

HOW TO CITE IN APA STYLE

In this video, we are going to look at how to cite sources properly using APA style. We'll cover where you need to cite, what information you need, and how to format your citations.

WHERE DO YOU NEED CITATIONS?

First, where do you need to put citations?

Citations come in two parts. The first part is in your paper, at the end of every sentence that uses ideas from a source. This lets readers know which source you used, and is called an in-text citation. Then, the second part is at the end of your paper where you give a list called References, which has all the sources with in-text citations in your paper. For each source, you need to give the information that you would need if you wanted to locate a copy of it.

The two parts work together. The in-text citations refer to the full information about the source listed in the list of references at the end. You need to have both parts to cite correctly and avoid plagiarism.

WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU NEED?

Next, we'll look at what information you need to create a citation.

APA requires specific pieces of information about each of your sources. These include the author, the title, the title of the item that the source is located in, the publisher, date, and the information you need to locate a copy of the source. These pieces of information look a bit different for different types of sources.

For a scholarly journal article, you'll need the author and title of the article. You'll also need the title of the journal the article is published in, and the date. The location information includes the volume, issue, pages, and the DOI, which is a unique ID number assigned to the article. The same information is required for articles whether they are print or online. Don't list the database you found the article in, like Proquest.

For a book, you'll need the authors, the book title, the publisher, and the publication year.

Some books have chapters written by different people. If that's the case, you'll need to cite the individual chapter rather than the book. You'll need information on the chapter's author and title, the title of the book that the chapter is published in, the editors of the book, the publisher, year, and the chapter pages.

Web sites don't always have as much information available. You'll need to provide all the information you can find, though, including the author, the title of the page, the title of the web site or the organization the site is published by, the date, and the page url. Just because you find a source online, it doesn't mean you should cite it as a web site. If you're using an online article or book, you'll need to cite it as an article or a book, not as a web site.

HOW DO YOU FORMAT THE INFORMATION?

Next, we'll look at how you format your citations.

In APA style, you need to put information in brackets at the end of every sentence where you refer to a source. What you include in the brackets depends on how you refer to the source. If you mention an idea from a source in your own words, include the author's last name, a comma, then the date. If you mention the author's name in your sentence, you only need to include the date. If you quote from the source directly, you will need to include the page number where you got the quote. If there are three or more authors, list only the first author followed by et al.

Then, at the end of your paper you give a list called References, which has all the sources with in-text citations in your paper. The Reference list should be in alphabetical order by author last name.

APA style has rules on how to arrange and format citations in your list of References. As we've seen, each type of source uses somewhat different information in the citation and is formatted somewhat differently. You need to follow the correct formatting for your type of source.

Here's how to format a citation for an article. First, list all the authors, last name first, followed by their initials with a period after each initial. Next, put the date of publication in brackets, followed by a period. After the date put the title of the article, followed by a period. Only the first word of the title and the word after a hyphen or colon should be capitalized. After the title, list the name of the journal that the article was published in, followed by a comma. It should be in italics, with each word capitalized. Then, list the journal volume in italics, followed by the issue in brackets but not in italics, then a comma and the pages of the article, followed with a period. Finally, list the DOI, or unique identification number assigned to this article, formatted as a link.

This is what a journal article citation in APA style should look like in your reference list. As you can see, small details like punctuation and italics make a difference, so pay attention to them. You'll need to refer to a guide to APA style that lists all the citation rules you need to follow for different types of sources. You'll find links on this page.

QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK

If you have any questions, please ask us at library.wlu.ca/help/askus