



APA Documentation Style

This unit presents information on APA (American Psychological Association) documentation style, 7th edition, a system used in social and natural sciences as well as medical fields to acknowledge the sources that you borrow from when you write a research paper.

WHY DOCUMENT YOUR SOURCES?

1. To give credit to the sources you have borrowed from to make your paper stronger.
2. To show your credibility: readers can trust you because you care enough about your subject to do research on it to support your own ideas and opinions with the ideas and opinions of expert sources.
3. To let readers know where they can get further information about your topic.
4. To let readers look for themselves at your sources so they can draw their own conclusions.
5. To avoid plagiarism (sometimes called “literary theft”), a serious academic offense in which writers borrow words or ideas from a source and present them as if they were their own.

WHAT IS A SOURCE?

A source is any person, place, or thing from which you borrow information for your paper. Most commonly, it is an article from a journal, magazine, website, or database. It might also be a book, a *YouTube* video, movie, a song, a personal interview The list goes on.

PART 1: APA REFERENCES PAGE

The APA References page, like the MLA Works Cited page, provides publishing information about all the sources you have borrowed from in your paper. Also like the MLA Works Cited, the APA References page is placed at the end of your paper, is alphabetized and double-spaced, and uses “hanging” indents.

There are, however, a few mechanical differences between the two:

- After the full last names, the APA References page identifies only the authors’ first and middle initials.
- Article titles in the APA References page are not enclosed in quotation marks.
- Article and book titles in the APA References page have no capital letters except for the first letter of the first word, the first letter of proper nouns, and the first letter after a colon.

- In APA style, the year of publication is placed directly after the author's name.

Here is an example of an APA References page.

References

- Auden, W.H. (2000). *Lectures on Shakespeare* (A. Kirsch, Ed.). Princeton University Press.
- Bachrach, H. (2017). The Oregon Shakespeare Festival 2017. *Shakespeare Newsletter*, 67(1), 14-21.
- Biography. (2015, April 24). *William Shakespeare*. <https://www.biography.com/writer/william-shakespeare>
- Branagh, K. (Director). (1996). *Hamlet* [Film]. Columbia Pictures.
- Crystal, D., & Crystal, B. (2002). *Shakespeare's words: A glossary and language companion*. Penguin Books.
- Encyclopedia Britannica. (n.d.). Sonnet. In *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved August 7, 2022, from <https://www.britannica.com/art/sonnet>
- Garber, M. (2008). *Shakespeare and modern culture*. Anchor Books.
- Greenblatt, S., Cohen, W., Howard, J. E., & Maus, K. E. (Eds.). (2007). *The Norton Shakespeare: Tragedies*. W.W. Norton & Company.
- Hamlet*. (n.d.). Rotten Tomatoes. Retrieved August 7, 2022, from <https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/1075422-hamlet>
- Holland, P. (2021, August 12). Shakespeare, William. In *Oxford dictionary of national biography*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25200>.

Howes, S. (2019, July 18). *Review: 'Hamlet' at Shakespeare Theatre Company's Free for All.*

DC Theater Arts. <https://dctheaterarts.org/2019/07/18/hamlet-free-for-all/>

Modern Language Association of America. (2021). *MLA handbook* (9th ed.).

Shakespeare, W. (2015). *Julius Caesar*. In R. McDonald & L.C. Orlin (Eds.), *The Bedford Shakespeare* (pp. 886-943). Bedford-St. Martin's. (Original work published 1623)

Staging Shakespeare. (n.d.). *Ian McKellen: Understanding King Lear, the character* [Video].

YouTube. Retrieved August 7, 2022, from

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahFtoCq6CHw&t=35s>

[Note: Your References page for Exercise 1 should follow the format above.]

FREE CITATION GENERATORS ONLINE

There are several free citation generators available online, which can be a big help in creating References entries for your sources. Here are some good citation generators:

ZoteroBib: <https://zbib.org/>

EasyBib: <https://www.easybib.com/>

CiteFast: <https://www.grafiati.com/en/blogs/citefast-alternative/>

However, be sure to check the accuracy of the results you get from these generators. See examples in this unit for proper References format.

SAMPLE REFERENCES ENTRIES

Book

Basic Format

Author's Last Name, Author's First and Middle Initials. (Year of Publication). *Title of*



book. Name of Publisher.

Examples

Auden, W.H. (2000). *Lectures on Shakespeare* (A. Kirsch, Ed.). Princeton University Press.

