

# APA Citation Style

## Guide to Bibliographic Citation



*Please Note:*

*While Library staff have made every effort to avoid errors in this document,  
we strongly encourage students to verify this information with the APA manual,  
The Publication Guide of the American Psychological Association,  
or with your professor*

The Library, Durham College & UOIT  
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## Avoiding Plagiarism

We learn a lot by studying the work of others. However, when writing a research paper, credit must be given where credit is due. **If you fail to acknowledge your sources, you are guilty of plagiarism.** Plagiarism is a serious offence which may lead to lost marks or a failing grade.

There are many different formats for providing credit (also known as bibliographic citation) to other sources within your research paper. Two common formats are the APA (American Psychological Association) and the MLA (Modern Language Association) styles.

This handout provides a brief summary of the **APA** style guidelines as outlined in the fifth edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. The examples presented illustrate the more common types of bibliographic citation. Please note that this handout should only be used as a guide. For complete information and additional examples consult the Library's copy of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* shelved in the Reference section of the library – Call number: BF 76.7 .P83 2001. PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR FOR ANY ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS THAT MAY DIFFER FROM THOSE OUTLINED BY THE APA.

## When to cite

Before examining the specific formats of the APA citation style (which are explained in detail in the following pages), it is important to understand when to cite to prevent plagiarism. A source must be cited or acknowledged when you:

- quote material verbatim (word for word)
- slightly reword or paraphrase materials
- include statistics or findings from a survey or study
- incorporate facts, ideas or opinions that are not common knowledge

Listed below are a few examples to illustrate when citations are required.

Assume that you have been given an assignment on the increasing use of alternative medicines and you decide to use an article written by Sally E. Thorne entitled "Complementary and alternative medicine: Critical issues of nursing practice and policy" from *Canadian Nurse*, April 2001, volume 97, number 4, pages 27 to 30.

Here is a passage taken directly from the above-mentioned article:

Why is so little known about the actual effects - both benefits and harms - of many of the alternative and complementary therapies? In modern health care, the general standard by which medical knowledge is judged is the randomized controlled clinical trial, which uses large population studies to create mathematical probabilities of certain effects and outcomes.

### Example 1

Citation is required if you use a **direct quote** from a source in your paper. Note that a page number is required when using quotes.

Traditional western medical knowledge is judged using the "randomized controlled clinical trial, which uses large population studies" (Thorne, 2001, p. 28).

## Example 2

**Paraphrasing** or **rewording** the passage does not make it your own. Look at the following change; citing is still required. As this is not a direct, verbatim quote a page number is not necessary.

Randomized controlled clinical trials study large populations to calculate the mathematical probabilities of various outcomes or effects (Thorne, 2001).

## Example 3

**Statistics** must always be cited. This example uses an article by Kathryn Wilkins and Marie P. Beaudet titled “Changes in social support in relation to seniors’ use of home care” from *Health Reports*, Spring 2000, volume 11, number 4, pages 39 to 47. The cited statistics are from a chart within the article.

In 1996/97, twelve percent of seniors entering home care for the first time were from lower income brackets, compared to six percent from higher income brackets (Wilkins & Beaudet, 2000).

## Example 4

Consider another section taken directly from the Wilkins and Beaudet article:

As expected, age was independently predictive of entry into home care. The odds of entering government-supported home care were three times as high for people aged 75 or older as those for 65 to 74-year olds.

When you **summarize a concept that is not common knowledge**, you must cite your source.

Regardless of income or family structure, the age of an individual is a strong factor in the decision to enter a government supported care facility (Wilkins & Beaudet, 2000).

It is not necessary to cite information that is widely known by your audience – such as: “milk is a good source of calcium” or “good oral care prevents tooth decay”.

## What to cite

The previous examples were taken from journal articles but proper citation applies to all types of formats including books, journals, newspapers, works by associations or corporations, encyclopedias, dictionaries, technical reports, videocassettes, websites, electronic journal articles or interviews.

