between news media literacy and belief in conspiracy theories:

Individuals who give credence to conspiracy theories know comparatively little about how the news media work. The greater one’s knowledge about the news media—from the kinds of news covered, to the commercial context in which news is produced, to the effects on public opinion news can have—the less likely one will fall prey to conspiracy theories. (Craft et al., 2017, p. 396)

Narrative Citation:

A study by Craft et al. (2017) found:

Individuals who give credence to conspiracy theories know comparatively little about how the news media work. The greater one’s knowledge about the news media—from the kinds of news covered, to the commercial context in which news is produced, to the effects on public opinion news can have—the less likely one will fall prey to conspiracy theories. (p. 396)

Citing specific parts of a source

To cite a specific part of a source, provide a page number with the in-text citation or use another method to indicate location. Many sources do not have page numbers (e.g., websites), but there are various other ways to refer to a specific location within a source. For example, you can use paragraph numbers, headings, chapter or section names, table or figure numbers, time stamps for videos, or slide numbers in PowerPoint presentations. The following table contains examples that illustrate some of the ways you can direct your reader to a specific part of a source:

	Abbreviation	Example parenthetical citation
Single page number	p.	(Cheyne, 2019, p. 213)
Multiple consecutive pages	pp.	(Haddad, 2016, pp. 89–90)
Multiple non-consecutive pages	pp.	(Dempsey, 2010, pp. 25, 28)
Paragraph number (if not numbered, count the paragraphs manually)	para.	(Zhang, 2020, para. 3)
Heading or section name		(Tull, 2020, Participate in Counseling section)
Heading or section name with paragraph number		(Ahmed & Haku, 2014, Discussion section, para. 3)
Abbreviated heading or section name enclosed in quotation marks*		(Sanchez, 2014, “Limit Your Exposure” section, para. 1) Actual heading: “Limit Your Exposure to Computer Screens at Night”

*If the heading or section name is very long, use a shortened version and enclose it in quotation marks to indicate that it has been abbreviated.

Additional resources

For more information, please consult the following resources:

- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th ed., call number: BF 76.7 P83 2020
- [APA Style 7th Edition Reference Quick Guide](#)
- [APA Style Blog](#)
- Patrick Power Library guide: *APA Style 7th Edition: The Reference List*

For further assistance, please contact the Library's Research Help Desk:

- Email: research@smu.ca or Text: 902-702-3057

Please note: Your instructors' requirements for citing may differ from the examples provided in this guide. Always check with your instructor if you have questions.

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