# The Writing Center

# Directed Learning Activity

APA 7th Edition Format and Documentation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student Name: | Date: |
| Instructor: | Course: |

# About This DLA

## Important Note

All the activities (2) in the DLA must be completed in their entirety before receiving credit for completion. Students are welcome to meet with a tutor if they need help, but please be aware that students might need a second appointment for review and signature in that case. If your instructor wants evidence of this completed DLA, return this form to him or her with the tutor’s signature included.

## Learning Outcomes

Through independent work, students will be able to identify the sections of a typical APA paper, correctly complete in-text citations, and format citations appropriately in a references list.

## Activities (approximately 1 hour)

Read the information, complete the activities that follow, and be prepared to discuss your answers when you meet with a tutor.

## Note

This DLA is meant to be used in conjunction with other APA resources. Please visit the [Mt. SAC “About](http://mtsac.libguides.com/citations) [Citation” page](http://mtsac.libguides.com/citations) for the Mt. SAC library’s brief APA overview and [Purdue Owl’s APA Citation page](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html) for a more in-depth APA documentation guide from Purdue University.

# Understanding APA Format and Documentation

APA style is the formatting and citation system of the American Psychological Association. This style is commonly used for papers written in the behavioral and social sciences, such as psychology, education, and child development.

## Types of APA papers

APA papers are divided into sections labeled by headers, and the type of paper you are writing will determine which sections you need to include. There are roughly two types of APA papers:

* literature reviews
* original research reports

If your paper falls into neither category, use the sections that are most appropriate for your topic or ask your professor for guidance.

### Original Research Reports

If you have conducted original research, then you will write this type of APA paper. These reports are more fixed in the sections you include because you need to explain the process, results, and implications of your research.

### Literature Reviews

In a literature review:

* Summarize several articles about a specific issue or problem
* Evaluate and synthesize this information to illuminate the problem
* Suggest possible solutions or further areas for research.

Literature reviews have more flexibility in the sections used, and you can arrange your information in a way that best suits your topic.

# Organization of APA Papers

Once you have determined which kind of APA paper you’re writing, you can proceed with its organization. ***Please see the Writing Center’s sample APA paper***, available where the center’s other research handouts are located, for examples of the following sections.

The following sections are typical in an APA paper and will be explained further:

**Title Page, Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review, Methods, Results, Discussions, References, and Appendices.**

## Title Page

The title page should include the following information:

* A header with the page number on the right-hand side. Do not include the paper’s title or “Running Head” in the header.
* Title of the paper in **bold**
* Your first and last name
* Your college
* Your class name
* Professor’s name (as written on syllabus)
* Assignment due date (in U.S., Month Day, Year)
* The title page should be numbered page “1” in your document.

## Abstract

***NOTE:*** Abstracts are usually not required for student papers but ask your professor to make sure. If you are required to write an abstract, include the following:

* A 150 to 250 word summary of your paper; include the paper’s purpose and main points, giving the reader an overall picture of your work
* Explain any abbreviations or acronyms used in your paper.
* The abstract is on its own page, titled “Abstract,” and should be numbered page “2” in your document.

## Main Body

The main body is your paper itself and should start on page “3” of your document. The sections you use will depend on what kind of paper you’re writing, but the following sections are typical for an APA formatted paper. You do not start a new page each time you begin one of the following sections.

Headings act as an organizational system for your research and the body of your paper, so deciding what sections to include for your APA paper depends on your professor’s assignment. You might not need to include all of the following sections:

#### Introduction Literature Review Method & Results Discussion Conclusion

Please refer to the [Heading Levels Template: Student Paper](https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/heading-template-student-paper.pdf) to see an example of how to use headings in an APA formatted paper.