Due to concerns regarding plagiarism, students often complain that their essays are a string of cited lines and paragraphs. However, it is *how* you interpret the information from various sources and bring it together, that is uniquely yours. No other individual will come up with quite the same combination. If you are in doubt if a citation is required, it is better to cite than not cite.

## American Psychological Association (APA) Citation Style

### In Text Citations and Reference List Citations

Information from other sources must be acknowledged within the body of the text (**in text citations**) *and* at the end of the paper (in the **reference list**). It is important that all material cited within the text must appear in the reference list, and vice versa.

#### **In Text Citations**

Citations within the text are brief and include the author's name, the year of publication, and the page numbers where appropriate. These short references provide enough information for the reader to locate the full citation in the reference list at the end of the paper. Page numbers are not necessary when paraphrasing an author's ideas, only for quoting directly (see 'Quotations' section for more information).

The surname of the author and the year of publication are inserted in the text at the appropriate point (e.g. before a comma, after a quotation or at the end of the sentence).

In an earlier patient survey (Wilson, 2001), it was found

If the name of the author appears in the sentence, only the year is required in the citation.

Wilson (2001) surveyed patients

A study by Kirton et al. (2001) found that

In the majority of the examples listed in the following sections, the in text citations are given as if the author's name was not used in the sentence. However, it is generally advisable to use the author's name in the sentence with only the year in brackets, as it makes the text easier to read (less fragmented).

#### **Reference List Citations**

The reference list should start on a new page and the word *References* should be centered at the top of the page. All reference entries should be **double-spaced** (the examples used throughout this handout are single spaced due to space limitations). APA uses a hanging-indent format – the first line of each entry is flush left and subsequent lines are indented a half inch (5-7 spaces). Entries should be arranged alphabetically by author's surname or name of a corporate body. If the author is unknown, alphabetize the entry in the list by its title. The reference list provides enough information to identify or locate each source.

The following are some common APA style examples illustrating how to provide in text and reference citations. **For complete information and an exhaustive list of examples please consult the Library's copy of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* shelved in the Reference section – Call number: BF 76.7 .P83 2001.**

#### **Examples of Print Materials:**

##### **Book (general reference format)**

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

Elements that must be included in reference list citations are: author name (use only initials for first name), title, date of publication and publisher information. The title of the book should be italicised.

**Book  
(no author)**

**In Text:** The spinal column (*Dorland's Illustrated*, 2000) has

If referring to a book, brochure or report, the first few words of the title in the in text citation should be in italics. If referring to an article or chapter, the first few words should be in double quotes and capitalized.

**Reference:** *Dorland's illustrated medical dictionary* (29th ed.). (2000). Philadelphia: Saunders.

**Book  
(one author)**

**In Text:** Plagiarism is quite often unintentional (Ballenger, 2007) as

**Reference:** Ballenger, B. (2007). *The curious researcher: A guide to writing research papers*. Toronto: Pearson Longman.

**Book  
(two authors)**

**In Text:** In the United States, the occupation of registered nurse is expected to see largest growth in the next decade (Cherry & Jacob, 2005).

**Reference:** Cherry, B., & Jacob, S. R. (2005). *Contemporary nursing: Issues, trends, & management* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier Mosby.

**Book  
(three to five authors)**

**In Text, first citation:** The study (Kirton, Talotta, & Zwolski, 2001) concluded

**In Text, subsequent citations:** (Kirton et al., 2001)

**Reference:** Kirton, C. A., Talotta, D., & Zwolski, K. (2001). *Handbook of HIV/AIDS nursing*. St. Louis, MO: Mosby.

All of the authors are cited in the text the first time the reference appears. For subsequent citations, use the first surname followed by *et al.* (not italicized and with a period after "al"), a term meaning "and others". The only exception is when two distinct references shorten to the same first author. In this case list enough subsequent authors to establish a distinction between the two references.

**Book  
(six or more authors)**

**In Text:** The study (Wolchik et al., 2000) found

**Reference :** Wolchik, S. A., West, S. G., Sandler, I. N., Tein, J., Coatsworth, D., Lengua, L., et al. (2000). *Neuroscience*. Philadelphia: Saunders.

