

APA Frequently Asked Questions: Handbook Mediation for the Burdened Student's
Sherry Wynn Perdue and Kelly Coe
Oakland University
Rochester, MI

APA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the running text, and how is author attribution in it different from a parenthetical reference or a citation in the reference page?

- The running text (RT) consists of sentences within the body of your paper. If you include author attribution within it, your sentence would include the author(s)' (last name(s) only) and the date. Do not use the ampersand (&) between authors' names within the running text. You will follow author information with the date in parentheses as follows:

RT: Boud and Bosely (2009) argue that literature reviews are essential but undervalued components of the doctoral dissertation.

- If you choose not to include the author information within the text, you can do so within a parenthetical (P). Again, you only use last name(s) and date. Use an ampersand (&) between the last two authors of multi-authored sources as follows:

P: The research suggests that literature reviews are essential but undervalued components of the doctoral dissertation (Boud & Bosely, 2009).

- In the reference page, you will insert a full citation for the source. In this case, you will invert all last names and include initials for first and middle names. You follow the name information with the date, etc.

R: Boud, J. & Bosley, K. (2009).

How do I cite multiple authors within the running text and within a parenthetical?

- Up to **two** authors, always list both names followed by the date.

RT: Smith (2009) argue
Smith and Rooney (2009) argue

P: (Smith, 2009)
(Smith & Rooney, 2009)

- If **three to five authors**, list all authors the first time you cite the source. Thereafter, list the first author's names followed by et al. and the date. Do not place a comma between the et al. and the date, however.

RT 1st: Smith, Rooney, Jones, and Kline (2006) argue
RT thereafter: Smith et al. (2006) argue

P 1st: (Smith, Rooney, Jones, & Kline, 2006)
P thereafter: (Smith et al. 2006)

- In cases where the article is penned by **six or more authors**, you only cite the first author followed by et al. and the date. Again, do not place a comma between the et al. and the date.

RT in all cases: Jamison et al. (2009) argue

P in all cases: (Jamison et al. 2009)

How do I cite multiple authors within the reference page?

- If the source is authored by **up to seven authors**, list them all in inverted last name initial order.

Quincy, I., James, K., York, E., Konch, R., Rouche, S., Smith, W., & Jones, W. (2006).

- If the source is authored by **eight or more authors**, list the first six followed by the ellipses and the last author of the study's name, as follows:

Quincy, I., James, K., York, E., Konch, R., Rouche, S., Smith, W., . . . Karter, W. (2006).

When do I use the ampersand (&), and when must I write out the word "and"?

- Never use the ampersand (&) within the running text of your paper. Always use it within parenthetical and between authors within the References page.

How should I punctuate titles within the running text? within parentheticals without authors (the only time you would include a title)? within the reference page?

- **Within the running text of the paper and within parentheticals without authors**, punctuate book and journal titles with italics and article and chapter titles within quotation marks. **Don't forget to extend the italics to the volume number of the journal.**

In "APA is rotting my brain," Wynn Perdue (2010) offers students mediation for the brain rot that sets in when they confront the exceptions of this challenging documentation style.

- **Within the reference page**, you place no punctuation around titles of articles and chapter titles, but you italicize the title of all journals and books.

Wynn Perdue, S. (2010). APA is rotting my brain: Researcher responds to desperate plea for help. *Journal of Frustration Mediation*, 23(1), 3-17.

What title words do I capitalize in the reference page?

- On the one hand APA uses **first word capitalization (title and subtitle) for article titles and book titles**.
- On the other hand, **journal titles** are represented with **significant word capitalization**. In all cases, proper nouns are capitalized.

Smith, J. (2009). A quasi-theoretical model of research: Just what does quasi-theoretical mean? *Journal of Research Nightmares*, 1(2), 345-389.

How do I create a running head using Microsoft Word's header feature?

- Click on the "Insert" drop down menu. Select "Header." Select "Different First Page." Include the words "Running head" on the title page. Follow with the short title in all capital letters. Tab over to the right margin and click on the page number icon. Choose "current position" and "plain number."
- Follow the same procedure on page two except you do not type the words "Running head." **See the paper template for an example.**

How often must I cite my sources?

- Cite your sources after or within every sentence that you include information that is not common knowledge with few exceptions. If the next sentence says, "The authors further argue . . ." and you have not referenced more than one study, the reader can infer that you are speaking of the same study. In all other cases, err on the side of over-citing your sources.

When do I need to include page numbers in my parenthetical citation?

- APA requires that you provide page numbers for all directly quoted material. It suggests that you provide them for direct paraphrases, too.

Of its ease of use, the researcher claims that "we've never had to train employees to use it properly. It is intuitive" (Smith, 2009, p. 20).

When must I use a block quote?

- If you directly quote 40 words or more, you must indent the quote as follows. Do not place quotation marks around the borrowed words, and place the period BEFORE the parenthetical citation.

Once upon a time I thought that students should not have to learn APA citation within the classroom, but years of anecdotal evidence and research studies have convinced me that nothing about APA is intuitive to learners, whether they are undergraduate students, graduate students, or faculty members. (Wynn, 2009, p.3)

In what tense should I refer to research studies?