## References

Your references page lists all of the sources that you cited in your paper. It is titled “References,” is

**bolded**, and is on its own page.

The general format for an APA reference entry is as follows:

1. **Author:** Entries are alphabetized by author last name. Only use initials for first and middle names.
2. **Date:** Use the date given in the publication. Generally speaking, you will write the year for books or journals, the year and month for monthly publications, and the year, month, and day for weekly or daily publications.
3. **Title:** The titles of books, journals, and other long works are italicized. Do not put article titles in quotation marks. Only capitalize the first word of book and article titles and any proper nouns. For the titles of journals, magazines, and newspapers, capitalize all words of four letters or more, and always capitalize nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, regardless of length.
4. **Place of publication and publisher (books):** Use the information found on the book’s title page.
5. **Volume, issue, and page numbers (articles):** Volume numbers are italicized and issue numbers are in parentheses. Use “p.” (page) or “pp.” (pages) for newspaper pages but not journal or magazine pages.
6. **Retrieval information (online sources):** Use a DOI (digital object identifier) if available; if not, use the URL of the website’s homepage. Only include a retrieval date if the source you are using is unstable and likely to change.

***Examples:***

#### Book

Calfee, R.C., & Valencia, R.R. (1991). *APA guide to preparing manuscripts for journal publication*. American Psychological Association.

#### Article from an Online Periodical

Bernstein, M. (2002). 10 tips on writing the living web. *A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites, 149*. <http://www.alistapart.com/articles/writeliving>

#### Article from an Online Periodical with DOI Assigned

Brownlie, D. Toward effective positive presentations: An annotated bibliography. *European Journal of Marketing, 41*(11/12), 1245-1283. doi:10.1108/03090560710821161

#### Online Source

Quast, L. (2017, March 6). *Why grit is more important than IQ when you're trying to be successful*. Forbes. https://[www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com/)

For a detailed example of a references page with a more extensive list of entries, please refer to the APA handouts available on the [Writing Center](https://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/) website, the [Mt. SAC library](https://www.mtsac.edu/library/) website, or the [Purdue Owl](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_basic_rules.html) website.

## Appendices

If your paper includes charts or other supplementary materials, the place for these is in an appendix. Each appendix begins on a new page. If you only have one appendix, this page is titled “Appendix.” If you have multiple appendices, then they will be titled “Appendix A,” “Appendix B,” and so on.

# In-Text Citation

The citation of sources in the body of your paper is vital for academic integrity. However, quote rarely. Paraphrase is preferred in APA style.

*For more information on in-text citation, refer to our* [*Integrating Sources DLA*](https://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/Integrating_sources_revised_new_policy.docx) *or* [*handout.*](https://www.mtsac.edu/writingcenter/handouts/mla_integrating_sources_and_intext_citations.pdf)

## Signal Phrases

A signal phrase notifies your reader that you are about to introduce a source. It usually includes the author’s last name followed by the publication date in parentheses and a suitable reporting verb; commonly used reporting verbs are listed below. **Note that APA requires the use of simple past or present perfect when introducing a source.**

##### Examples:

* Jameson (2015) has noted that “. . .”
* Paulson (2011) claimed the following: “. . .”
* “. . . ,” reasoned Wang (2014).

When introducing authors for the first time, you should establish their credibility by including their credentials, title, or experience. The credibility of your sources bolsters your own credibility as a responsible researcher and informed writer.

### Paraphrase

##### What is it?

A paraphrase is putting the author’s ideas into your own words and is generally the same length as the original source and has about the same level of detail.

##### When should I use it?

* when the ideas rather than the exact words are what matters
* when you are trying to simplify a source or reorder its ideas

##### Do I need to cite a summary in my APA paper?

You must always cite the original source of your paraphrase.

##### Example

Little (2006) argued that the engagement in core personal projects is at the heart of human well-being. However, the sustainability of these projects can be influenced by both internal and external factors, and human struggle arises from the inability to either regulate internal factors or negotiate external ones (p. 423).

## Other Ways of Incorporating Sources

### Summary

##### What is it?

A summary is written in your own words, expresses only the main points of a source, and condenses the length considerably.

##### When should I use it?

* when you want readers to understand the source’s argument before you respond with your own
* when you wish to compare ideas from several sources

##### Do I need to cite a summary in my APA paper?

Yes, you must cite the source, even for a summary.