Only the first six authors' names are listed followed by *et al.*

**Group as Author, including Government Documents  
(government agency, associations, corporations, etc.)**

**In Text, first citation:** The use of biased language should be avoided when possible (American Psychological Association [APA], 2005)

**Subsequent citations:** (APA, 2005)

If the organization has a well-known abbreviation, include it in brackets the first time the sources is cited and then use only the abbreviation in later citations.

**Reference:** American Psychological Association. (2005). *Concise rules of APA style*. Washington: Author.

Canada Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1995). *Choosing life: Special report on suicide among Aboriginal people*. Ottawa, ON: Ministry of Supply and Services Canada.

Statistics Canada. (1998). *Family expenditure in Canada, 1996* (No. 62-555-XPB). Ottawa, Ontario: Author.

Publications with a group author (e.g. annual reports or government documents) are often published by the group itself. In these cases the publisher is listed as Author and the place of publication is often the city of the corporation's head office.

**Edited Book**

**In Text:** The relationship between crime and schizophrenia (Raine, 2006)

**Reference:** Raine, A. (Ed.). (2006). *Crime and schizophrenia: Causes and cures*. New York: Nova Science.

Lamberts, K., & Goldstone, R. L. (Eds.). (2005). *Handbook of cognition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**Article or Chapter in an Edited Book**

**In Text:** There are a several key theories of learning (Young & Wasserman, 2005)

**Reference – general form:** Article author. (publication year). Title of article or chapter. In editor's name (Ed.), *Title of book* (article pages). Place of publication: Publisher.

Young, M. E., & Wasserman, E. A. (2005). Theories of learning. In K. Lamberts, & R. L. Goldstone (Eds.), *Handbook of cognition* (pp. 161-182). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

### Encyclopedia Entry

**In Text:** Chemical elements are the building blocks of all materials (Usselman, 2006).

**Reference – general form:**

Section author. (publication year). Title of section. In *Title of encyclopedia* (volume number, pages). Place of publication: Publisher.

Usselman, M. (2006). Chemistry. In *The world book encyclopedia* (Vol. 3, pp. 398-407). Chicago: World Book.

### Brochures and pamphlets

**In Text:** (Correctional Service Canada, 2000)

**Reference:** Correctional Service Canada. (2000). *Parole eligibility* [Pamphlet]. Ottawa: Solicitor General of Canada and Public Works and Government Services Canada.

The reference entry should indicate the source format if it is an individual work such as a pamphlet, chart or map. The presentation format or medium appears in square brackets.

### Conference Papers or Proceedings

**In Text:** (Deci & Ryan, 1991)

**Reference:** Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1991). A motivational approach to self: Integration of personality. In R. Dienstbier (Ed.), *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation: Vol 38. Perspectives on motivation* (pp. 237-288). Lincoln: University of Nebraska.

The reference follows the same basic format as a book chapter. The name of the conference is capitalized as it is a proper noun.

### Periodicals (Journals, Magazines, Newspapers) (general reference form)

Author, A.A., & Author, B.B. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, volume(issue), page-range.

Journal article references include the author of the article, date, title of the article, title of the journal, volume and issue information and the page range of the article. The periodical title and volume number are italicised.

### Journal Article (one author)

**In Text:** Clinical trials (Thorne, 2001) indicate

**Reference:** Thorne, S. E. (2001). Complementary and alternative medicine: Critical issues of nursing practice and policy. *Canadian Nurse*, 97(4), 27-30.

**Journal Article  
(two authors)**

**In Text:** An individual's age is a factor (Wilkins & Beaudet, 2000)

**Reference:** Wilkins, K., & Beaudet, M. P. (2000). Changes in social support in relation to senior's use of home care. *Health Reports, 11*(4), 39-47.

**Journal Article  
(three to six authors)**

**In Text, first citation:**

Palliative care focuses on geriatric syndromes (Kapo, Morrison, & Liao, 2007)

**In Text, subsequent citations:** (Kapo et al., 2007)

**Reference:** Kapo, J., Morrison, L. J., & Liao, S. (2007). Palliative care for the older adult. *Journal of Palliative Medicine, 10*(1), 185-209.