- While APA proper encourages writers to refer to prior studies in past tense, many disciplines, such as composition studies, ask writers to refer to research in the present tense unless you are making a distinction between ideas held in the past and ideas that are still salient. Check with your discipline and the individual teacher.

When do I include the retrieved from date in web sources?

- Only if the information from the source is subject to change, then it is necessary to include the retrieval date (APA Manual, 2010, p. 192).

How do I correctly translate the information of Academic Digital Sources to my reference page? With DOI? Without DOI? *APA Manual* on page 199. An easy example from *Sherry's APA Documentation (6th edition): A Self-Paced Tutorial* is as follows:

- In an article **WITH DOI**, the information appears as shown on this link:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.1219>

The information is translated to the reference page as:

Tyler, J. A. (2007). Incorporating storytelling into practice: How HRD practitioners foster strategic storytelling. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 18(4), 559-587.
doi:10.1002/hrdq.1219

- In an article **WITHOUT DOI**, the information appears as:

Developing a Standardized Letter of Recommendation Alyssa M Walters; Patrick C Kyllonen; Janice W Plante
2006 English Article (EJ) 10
Journal of College Admission, v191 p8-17 Spr 2006
National Association for College Admission Counseling. 1631 Prince Street,
Alexandria, VA 22314-2818. Tel: 703-836-2222; Tel: 800-822-6285 (Toll Free); Fax:
703-836-8015; e-mail: info@nacac.com; Web site:<http://www.nacacnet.org>.

The information is translated as to the reference page as:

Walters, A. M., Kyllonen, P. C., & Plante, J. W. (2006). Developing a standardized letter of recommendation. *Journal of College Admission*, 191, 8-17. Retrieved from <http://www.nacacnet.org>

How do I use headings throughout my paper?

The Sample APA Paper for Students Learning APA Style (2010) states the following:

Headings organize the hierarchy of ideas in your paper. By employing headings, you give your reader visual cues about the importance of the information that is to follow. Headings can be especially useful when explaining processes step-by-step. You can have one or more levels of headings in your paper; all ideas of equal importance will have the same level of heading. The longer your paper, the more levels of headings you will have. For a detailed explanation of headings (including how to format headings when you have more than three levels), see section 3.03 of the APA Publication Manual. (p.4) or pages 30-31 of Sherry’s APA Tutorial. The five levels are depicted below.



What is an Abstract?

The Sample APA Paper for Students Learning APA Style (2010) states the following:

You may not have to include an abstract with your paper; if in doubt, ask your instructor. The abstract is a single paragraph in block format (without paragraph indentation) and should be between 150 and 250 words. Be sure to understand the difference between the abstract (a summary of the paper) and the introduction (an introduction to the paper). A good trick is to write one summary sentence for each major part of your paper, which should leave you with a good, four-sentence abstract. See section 2.04 of the 6th edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association for additional information. (p. 2)

How does the 6th Edition prescribe the documentation of popular internet resources?

Historically APA did not offer citation guidelines for popular internet resources. The 6th edition, however, includes citation formats for popular resources although you should exercise caution when you reference personal web pages and social media sites (formats included below) because they may not be appropriate for your assignment or audience.

What is the difference between an entire website vs. an individual web page (Olsen Library Printout, p.8)?

- With an **entire web site**, it is **not necessary** to include the site on the reference page, but instead within the text as such:

The Student Advocacy Center web site provides resources and programs for students with disabilities throughout the state of Michigan (<http://www.studentadvocacycenter.org>).

An **individual web page**, however, **does** need to be entered on the reference page, as well as cited within the text. For more examples, see: Strahan, M. (updated 2010). *APA Reference Style Guide*. Retrieved from http://library.nmu.edu/guides/userguides/style_ap.htm/

- Reference page example, followed by in-text example:

Reader's theater, having students practice reading in groups and then having them perform for the whole class, is a popular strategy to improve students' reading and communication skills (Gregory, 2010).

Gregory, M. (2010). *Reader's Theater*. Retrieved July 26, 2010, from http://www.mandygregory.com/readers_theater.htm

Facebook: The answer can be found in the *APA Manual*, Ex. 67 on page 214. An easy example from *APA Style Blog* (p. 1 of 5) is as follows:

Username or Group Name. (n.d.). In *Facebook* [Page type]. Retrieved Month Day, Year from <http://www.facebook.com/specificpageURL>

Wikipedia: APA Manual p. 205 (Entry in an online reference work, no author or editor). An easy example from *APA Style Blog* (p. 5 of 5) is as follows:

Psychology. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved October 14, 2009, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychology>

How do I cite a document found on ERIC?

Publication Type: Book - Limited-circulation book or monograph, from electronic database [ERIC] (Manual, p. 204) [Note: ISBN usually provided]

Hipp, E. (2000). *Understanding the human volcano: What teens can do about violence* [Monograph]. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/>

Link for more examples of how to cite Eric documents:
http://library.nmu.edu/guides/userguides/style_apa.htm#ericonline

Strahan, M. (updated 2010). *APA Reference Style Guide*