[Note: This book has an editor.]

Shakespeare, W. (2015). *Julius Caesar*. In R. McDonald & L.C. Orlin (Eds.), *The Bedford Shakespeare* (pp. 886-943). Bedford-St. Martin's. (Original work published 1623)

[Notes: This book is a work in an anthology. Also, because the work is quite old, the original publication date is given, which is optional.]

Journal Article

Basic Format

Author's Last Name, Author's First and Middle Initials. (Year, Month Day). Article title.

Journal Title, volume number(issue number), pages. DOI or URL

Example

Bachrach, H. (2017). The Oregon Shakespeare Festival 2017. *Shakespeare Newsletter*, 67(1), 14-21.

[Note: This article is from a library database, so there is not a DOI or a non-database URL.]

Article or Page on a Website

Basic Format

Author's Last Name, Author's First and Middle Initials. (Year, Month Day). *Article title*.

Website Name. URL



Examples

Howes, S. (2019, July 18). *Review: 'Hamlet' at Shakespeare Theatre Company's Free for All*. DC Theater Arts. <https://dctheaterarts.org/2019/07/18/hamlet-free-for-all/>

Rotten Tomatoes. (n.d.). *Hamlet*. Retrieved August 7, 2022, from <https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/1075422-hamlet>

[Notes: This source has no named author, so the site name is used as group author.

Also, since this source has no publication date, the date of retrieval is given.]

Entry from an Online Dictionary or Encyclopedia

Basic Format

Author's Last Name, Author's First and Middle Initials. (Year). Term or Word. In *Name of dictionary or encyclopedia*. URL or Name of Publisher.

Example

Encyclopedia Britannica. (n.d.). Sonnet. In *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved August 7, 2022, from <https://www.britannica.com/art/sonnet>

[Note: This source has no named author, so the organization is used as group author.]

PART 2: APA QUOTING AND PARAPHRASING

The two main ways to borrow information from a source and include it in your paper are **quoting** and **paraphrasing**.

- A **quotation** is an exact borrowing of words from a source, and those borrowed words are put in quotation marks.



- A **paraphrase** is the borrowing of an idea from a source, and that borrowed idea is written in your own words. A paraphrase is not put in quotation marks.

[Note: A paraphrase is not a summary of an entire work; rather, it is the borrowing of an idea or two from a source.]

APA IN-TEXT CITATION STYLE

APA requires an in-text citation style that uses a minimum of clutter to match the quotations and paraphrases in your paper with the publication information about the sources in your References page.

HERE IS THE BASIC FORMULA:

Introductory word group/phrase of attribution that mentions author’s last name

+

(Year of publication in parentheses after author’s name)

+

“Exact words borrowed in quotation marks” or paraphrase

+

(page number of source, if available, where borrowed material appears).

QUOTATION AND PARAPHRASE EXAMPLES

Here are some examples of effective quoting and paraphrasing:

Quotation with Author in Phrase of Attribution

Bachrach (2017) contended, “The big question in *Julius Caesar* in most cases is how to make all five acts seems necessary” (p. 14).

[Note: APA style prefers past-tense verbs of attribution.]

Quotation with Author in Parentheses

One critic contended, “The big question in *Julius Caesar* in most cases is how to make all five acts seems necessary” (Bachrach, 2017, p. 14).



Paraphrase with Author in Phrase of Attribution

Auden (2000) maintained that Hamlet’s soliloquies are not well integrated into the play (p. 159).

Paraphrase with Author in Parentheses

At least one notable critic maintained that Hamlet’s soliloquies are not well integrated into the play (Auden, 2000, p. 159).

Quotation with Author in Phrase of Attribution, Page Number Unknown

In a review of a recent performance of *Hamlet*, Howes (2019) repeated a familiar truism: “*Hamlet* is being performed somewhere every single minute of every single day.”

[Note: This is from a web source that has no page numbers.]

Quotation with Author in Parentheses, Page Number Unknown

A review of a recent performance of *Hamlet* repeated a familiar truism: “*Hamlet* is being performed somewhere every single minute of every single day” (Howes, 2019).

Paraphrase with Author in Phrase of Attribution, Page Number Unknown

Holland (2021) mentioned that Shakespeare wrote the tragedies *Timon of Athens*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* in 1605 and 1606.