##### Example

In the book *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, Kahneman (2011) summarized his research on the human mind and its two modes of thinking: fast and intuitive versus slow and deliberative.

### Direct Quotation

##### What is it?

A direct quotation is the insertion of the author’s exact words into your paper.

##### When should I use it?

* when the language itself is very powerful or is needed for accuracy

*NOTE: Direct quotes should be limited and short as much as possible in your APA paper.*

##### Do I need to cite a summary in my APA paper?

Yes, you must cite the source.

##### Example

K. Sheldon, M. Sheldon, and Nichols (2007) have argued that “the Big Five approach cannot handle true human uniqueness; every person is reduced to five numbers, and the ways in which two people with the same trait profile can nonetheless differ considerably are not addressed” (p. 1073).

# Activities

Check off each box once you have completed the activity.

## 1. APA Format and Documentation Review

Please answer the following questions.

* + 1. What sections are in a typical APA paper?

|  |
| --- |
| 2. Which verb tense is used when introducing a source for an AP paper? |
| 3. Which elements are included for a citation on your references list? |

## 2. Citation Practice

Complete the in-text citation and references list entry for each of the following sources. For the in-text citations, you must add closing punctuation as well. Please refer to the Writing Center’s APA handouts for further help.

### Citation 1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Source Information** |
| **Source Type** | Book |
| **Title** | Performing Under Pressure: The Science of Doing Your Best When It Matters Most |
| **Author** | Hendrie Weisinger and J.P. Pawliw-Fry |
| **Publisher** | Crown Business, New York |
| **Year** | 2015 |
| **Page** | 91 |

#### In-Text Citation

Weisinger and Pawliw-Fry ( ) explained relative gain as a “mind-set in which we get so focused on one part of an outcome that we miss other important factors. This perspective can lead individuals to make bad decisions and commit actions that they inevitably regret” ( )

* **References List Entry**

### Citation 2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Source Information** |
| **Source Type** | Article |
| **Title** | The Effects of Boredom, Loneliness, and Distress Tolerance on Problem Internet Use Among University Students |
| **Author** | Jason Skues, Ben Williams, Julian Oldmeadow, and Lisa Wise |
| **Journal** | International Journal of Mental Health & Addiction, Volume 14, Issue 2 |
| **Date** | April 2016 |
| **Page** | 167-180, quote on page 176 |
| **DOI** | 10.1007/s11469-015-9568-8 |

#### In-Text Citation

In their article about problem internet use, Skues, Williams, Oldmeadow, and Wise ( ) wrote, “As a result of frequently turning to the internet for distraction and mood regulation, individuals fail to develop or practice more appropriate long-term strategies for regulating habitual behaviours and dealing with negative states” ( )

* **References List Entry**

### Citation 3

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Source Information** |
| **Source Type** | Website |
| **Title** | Marijuana |
| **Author** | National Institute on Drug Abuse |
| **Date** | June 2018 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Source Information** |
| **URL** | https://[www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana](http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana) |

#### In-Text Citation

As reported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse ( ), “Marijuana is the illicit drug most frequently found in the blood of drivers who have been involved in vehicle crashes, including fatal ones” ( )

* **References List Entry**

## 3. Review the DLA

Go to https://mtsac2.mywconline.com and use the [Mt. SAC Writing Center Appointment System](https://mtsac2.mywconline.com/) to make a DLA appointment, or sign-up to see a tutor on the “**Walk-in**” list in the Writing Center. During your session with a tutor, refer to your own graded writing (or the completed activity) and explain your work to demonstrate your understanding of APA citation style.

Student’s Signature: Tutor’s Signature

Date:

Date:

*If you are an individual with a disability and need a greater level of accessibility for any document in The Writing Center or on The Writing Center’s website, please contact the Mt. SAC Accessible Resource Centers for Students,* [access@mtsac.edu*,*](mailto:access@mtsac.edu) *(909) 274-4290.*

*Revised 07/21/2022*