APA in-text citation style

APA DOCUMENTATION relies on a combination of in-text citations and a Reference List at the end of your paper. In-text citations include a combination of the author’s last name, date of publication, and location reference, all separated by commas. The Reference List is a list of complete publication information from the resources you cited in your paper, alphabetized by the author’s last name.

PARAPHRASED IN-TEXT CITATIONS always include dates, but can be listed in two ways:

- If the author’s name is included in a signal phrase, only the date needs to be placed in parentheses: Patterson (1998) has noticed the same phenomenon....
- If you simply allude to a study, both the author’s last name and the year must be listed in parentheses: This same phenomenon has been noted elsewhere (Patterson, 1998).
- If you use more than one article published by the same author in the same year, you differentiate with letters, e.g. Smith (1999a) and Smith (1999b).

DIRECT QUOTES require the author’s last name, publication date, and page with the abbreviation p. in front or section title and paragraph number with the abbreviation para. or the ¶ symbol in front for non-paginated online sources:

- “The likelihood that adopted children will develop normally is highly contingent on the attitude of their parents” (Patterson, 1998, p. 201).
- “Social workers act honestly and ... promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated” (NASW, 1999, Ethical Principles section, 6).

VARIATIONS OF IN-TEXT CITATIONS occur in situations of multiple authors, institutions or groups as authors, specific parts of a source, personal communication, etc. For more variations, see the Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.).

- Many research articles have multiple authors. In such cases, all author names are listed the first time a source is mentioned (e.g., Patterson, Stevens, Thompson, & Williams), and thereafter the list is reduced (e.g., Patterson et al.). When there are six or more authors, the convention “et al.” is used throughout.
- When a source has an institution or group as author, you should provide the full name of the group in your reference list entry. In the first in-text mention of the source, supply the group’s full name followed by its abbreviation in brackets (e.g., National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 1999); then, in subsequent in-text mentions of the source, use only the abbreviation (e.g., NASW, 1999).
- Whenever you cite a specific part of a source (a table, a graph, a figure, an equation, etc.), include the page number in your parenthetical citation (e.g., Vandenberg, 1999, p. 62).
- When you include multiple, subsequent citations from one source within one paragraph, you should use only use a complete citation for the first use. In subsequent citations, include only the author's name (with a paraphrase or summary), or the author's name and page number (with a direct quotation). If a first use of a source is for a direct quotation—e.g., the in-text citation is (Montaigne, 1949, p. 66)—a second, subsequent use that is also a direct quotation should be written this way: (Montaigne, p. 72).
- Personal communications are the only sources cited in-text only and not included in the reference list. Each in-text citation for a personal communication includes the first initial and last name, the words personal communication, and the complete date (e.g., S. White, personal communication, August 11, 2005).

Source: Center for Writing, U of MN