APA (7th Ed.) Reference List

The Reference List identifies the sources of specific information you included in your research paper. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition) gives detailed information on how to cite sources and format the Reference List page, how to create in-text citations, and how to abbreviate common words, geographic names, and other citation elements. Copies of the Publication Manual are in the Leeward CC Library Reference Collection (Call number BF76.7 .P83 2020). This guide covers basic concepts and common sources; consult the Publication Manual for detailed instructions, explanations, and examples. The manual sections (§) and page numbers are included to help you find the appropriate information.

See also: http://apastyle.apa.org

GENERAL PRINCIPLES [Chapter 9]

APA reference style uses the same citation formats for both print works and for electronic versions of those works that are retrieved from library academic research databases like EBSCOhost, ProQuest, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. It gives enough information for the interested reader to search for cited works in whichever databases, libraries, and document delivery services they have available to them. It’s only necessary to give additional information when a work is only available from a particular provider (such as a document repository or a database with original, proprietary content) or if there is some significant aspect of the particular work that needs to be communicated to clearly describe it.

Basic Elements of a Reference

Reference list citations are made of four elements: author, date, title, and source.

The author is the person(s) or group who created the work; for some works, editors, directors, podcast hosts, etc. are cited in the author element. Each personal name is inverted—last name first, followed by first & middle initials. See §9.11 for how to give the name of a group author (e.g., a government agency, organization, etc.). You will be alphabetizing your reference list according to these names. Conclude this element with a period (but don’t add an extra period if a name already has a period at the end).

The date is the date of publication. For books and journal articles, give only the year. For magazine and newspaper articles and online posts, give the year followed by month and day or season. Enclose the date in parentheses. Examples: (2015), (2020, February 3), (2019, Summer). Conclude with a period.

When you are citing a whole item like a book, the title element would be the title of the book, and it should be italicized. If you are citing a work that is a part of a greater whole, such as an article from a magazine or journal, or a chapter from an edited book, use the title of that part; do not italicize it. The title should be in sentence case – that is, with only the first word and proper nouns capitalized. Conclude this element with a period, unless the title ends with a question mark or exclamation point.
The source for a standalone item like a book, video, or a report is the publisher. Do not abbreviate the publisher’s name (unless it is shown that way on the work), but omit designations of business structure (Inc., Ltd., LLC, etc.). If the author is also the publisher, omit the publisher to avoid repetition. Conclude with a period.

The source for a part of a greater whole is that greater whole. For an article, the source is the periodical issue the article came in. Give the name of the periodical, italicized and in title case (i.e., first and principal words capitalized); followed by the volume number in italics and the unitalicized issue number in parentheses; then the page numbers. Example: Pacific Science, 73(4), 421–449. For a chapter in an edited book, describe the book with the word “In” followed by the names (not inverted) of the editors labeled with (Ed.) or (Eds.); the book title, italicized and in sentence case, and the edition and/or volume (if applicable) and chapter page numbers in parentheses; then the publisher. Example: In E. Fudd & W. E. Coyote (Eds.), Developments in animation arts (2nd ed., Vol. 6, pp. 107–168). Bench Press.

Note: An edited book is one where substantial credit for creating the book is given to editors, rather than authors. For an authored book, do not cite an individual chapter in your reference list; cite the whole book and note the page number(s) in your in-text citation.

If the work can only be retrieved from a particular database or repository, identify the provider as instructed in §9.30. If the database publishes original, proprietary content (i.e., the provider created and owns the content), give the database name in title case and italicized. For databases or repositories that collect non-proprietary works that are not available from other providers (e.g., manuscripts, dissertations, archival documents, etc.), give the repository name in title case, but do not italicize it.

DOI and URLs

Publishers often assign a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) to academic books and articles. Typically given on the first page of an article, it looks like this: doi:10.1007/s00024-008-0436-3

Whenever a DOI is available, provide it at the end of the citation. Provide it as a URL in this form, without a period at the end: https://doi.org/10.1007/s00024-008-0436-3

For online resources that are 1) not from a library academic research database and 2) do not have a DOI, include the URL of the resource at the end of the citation. If you cannot link directly to the specific resource or retrieve it without logging in, link to the home page or login page of the database or archive. Do not put a period at the end of the URL. See §9.30 for further guidance.

Missing Information

When an author is not stated, give the title first, followed by the date and source. When a date of publication is not stated, use (n.d.) to indicate no date. For other types of missing information. See Table 9.1 on page 284.

Reference List Formatting

Although the citation examples shown below are single-spaced to save paper, your reference list should be double-spaced within and between entries. The first line of each entry should start at the left margin, but each line below the first line should be indented one half inch; use your word processor’s hanging indent feature. Entries should be in alphabetical order as described in §9.44–9.48.
For articles from print publications that were retrieved from a library research database (such as EBSCOhost or ScienceDirect), use the citation format for print articles.

**Journal Article**


Note that for periodical articles, the volume, issue, and page numbers are not labeled. For a work with 21 or more authors, list the first 19, insert an ellipsis (three periods with spaces between) after the comma, then add the last author. Example: Besser, J., . . . DeRita, J. (2008).

