

Improving Information-Seeking Behaviors and Knowledge Bases for  
Thesis Students in the Applied Behavior Analysis Graduate Program and  
Students in the Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Graduate Program

### **Video 10: APA citation style**

Citations in academic papers are a critical source of information for researchers. Each type of information, ranging from journal articles to book chapters to websites to legal materials, has specific information that is necessary for the reader of the article to find the author's supporting documentation, i.e., the item being referenced. If you write research papers, understanding the elements of a particular citation style can make your life much easier.

The citation style most commonly used is that of American Psychological Association (APA). This video will provide a quick overview of the elements of a citation, focusing primarily on articles, books and chapters, and websites, according to the latest APA style manual, 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

APA style uses the author-date citation system. There are two types of citations, embedded and bibliographic. Embedded citations, also known as in-text citations, are those references listed in the body of the text. Sources cited in the text are listed alphabetically at the end of the document.

Basic rules for in-text citations are (Author, Date, Page) or Author (Date, Page). If you are referencing an idea or theory you read from another author, then you must give credit by providing his or her name and the year of the publication. If you are quoting from a work, then you must include the page number(s) where you found the quote.

Bibliographic citations are best known as the "references at the end of the article, book, or chapter."

The most basic elements of a citation parallel the who, what, when, and where as in "Who wrote it?" "What did they write?" "When did they write it?" "Where is it?" "Where was it published and who

published? Also known as Author (WHO), Work (WHAT), Date (WHEN), and Place:Who (WHERE:WHO).

The WHO as the author may be a person, a group of people, or an organization. The author may also be anonymous.

The WHAT is the clue to what information about the item will be in the citation. The item may be a journal issue, a book, a website, a database, a statute, or something else. Each of these works has parts. A journal article is part of an issue. A book chapter is part of a book. A single webpage is part of a website. A statistical table is derived from an online statistical database. And so on. Also included in WHAT is edition and reprint information.

WHEN an article was created is important, especially if there have been reprints or different editions. A pre-print article published ahead of a specific journal issue, for example, may have some revisions when it is finally 'printed' in an issue.

WHERE addresses volume and issue numbers, page numbers, URLs, and DOIs. Each of these 'where' elements tells you where you may find the item. The more specific the information, the more accurately and more quickly you may find the specific work referenced.

A second WHERE:WHO element is the place of publication and the publisher. Tied to editions and reprints, this information allows you to distinguish between the British printing by Oxford in 1987 and the American printing by MacMillan in 1989. This becomes crucial when citing a quote on page 34 in the British edition and on page 42 in the American edition.

Each type of work -- whole or part -- has additional elements specific to its format. Let's start with journals.

A citation for a journal article has the author, the date, the article title, the volume number, the issue number, and the page numbers, and if an electronic version is used, the URL or DOI must be included. The inclusion of the DOI, the Digital Object Identifier, is a new APA requirement for all print and online materials. A DOI is a unique alphanumeric string assigned to a published document, a book chapter, a book, or a report.

McGaha, A., Stiles, P. G., & Petrila, J. (2002). Emergency involuntary psychiatric examinations in Florida. *Psychiatric Services*, 53(9), 1171-1172. DOI: 10.103/0278-6133AG.375

You can see the DOI on print articles, in databases, and on the digital article.

Please note there is a period after the page numbers but no period at the end of the DOI number, according to the APA publication manual. If you are citing an online article and there is no DOI, then use "Retrieved from URL" so the reader can review the original source. By the way, there is no need to include date of retrieval.

In addition to the basic information, you must also watch for punctuation and font styles. As you can see in the example, the citation uses a hanging indent and the title of the journal is italicized.

An easy way to remember the elements needed for a journal article is the following:

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (DATE). Article title. *Title of the Journal*, Volume, (Issue), (123-128). DOI: 10.103/0278-6133AG.375

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (DATE). Article title. *Title of the Journal*, Volume, (Issue), (123-128). Retrieved from [http://practice.apa.org/getting\\_citations\\_right](http://practice.apa.org/getting_citations_right)

If the item is a pre-print or an advance copy, then the format simply adds the phrase "Advance online publication" in front of the DOI or URL.

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (DATE). Article title. *Title of the Journal*, Volume, (Issue), (123-128). Advance online publication. Retrieved from [http://practice.apa.org/getting\\_citations\\_right](http://practice.apa.org/getting_citations_right)

Note that article titles are NOT capitalized unless a word or phrase is a proper noun or an acronym. Journal titles are capitalized and italicized.

Moving on to books, the format is very similar. Again, you have Author, Title, Place of Publication: Publisher, and Date.

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (DATE). *Title of the book*. Place of Publication: Publisher.  
DOI: XX.XXX/XXX-XXX.XXX

If the book is electronic, remember to add the DOI or the URL.

Now, for book chapters.

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (DATE). Chapter title. In A. A. Editor (Ed.), *Title of the book* (chapter pages). Place of Publication: Publisher. DOI: 10.103/0278-6133AG.375

Titles of book chapters or titles of books are NOT capitalized unless a word or phrase is a proper name or an acronym.

Place of publication is city and state: Tampa, FL; or city and country: London, England.

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (DATE). Chapter title. In A. A. Editor (Ed.), *Title of the book* (chapter pages). London, England: Publisher. DOI: 10.103/0278-6133AG.375

Writers often have questions about how many authors are listed in an IN-TEXT citation.

For two authors, cite both names EVERY time.

For three to five authors, cite all names the first time the reference occurs. Then cite only the surname of the first author followed by et al.

If six or more authors, cite only the surname of the first author followed by et al.

If there are two sets of multiple authors that are the same, cite as many authors as necessary to separate the two citations,

Smith, Jones, Weick, Goffman, DeLeuze, Quimper, Gunnarson, Pritchard, Tracy (1987)

Smith, Jones, Weick, Goffman, DeLeuze, Tracy, Gunnarson, Quimper, Pritchard (1987)

and that would be each time these sets of authors are referenced in the work. There is no more 1987a, 1987b format.

If a group, such as an organization, association, government agency, or study group, wrote the article, use the full name of the group the first time the group is referenced. Also include the shortened form or acronym of its name so the reader can trace the group through the work.

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH, 2007)

If there is no author, cite the first few words of the title of the work and the year. Put quotes around an article title, a web page, or a chapter, and italicize the title of a book, a periodical, a brochure, or a report.

on health reform ("Report Finds", 2006)

the book *Healthcare for Dummies* (2007)

For the references list, spell out the names of all the authors for up to 7 authors.

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., Author C. C., Author, D. D., Author, G. G., Author, F. F., Author, H. H. (1987).

If more than 7 authors, list the first six, then add ellipses (...) and the name of the last author.

Author, A.A., Author, B.B., Author C.C., Author, D.D., Author, E.E., Author, F.F., ... Author, J. J. (1987).

There are many more rules regarding how to cite work properly using the APA publication manual. It is worth your buying a copy of the book and carefully reading it. Then, if you have questions, feel

free to bring the problem work to the library and we will be happy to help you determine the correct way to cite it. Also see the website (<http://www.apastyle.org>) for the Basics of APA Style and other FAQs.

Contact us at [fmhilibrary@usf.edu](mailto:fmhilibrary@usf.edu)

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