Paraphrase with Author in Parentheses, Page Number Unknown

Shakespeare wrote the tragedies *Timon of Athens*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* in 1605 and 1606 (Holland, 2021).

Quotation with a Group Author

Biography (n.d.) explained that “Shakespeare’s early plays were written in the conventional style of the day, with elaborate metaphors and rhetorical phrases that didn’t always align naturally with the story’s plot or characters.”

[Note: This source has no publication date, so “n.d.” is used in place of a year.]

Paraphrase with a Group Author

The forward slash mark (/) is used to indicate line breaks when quoting three or fewer lines of poetry from a source (Modern Language Assn., 2021, p. 256).

Paraphrase with Two Authors

It has been suggested that the characters in *Hamlet* can be divided into seven circles: the Danish Court, the Soldiers, the Norwegian army, the Sailors, the English Ambassadors, the Players, and the Graveyard (Crystal & Crystal, 2002, p. 529).

Paraphrase with More Than Two Authors

It is possible that Shakespeare did not act during 1592-94, which were the plague years (Greenblatt et al., 2007, p. 1106).

[Note: For sources with more than 2 authors, the abbreviation “et al.” is used after the first author’s name.]

Block Quotation (40 Words or More)

Garber (2008) commented on a well-known artistic strategy:

The play-within-the-play has strong roots in the early modern period. In Shakespeare’s time the device was constantly exploited, by revenge tragedies and comedies alike. The revenger in Thomas Kyd’s *Spanish Tragedy* contrives to kill his enemies during the plot of a play they are performing. Both *Love’s Labour’s Lost* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* present the spectacle of onstage audiences watching plays that—although they do not realize it—tell versions of their own stories, to comic effect. (p. 220)

[Note: Long quotations are indented, and quotation marks around them are unnecessary.]



HELPFUL VERBS FOR APA QUOTING AND PARAPHRASING

according to
agreed
argued
asked
asserted
believed
boasted
claimed
commented
compared
conceded
considered
contended
contrasted
declared
defended

defined
denied
described
disputed
emphasized
explained
extolled
found
held
illuminated
illustrated
implied
inferred
insisted
maintained
noted

observed
pointed out
rejected
related
reported
responded
revealed
said
saw
showed
speculated
stated
suggested
thought
warned
wrote



More Examples of Quotations and Paraphrases

Quotation 1

In a review of a recent performance of *Hamlet*, Howes (2019) repeated a familiar truism: “*Hamlet* is being performed somewhere every single minute of every single day.”

Paraphrase 1

Indeed, as many have observed, pick a time of day, and a production of *Hamlet* is playing somewhere on the planet (Howes, 2019).

Quotation 2

Bachrach (2017) contended, “The big question in *Julius Caesar* in most cases is how to make all five acts seems necessary” (p. 14).

Paraphrase 2

Julius Caesar seems to lose so much energy toward the end that one wonders if the play should be shortened to three or four acts (Bachrach, 2017, p. 14).

Quotation 3

The Modern Language Association (2021) advised “using a forward slash with a space on each side (/) to indicate to your reader where the line breaks fall” (256).

Paraphrase 3

The forward slash mark (/) is used to indicate line breaks when quoting poetry (Modern Language Assn., 2021, p. 256).

Exercise 1: APA Documentation

"We usually think of inequalities as extending from bottom to top: I earn a little wealth over eight hours; Bill Gates earns much more." --p. 25

Author: Nathan Heller
Article title: "Share and Share Alike"
Pages: 44-53
Magazine title: *The New Yorker*
Date: August 1, 2022

1. Write an APA references entry for this source.

2. Quote a portion of the passage above as an APA in-text citation.



Exercise 2: APA Documentation

“From the beginning, the WNBA—which was born of the NBA’s approval in the NBA’s cities with NBA teams’ colors and largely NBA-related names and which survived a challenge from the ABL by virtue of its NBA affiliation—has featured a more stringent age eligibility rule than the NBA.”
—p. 602

Author: N. Jeremi Duru

Article title: "Hoop Dreams Deferred: The WNBA, the NBA, and the Long-Standing Gender Inequity at the Game’s Highest Level"

Name of Journal: *Utah Law Review*

Volume Number: 2015

Issue Number: 3

Date of Publication: 2015

Pages 559-603

URL: <https://dc.law.utah.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1096&context=ulr>

1. Write an APA references entry for this source.

2. Paraphrase a portion of the passage above as an APA in-text citation.