**Journal Articles  
(more than six authors)**

**In Text:** The study by Davies et al. (2002) of recent newborns concluded that

**Reference:** Davies, B., Hodnett, E., Hannah, M., O'Brien-Pallas, L., Pringle, D., Wells, G., et al. (2002). Fetal health surveillance: A community-wide approach versus a tailored intervention for the implementation of clinical practice guidelines. *CMAJ: Canadian Medical Association Journal, 167*(5), 469-474.

If an article has more than six authors, cite the first six in the reference citation and abbreviate the remaining authors as *et al.* The in text citation requires only the first author followed by *et al.*

**Newspaper Article  
(with author)**

**In Text:** A serious shortage of nursing staff will occur over the next decade (Robinson, 2002), as indicated by

**Reference:** Robinson, L. (2002, September 10). Simple solutions to address nursing labour shortage. *The Hamilton Spectator*, p. B4.

References for titles that are published daily (e.g. newspapers) include the year, month and day of the issue. Unlike journal references, newspaper references also require a p. (for single page articles) or pp. (if multiple pages) to indicate page number(s).

**Newspaper Article  
(no author)**

**In Text:** Medication may be delivered in a number of formats ("Medicated Gum", 2002), including a chewable gum format.

**Reference:** Medicated gum helpful to seniors. (2002, September 19). *The Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, pp. C2, C4.

Alphabetise by the first significant word in the title. For example, if the title was "The new health-care system", list it under *new*.

**Examples of Electronic Sources**

The 5th edition of the APA style guide includes new guidelines for the citation of electronic references. However, your instructor may have a format that he/she prefers to use instead. PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR FOR ANY ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS THAT MAY DIFFER FROM THOSE OUTLINED BY THE APA.

**Website**

**In Text:** The profession of nursing is a challenging one (College of Nurses of Ontario, 2003).

**Reference – general form:**

Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of work*. Retrieved month day, year, from source.

College of Nurses of Ontario. (2003, July 28). *Welcome to CNO*. Retrieved September 20, 2003, from <http://www.cno.org>

If no date is available, use *n.d.* in brackets. If no author is identified (individual or corporate), begin the reference with the title of the document.

*GVU's 8<sup>th</sup> WWW user survey*. (n.d.). Retrieved June 1, 2007, from [http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/user\\_surveys/survey-1997-10/](http://www.cc.gatech.edu/gvu/user_surveys/survey-1997-10/)

**Multipage Website**

When an Internet document comprises multiple pages (i.e. different sections have different URLs), provide a URL that links to the home (or entry) page for the document. Use the format for a website as listed in the preceding section.

**Electronic Journal Article  
(retrieved from database)**

Full-text journal articles retrieved from library databases, such as EBSCO or Proquest, are examples of this type of source. The reference citation is very similar to a print journal reference, however, the name of the database and the date of retrieval are also listed.

**In Text:** Palliative care focuses on geriatric syndromes (Kapo, Morrison, & Liao, 2007), while

**Reference:** Kapo, J., Morrison, L. J., & Liao, S. (2007). Palliative care for the older adult. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*, 10(1), 185-209. Retrieved June 2, 2007, from EBSCO Academic Search Premier database.

**Electronic Journal Article  
(retrieved from Internet with print equivalent)**

Often online journal articles are a duplication of a print version. As a result, the same primary journal reference can be used. To indicate that the electronic version was used as the source, [electronic version] should be included after the article title in the reference citation.

**In Text:** Clinical trials (Thorne, 2001) indicate

**Reference:** Thorne, S. E. (2001). Complementary and alternative medicine: Critical issues of nursing practice and policy [Electronic version]. *Canadian Nurse*, 97(4), 27-30.

**Electronic Journal Article  
(Internet format only/no print equivalent OR modified from paper format)**

**In Text:** Research requires a range of skills (VandenBos, Knapp, & Doe, 2001).

**Reference:** VandenBos, G., Knapp, S., & Doe, J. (2001). Role of reference elements in the selection of resources by psychology undergraduates. *Journal of Bibliographic Research*, 5, 117-122. Retrieved June 3, 2007, from <http://journals.apa.org/prevention/volume3/pre0030001a.html>

**Electronic Books**

Electronic book references are very similar to print book references. However, the retrieval date and the name of the source are also included in the reference.

