

APA Citations

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Background

Assignments in the social sciences, such as psychology, sociology, communication, etc., generally require a synthesis of original research. Oftentimes, assignments will pose a question, prompting the student to explore the ideas of other scholars and authors to draw a conclusion. The student is expected to support his or her conclusion with a variety of scholarly sources.

APA, In-text Citation, and Plagiarism

The American Psychological Association (APA) system requires in-text citations and references to avoid plagiarism in the utilization of external sources. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty, similar to cheating, in which the writer fails to give credit to the original authors for the use of their intellectual property. Information including direct quotations, statistics and other specific facts, visuals, and *even* ideas you paraphrase must be cited to avoid plagiarism. Sources are cited to both direct your reader to the original source and to give credit to the original author.

Note: The only exception to citing *everything* is the integration of common knowledge into the assignments. Evidence that your reader likely knows does not require a citation. When certain information appears repeatedly within a particular reading, it is generally unnecessary to cite the course. For example, most general encyclopedias indicate that George Washington was the first President of the United States. Thus, this can be interpreted as common knowledge and does not require a citation.

To avoid plagiarism and give credit to the original author, APA requires an author-date citation system. To insert an in-text citation, include the author's last name and year of publication.

Note: For a direct quotation, also include the page number or specific location of the phrase in the original work.

- Kessler (2003) found that among epidemiological samples...
- Early onset results in a more persistent and severe course (Kessler, 2003).
- In 2003, Kessler's study of epidemiological samples showed that... (Hacker & Sommers, n.d.)

Note: each paraphrase example includes the *author* and the *date*.

References Page

Sources utilized throughout the assignment should be included in the References section of the paper. References should include the author's name, publication date, title of work, and publication data.

A reference list helps readers assess the information's reliability and access the source if necessary. A reliable source is generally free from bias and offers a well-evidenced argument. To determine if a source is potentially biased, determine if:

- the author expresses political or religious views
- the author is associated with a special-interest group, such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
- opposing views are addressed and discussed
- the author's language is biased

To determine if the argument is well-evidenced, determine if:

- the author supports the claim with evidence rather than personal or emotional opinions
- the author discusses opposing viewpoints
- statistics have been manipulated or presented fairly

The References page should list all citations in alphabetical order, organized by the author's last name. The format of the References page requires hanging indent paragraph style and double-spacing.

Additional Information

For more information, explore the Sample Paper on the APA website:
<http://supp.apa.org/style/PM6E-Corrected-Sample-Papers.pdf>