

# American Psychological Association (APA) Documentation

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APA documentation style is often used in the Social Sciences, including government, psychology, sociology, and education. For more APA help, consult the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, sixth edition (2009), or visit the Writing Center.

## Step 1: In-Text Citations

Place a parenthetical reference at the end of each sentence which includes any information that is not common knowledge. Cite paraphrases, summaries, and quotations. APA style emphasizes the date of the publication; always include a date when mentioning an author's name. When the author is an organization, use the organization's name as the author. For two authors, always cite both; for more than two, include all names in the first citation and in subsequent citations use the first author followed by "et al."

*Direct quotations:* These are an author's exact words. Include the author's last name, date of publication, and the page number(s) on which the cited information appears. If the source does not have page numbers, use a paragraph number.

**Ex.** All too often, "parents of adolescents have forgotten the difficulties of being a teenager and thus are unlikely to empathize with the trials and tribulations of high school life" (Smith, 2001, p. 32 OR para. 6).

**Ex.** According to psychologist Jonathan Smith (2001), "parents of adolescents have forgotten the difficulties of being a teenager and thus are unlikely to empathize with the trials and tribulations of high school life" (p. 32 OR para. 6).

*Paraphrases:* Remember to cite borrowed information even when you do not quote the source directly. As with a direct quotation, include the page number when you paraphrase.

**Ex.** Parents of adolescents often forget what it is like to be a teenager and can't empathize with their children (Smith, 2001, p. 32 OR para. 6).

*Summaries:* When citing summarized information, include only the author's last name and date of publication.

**Ex.** Extensive research has been conducted on the inability of parents of adolescent children to empathize with the difficulties of high school life (Smith, 2001).

**Ex.** Psychologist Jonathan Smith (2001) has conducted extensive research on the inability of parents of adolescent children to empathize with the difficulties of high school life.

## Step 2: References Page (see example following)

Place the References page at the end of the paper and title it "References" (no quotation marks).

*Formatting:* Entries are double-spaced and listed alphabetically by the author's last name. The first line of each entry should be flush with the left margin; indent subsequent lines. Italicize titles of a major works such as books, magazines, journals, and websites. Do not italicize article, chapter or webpage titles. Capitalize the first, last, and all major words in journal and other periodical titles. Capitalize only proper nouns and the first word of the title and subtitle of books, articles, websites and webpages.

*Electronic sources and DOI numbers:* Cite electronic sources as with print sources but include retrieval information. If the work has a DOI (digital object identification) number (usually found on title page), list it last in the reference. If there is no DOI number, list the web address for the journal or book publisher's homepage or the URL of a personal webpage. A retrieval date (in addition to a copyright/updated date) should be included for website citations. The retrieval date should not be included for online articles if the final version of the article is being referenced. In these cases, only the date of publication is needed.

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## References Example

**Single author book.** Author last name, Initials. (year). *Title*. City of publication, State abbr. [unless major city. See APA manual]: Publisher.

**Print journal article.** Author last name, Initials. (date). Article title. *Journal title*, volume #(issue #), page #s.

**Online Journal Article**  
Author last name, Initials. (date). Article title. *Journal title*, volume (issue), page #s. Retrieved from URL (no retrieval date needed because final version of the article is being referenced) OR doi:xxx

**Print journal article, 2 or more authors.** Author last name, Initials, for all authors. Name all authors for up to 6 authors. (date). Article Title. *Journal title*, volume #(issue #), page #s.

**Part of an anthology or chapter in a collection of essays.** Author last name, Initials. (date). Article title. In Editors' first initials and last names (Eds.), *Book Title* (page numbers). City of publication, State [unless major city]: Publisher.

**Article from a newspaper or magazine published at least twice a month.** Author last name, Initials. (year, month day). Article title. *Periodical Title*, vol. #(issue #) (if given), page #s. (If online include Retrieved from URL)

**Personal or professional webpage.** Author last name, Initials. (Date site was updated or copyright). Article/page title. *Website Title*. Retrieval Date, from URL.

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