**In Text:** Taking patient histories (Nettina, 2001) requires

**Reference:** Nettina, S. M. (Ed.). (2001). *Lippincott manual of nursing practice*. Philadelphia: Williams & Wilkins. Retrieved September 30, 2002, from Books@Ovid.

**Online Government Document**

**In Text:** The number of small businesses on the rise (Statistics Canada, 2003).

**Reference:** Statistics Canada. (2003). *Business dynamics in Canada, 2003* (No. 61-534-XIE). Ottawa, Ontario: Author. Retrieved May 5, 2007, from <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/61-534-XIE/61-534-XIE2007001.htm>

### Discussion Lists, Newsgroups, and Electronic Mailing Lists (Listservs)

In general, discussion list messages, newsgroups and electronic mailing lists (listservs) are not referenced in formal research publications. These sources are seldom peer reviewed, often lack scholarly content and are difficult to retrieve at a future date (unless archives are kept). CHECK WITH YOUR PROFESSOR IF THESE COMMUNICATION FORMATS ARE ACCEPTABLE SOURCES. If they may be included, cite them as follows:

Discussion lists and newsgroups:

**In Text:** Many people are visual or kinetic learners (Simons, 2000)

**Reference:** Simons, D.J. (2000, July 14). New resources for visual cognition. Message posted to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/visualcognition/message/31>

Electronic mailing lists (listservs):

**In Text:** A growing population of families are caring for children and aging parents at the same time (Spencer, 1999).

**Reference:** Spencer, T. (1999, December 7). Helpful tips for elder care. Message posted to LISTSERV@kentuckyu.nursing.edu

### Examples of Audio-visual Material

#### Television Broadcast

**In Text:** As reported on *The National* (Mansbridge, 2006), the hurricane

**Reference:** Mansbridge, P. (Chief Correspondent). (2006, March 30). *The National* [Television broadcast]. Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Provide the name(s) of the originator or the primary contributors and their function (e.g. director, producer). Also provide the date of broadcast, title, medium, place of production and the name of the production company.

#### Motion Picture (with one contributor)

**In Text:** Domestic violence is often not revealed to outsiders (Belson, 1995)

**Reference:** Belson, J. (Producer). (1995). *Domestic violence: Identification, treatment and referral for the healthcare professional* [Motion picture]. Glendale, CA: Belson/Harwright.

**Motion Picture  
(with two contributors)**

**In Text:** Stress is a major factor of heart attacks (Spiegel & Martin, 1982)

**Reference:** Spiegel, S. (Producer) & Martin, Q. (Director). (1982). *The heart as the primary pump* [Motion picture]. New York: Scientific Minds.

**Work Discussed in a Secondary Source**

A primary (or original) source may be cited in the source you are citing. Do not cite works that you have not read firsthand. For example, Miller and Grey's work is cited in Greenberg, but you did not read the original paper by Miller and Grey. Within the text, you may mention Miller and Grey but only Greenberg can appear in your citation and reference list.

Miller and Grey's study (as cited in Greenberg, 1997)

**Personal Communications**

Personal communications can include letters, memos, emails, personal interviews or telephone conversations. Unlike published sources, personal communications are cited within the text but generally not in the reference list at the end of the paper as they are irrecoverable data. In the text reference, the initials and surname of the communicator should be included as well as an exact a date as possible. The APA guidelines do not require that you specify the type of personal communication (email, interview, etc.). PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR IF PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS ARE ACCEPTABLE SOURCES FOR YOUR PAPER OR IF THEY HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN ADDITION TO THOSE OUTLINED BY THE APA.

**In Text:** (P. K. Smith, personal communication, October 23, 2003)

**Reference (if used):**

Nesbitt, L. (President, Hamilton and District Chamber of Commerce). (1998, January 30). Personal Interview.