**Journal Article, Not from a Library Research Database**

For an article without a DOI that needs to be obtained from a particular online provider, give the URL. For original, proprietary works, or works from a document repository, also give the database or repository name before the URL, as instructed by §9.30.

Author, A. (Publication Year). Title of article. *Title of Journal, Volume(Issue)*, page numbers. URL


**ERIC Document, Informally Published**

The ERIC database includes both formally published works and other documents and reports. Formally published works should be cited using the formats for those works.

Author, A. (Publication Year). Title. (ERIC Number) ERIC. URL


**Magazine Article**


**Magazine Article, No Author Stated**

Title of article. (Year, Month Day). *Title of Magazine, Volume(Issue)*, page numbers.

**Magazine Article, from an Online Magazine**

Author, A. (Year, Month Day). Title of article. *Title of Magazine.*

URL


**Newspaper Article**

Author, A. (Year, Month Day). Title of article. *Title of Newspaper,* section page numbers.


Give all page numbers for articles printed on discontinuous pages (e.g., C2, C6–C7.)

**Newspaper Article, from an Online Newspaper**

Author, A. (Year, Month Day). Title of the article. *Title of Newspaper.* URL


**BOOKS & REFERENCE WORKS** [§10.2–10.3, pp. 321–329]

For e-books that were retrieved from a library research database (such as ProQuest Ebook Central), use the citation format for print books.

**Book**


**Edited Book**

Editor, A. (Ed.). (Publication Year). Title. Publisher.


**Chapter from Edited Book**


Note that the names of the editors (which are part of the source element, not the author element) are not inverted. Page numbers for book sources are preceded with “pp.” (or “p.” for a single page).

**Electronic Book, Not from a Library Research Database**

For an e-book without a DOI that needs to be obtained from a particular online provider, give the URL. For original, proprietary works, or works from a document repository, also give the database or repository name before the URL, as instructed by §9.30.


In this case, the publisher is the same as the author, and thus is omitted. “November 2019 Update” appears on the title page of the book, and functions as the edition statement. This is not a proprietary work or from a repository as defined by §9.30.

**Encyclopedia Article**


**Encyclopedia Article, from an Online Encyclopedia**

Author, A. (Publication Date). Title of article. In A. Editor (Ed.) Name of Encyclopedia. URL


Because this article is periodically updated, give a retrieval date. For a source like Wikipedia, which archives previous versions of articles, give the URL of the archived version; no retrieval date is needed.

**AUDIOVISUAL MEDIA**

Consult §10.12 (Audiovisual Works), §10.13 (Audio Works), and §10.14 (Visual Works).

**ONLINE MEDIA**

Cite only original content in social media, as shown in §10.15. If a social media post leads you to content, cite the content directly.

Cite web pages as shown in §10.16 when no other reference category fits. Follow the pattern for standalone works, by italicizing the page title and giving the website name and URL as the source.
PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS [§8.9, 260–261]

Cite personal communications (e.g., emails, conversations, unrecorded lectures, etc.) within the text of your paper like this: (J. Smith, personal communication, March 15, 2020). Do not include on the Reference List because these are not retrievable sources.

GENERAL MENTIONS OF WEBSITES, PERIODICALS, & COMMON SOFTWARE [§8.22, 268–269]

A general mention of a website, periodical, or software app without giving specific information from that source does not require a formal citation. Give the URL of a website in parentheses. Italicize the name of a periodical. Give the version number of software, if relevant.

IN-TEXT CITATIONS [§8.10–8.22, 261–269]

In-text citations link specific instances of cited information in the body of the paper to an entry in the Reference List. Each Reference List entry must have at least one in-text citation pointed to it. Material consulted for background information but not specifically cited should not be included on a Reference List. Background sources can be included in a bibliography, if your instructor assigns you to create one.

An in-text citation consists of the author’s last name and the year of publication. You can enclose both in parentheses. If you mention the author in the narrative, you can put the just the year in parentheses after the author. You could also mention both in the narrative.

    By the middle of the decade, films in the genre had become very popular (Healy, 2018).
    According to Healy (2018), this is an effective method of increasing audience engagement.
    But as he noted in 2018, Healy had found that audience preferences had changed.

For works with two authors, include both names; join with an ampersand in parenthetical citations or the word “and” in narrative citations. For more than two authors, give the first name and follow with “et al.” unless doing so would create ambiguity.

    (Howard & Fine, 2008)
    Howard and Fine (2008)
    (Besser et al., 2010)

You can cite multiple sources, from the same or different authors.

    (Howard, 1976, 1982, 1990)
    (Besser, 2015; DeRita, 2010; Fine, 1999)

You can cite specific parts of a source, such as a page or page range, paragraph, chart, etc.

    (Simon, 1977, Chapter 2)
    (Jigger, 1993, p. 394)
    (Statler & Waldorf, 2004, Table 4-2)

Give the full name of group authors on first mention. See §8.21 on using an abbreviated group name on subsequent use.