

# APA Reference Guide:

## Giving Proper Credit Using APA Citation Format

Brett Eldredge

When you use someone else's ideas in your paper, **you have an ethical obligation to acknowledge the source of those ideas in two places:**

- **in the text** of the paper and
- **in the reference list** that comes at the end of the paper.

People deserve credit for their original ideas. Not giving credit is a form of plagiarism. This document is a short guide for how to give proper credit in APA (American Psychological Association) format when you use other's ideas. APA format is used in many professional settings, including in business, psychology, sociology, recreation, and communication.

### In-Text Citations

There are three ways to incorporate someone else's ideas into your paper's text. You can:

- **quote** (use the author's exact words),
- **paraphrase** (restate the author's word's using your own words), or
- **summarize** (condense the information).

Better writers use a mixture of all three methods (instead of relying on a single method, such as using only quotations). With all three methods, **you must mention the author(s)'s last name(s) and the date of publication in your text.** This is called author-date format. If you do not state either of these items directly in the flow of the text, you put it in parentheses. **For quotations you must also include the page number** in parentheses after the quotation. All of these elements come before the period that ends the sentence (except in the case of a long quotation, also called a block quotation, as shown in the second box below).

Jones, Gonzalez, and Smith (2007) assert that it is healthy to balance work and leisure.

It is healthy to balance work and leisure (Jones, Gonzalez, & Smith, 2007).

Jones, Gonzalez, and Smith (2007) said that "work and leisure must balance" (p. 46).

"Work and leisure must balance" (Jones, Gonzalez, & Smith, 2007, p. 46).

For quotations of 40 words or more, the quotation is placed in an indented, freestanding block without any quotation marks. If more than one paragraph is used, indent the first line of each paragraph even further. Page numbers are placed in parentheses after the last period of a blocked quotation. (Notice that a citation used in the original text is retained within a quotation). Like the rest of your APA-formatted document, make sure you double-space a block quotation.

Jones, Gonzalez, and Smith (2007) mention the following:

The essence of good health is avoiding excesses (Durban, 1997). The old adage of 'moderation in all things' really works. This means that personal and family care activities, work and career activities, and a robust leisure life must all be balanced in order to maintain good health. (p. 46)

If a source has three, four, or five authors and is cited more than once in your paper, use all of the authors' last names the first time you cite them. Thereafter, use "et al" after the first author's last name in each citation. If the source has six or more authors, always use the et al format.

Jones et al (2007) also mention the importance of working in short, intense bursts.

**Indirect/Secondary Sources.** If you did not actually read the article you are referencing, but instead you read about it in another (or "secondary") source, your in-text citation must give appropriate credit to both sources. You should give credit in the text to the primary source of the idea(s), but the citation should be for the secondary source in which you read the material. Suppose you are reading Crane's 2003 book and in it you read about a research study conducted by Seiver written in 1996. You might discuss this in text in the following manners:

According to Seiver (as cited in Crane, 2003), work integration with family life is challenging.

Crane (2003, p.139) reported a 1996 study conducted by Seiver about work integration.

(This second example is better since it gives more specific information.)

It would be **incorrect** to state that "According to Seiver (1996)....", unless you actually read the original article by Seiver! Only take credit for reading the sources that you actually read! (The best writers try to track down and read the original article.)

In the reference list, you would list only Crane's 2003 article, since that is the only article you read. Reference list citations are discussed below.

### **Listing Sources in the Reference List**

APA format uses a reference list, which **contains only the references used in your paper.** (A bibliography can include background materials, but is not used in APA format.) **Any source cited in the text of your paper should also be listed in the references.** If you did not cite a source in the text of the paper, you should not include it in the reference list. The reference list is

titled “References” (not “Bibliography” or “Sources”), is always **alphabetical** by author name, and has no subsections or numbering. Unless you are instructed otherwise, **double-space** the reference list. For precise information about APA format guidelines, you should refer to the latest manual of the APA (BF76.7 P83 2001 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor reference area of Meriam Library). Some APA format guides are also available online. (See [www.csuchico.edu/lref/newciting.html](http://www.csuchico.edu/lref/newciting.html) for the library’s page with citation format links. Purdue University also has an excellent online APA guide at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> . At the bottom of the page there are 15 links to reference topics that are more in-depth than what is found in this document. If you have a unique situation, the Purdue website, called The OWL at Purdue, is a good source to check.)

Most APA references have the same four or five general components in the same order, with each component being followed by a period. The components of an APA citation, in order, are:

1. The name(s) of the author(s).
2. The date of publication.
3. The title (and subtitles).
4. Publishing information.
5. Electronic access information. (Information about the date and location of electronically viewing the source is only included if the document was electronically accessed in a non-PDF format either from the internet or from a database).

You can use the APA Reference List Citation Template to construct a reference from these components. Note that the references are in “hanging indent” format — that means that the first line of the reference is set flush against the left margin and any following lines are indented.

Common reference list formats for several situations are shown below.

**Book.** Note how the title and subtitle are italicized. They are not capitalized after the first word. An example for an edition of a book is given. The citation ends with the publisher’s major city and name.