Jackson, G. (jackson@aol.com). (2000, February 1). Midterm papers. E-mail to S.T. Withers (stwithers@rogers.com).

**Lecture Notes (class notes, WebCT and PowerPoint)**

According to formal APA guidelines, course lecture notes taken by the student are considered 'personal communication' as they are unpublished, 'non-recoverable data'. As such, they would only be listed in an in-text citation and not in the reference list.

However, some professors may also require a reference entry. If that is the case, you could do something similar to the example used for the personal interview listed above, changing 'Personal Interview' to 'Course Lecture'. Use your own judgement, but remember: *when in doubt, ask for your professor's opinion.*

You would provide the professor's name, the course name and the date of the lecture in the text.

**In Text:** In a lecture on January 15, 2008, to a COMM 1000 class, Professor Smith said...

...(A. B. Smith, COMM 1000 lecture, January 15, 2008).

Information taken from WebCT lecture notes or PowerPoint slides could also be documented in a number of ways. They could be treated as 'personal communication' (see the example for personal lecture notes above) or they may be treated more formally as in the example below. In the example below, you would provide the professor's name, date of the lecture, the title of the slide/lecture (in italics), the format and retrieval information. The format (PowerPoint or course notes) is given in square brackets after the title.

Again, there is no specific APA rule for this type of material – *please check with your professor for his/her preferred format.*

**In Text:** (Cloe, 2007)

**Reference:** Cloe, J. (2007, November 6). *The normal distribution* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from Okanagan College WebCT site: <http://olc-new.okanagan.bc.ca/webct>

### Works by the Same Author

If the publication years are different, list the works in order of publication, earliest first. If the works have the same author and the same publication date, identify them by the suffixes a, b, c, d, etc. after the year.

**In Text:** (Canadian Dental Hygienists, 2002a)  
(Canadian Dental Hygienists, 2002b)

**Reference:** Canadian Dental Hygienists Association. (2002a). *Corporate opportunities*. Retrieved September 30, 2002, from [http://www.cdha.ca/content/corporate\\_opportunities/corporate\\_opportunities.asp](http://www.cdha.ca/content/corporate_opportunities/corporate_opportunities.asp)

Canadian Dental Hygienists Association. (2002b). *Events & conferences*. Retrieved September 30, 2002, from <http://www.cdha.ca/content/events&conferences/events.asp>

### Quotations

Whenever possible, acknowledge your source with the author's surname (or document title if there is no author), year of publication and page numbers. In the case of electronic sources, such as web pages or electronic journal articles that do not provide page numbers, the paragraph number, if available, is used instead. If neither paragraph nor page numbers are visible, cite the heading and the number of the paragraph following it to direct the reader to the location of the material. Use the symbol ¶ or the abbreviation *para.* before the paragraph number.

(Roberts & Smith, 1988, p. 52)  
("Life Cycle", 2002, ¶ 6)  
(Beutler, 2002, Conclusion section, para. 3)

If your quote is short - fewer than forty words - it should be incorporated into the text and enclosed by double quotation marks. e.g.:

Especially if you are pressed for time, it is so easy to fall into the trap of passing off another's work as your own. Plagiarism is a moral issue, which requires you to acknowledge the use of other researchers' works. It is a "gesture of gratitude" to the researchers that came before you (Ballenger, 2007, p. 123).

Longer quotations of forty words or more are offset from the main body of the essay by indenting five to seven spaces from the left margin. If the quotation is more than one paragraph in length, indent the first line of the second and subsequent paragraphs five to seven spaces from the new margin. Do not use double quotation marks. The quotation should be double-spaced. e.g.:

Kapo, Morrison, and Liao (2007) found the following:

The U.S. population is aging at increasing rates. By 2030, one in five Americans will be age 65 or older. The fastest growing demographic segment...persons age 85 and older, expected to more than double in size from 3.5 million to 8.5 million within the next 30 years. (p. 185)

If you wish to omit material in the quotation use ellipsis points (...) to indicate the location of the absent material. Use three spaced ellipsis points for omissions within a sentence and use four points for omissions between two sentences. Take care to ensure that the material omitted does not change the original meaning of the quoted passage.