Singh, R., & Cadell, L. H., Jr. (2006). *All the fun you could wish for: A guide to your dreams* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Glasgow: McAllowarthy Press.

**Periodical Article: Journal.** The article title and subtitle are not capitalized after the first word, but the journal title is capitalized. This article is in volume 33, issue 4, and is found on pages 17 through 25. For periodicals, only the name of the periodical and the volume number are italicized. There is no space between the volume number and the parenthesis preceding the issue number.

Hobbins, C. W. (2005). The relationships between coworkers and their superiors: Constructing social wellness in the workplace. *Journal of Occupational Insight*, 33(4), 17-25.

**Periodical Article: Magazine.** Cite this like a journal article. If you have a specific month and even day, you should list them.

Corona, S., Hall, L., & Simmer, J. (2007, October 7). Hospitality in American life. *Novelties*, 14, 32-34, 49.

**Periodical Article: Newspaper.** Only with a newspaper do you put a “p.” or a “pp.” before (a) page number(s). Like a magazine, if you have a specific month and even day, you should list them.

Anuwe, I., Bonds, Q. R., & Arnold, T. (2004, February 11). The influence of alcohol on the quality of life in America: A summary report. *American Trends Weekly*, 288, pp. 51-84.

**Source Accessed Electronically.** Because of the explosion of electronic sources, this is a rapidly developing area. However, there are three main forms that will cover most of the situations you will encounter when you get your information from a monitor instead of from paper.

- **PDF Document.** A PDF document has images of pages that look exactly like the original article, including page numbers. These documents are usually displayed in a piece of software called a reader, like Adobe Acrobat. Although you accessed the document electronically, you list the reference citation almost exactly as you would if you had seen the paper copy. That is, list the reference like the above examples, since you saw the document in exactly the same form as paper. The only difference is that you should indicate that you saw the article electronically by adding [Electronic version] after the title but before the period that follows the title. For instance, the newspaper article cited above, if you saw it on your computer, would be cited as follows.

Anuwe, I., Bonds, Q. R., & Arnold, T. (2004, February 11). The influence of alcohol on the quality of life in America: A summary report [Electronic version]. *American Trends Weekly*, 288, pp. 51-84.

- **Non-PDF Document from a Library Database.** These are documents that are available in full-text versions from an online database in the library. Sometimes students think of this as an Internet source since it will have a web site address (for example, through the Chico State library), but it is a little different from the Internet. The retrieval date and the name of the specific database are listed after the other reference information. Again, indicate if you saw the article electronically by adding [Electronic version] after the title and before the period.

Cram, D. (2006, December 4). The personal personality split: Seeking balance between your personal and work lives [Electronic version]. *Body Whole Magazine*, 61, B8. Retrieved March 13, 2007, from Academic Search Premier database.

or: ...Retrieved March 13, 2007, from PsycINFO database.

or: ...Retrieved March 13, 2007, from ABI/INFORM Global database. etc.

- Article/Document from an Internet Source. When you find something on the Internet, you must cite the date retrieved and the web site address. If you are using part of a document, or especially if you are citing a direct quotation, and if you cannot find page numbers, you should list the paragraph number instead. Below, the web site titled *Whole Life Balance* had no listed author, but was from The Hauser Institute, which is listed as the author. The portion of the information that was used was from the sixth paragraph (shown as either ¶ 6 or para 6) on a page linked to the main web site and titled *Centering*. You must include the URL, or web address, of the exact page you are referencing, not just the website's main page. No period follows the web site address. If you have trouble finding a date, make sure to check the bottom of the page for a copyright date. Use the most recent year listed.

The Hauser Institute. (1998). Centering. *Whole Life Balance*, ¶ 6. Retrieved August 2, 2006, from <http://www.hauserhaus.org/balance/personalwork.html>

The Hauser Institute. (1998). Centering. *Whole Life Balance*, para 6. Retrieved August 2, 2006, from <http://www.hauserhaus.org/balance/personalwork.html>

**No Author**. Sometimes you will need to list an organization as the author. However, if you cannot find an author, you should list the title in the author position. If the above article had no author, it would be listed as shown below. The in-text citation would use a short form of the title, capitalized (The Influence Of Alcohol, 1994). Use the whole title for the in-text citation if the title is short.

The influence of alcohol on the quality of life in America: A summary report. (2004, November 10). *American Trends Weekly*, 288, 122-134.

**Personal Communication.** The only time you do not list a reference in the reference list is when you have personally contacted someone. The purpose of the reference list is to allow readers to locate and possibly review your sources. Since the reader cannot access a transcript of a personal communication, it is not listed in the references. It is, however, still cited in text as shown below. Note that the initials and surname as well as an exact date should be included.

T. J. Mascovich (personal communication, May 19, 2006) said that career responsibilities are increasing.

Career responsibilities are increasing (T. J. Mascovich, personal communication, May 19, 2006).

### **Avoid Footnotes**

APA format discourages footnotes. Usually it is best to include important information directly in text and leave out the rest.