

# APA Style for Research Papers

This is a brief, basic guide. For more complete information consult a good English handbook, *The Bedford Handbook*, or the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). In addition, a number of websites have online handbooks with APA style guides. Try one of these:

Purdue University Online Writing Lab. [www.owl.english.purdue.edu](http://www.owl.english.purdue.edu)

U. of Wisconsin Writing Center Handbook.  
[www.Wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/index.html](http://www.Wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/index.html)

Diana Hacker. [www.dianahacker.com/resdoc](http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc) (model research papers available)

## Citing Sources Within The Text of Your Paper

An APA style uses the Author-date system for citing sources in a paper. This means that whenever you quote, paraphrase, or refer to a source, the author and the year of publication must be given. If you are quoting directly, you must also include the page number. These citations refer the reader to sources listed at the end of the paper on a separate page titled *References*. Some examples:

***1. When stating the information in your own words place the author (or authors) and date in parenthesis within the sentence or at the end of it.***

Recent research has discovered that students who get the highest grades spent the most time studying (Farley, 2002) and sit near the front of the classroom (Bletch, 2000).

***2. Or including the author's name and/or the date as part of your own sentence.***

Farley (2002) discovered that students who get the highest grades spent the most time studying.

In 2002, Farley discovered that students who get the highest grades spend the most time studying.

***3. When quoting directly, enclose the quoted words in quotation marks, and put information not included in the text of your own paper in parenthesis following the quotation.***

According to Bletch (2002), “Students who sit in the area near the front of the classroom tend to receive significantly higher grades than students in other areas” (p.163).

[Note the placement of punctuation in relation to parentheses and quotation marks. The abbreviation p. (page) or pp. (pages) is used for references to periodicals]

**Short quotations:** Quotations of up to 40 words are written as part of the running text and enclosed in double quotation marks; author, year and page number are given in the text (as in the example above).

**Long quotations: (block quotes):** Quotations of more than 40 words are formatted as a single block set off from the text of the paper and indented five spaces from the left margin. The inset quotation is separated from introductory words. Example:

Farnsworth’s (1988) analysis of the 1988 federal government study of canine Frisbee preferences reached the following conclusion:

The study, conducted over a period of five years at a cost of \$15 million, examined the behavior of 2,000 dogs of over 50 different species, except poodles. The data indicated a statistically significant preference on the part of all species tested for red over blue frisbees. However, the study found no conclusive evidence of a particular reason for this preference. Revisiting the study two years later, Farnsworth and his team were able to determine that the preference for red frisbees was due to the fact that that red stands out better than blue against a blue

sky. The team determined this by the methodology of chasing frisbees themselves while running on all fours (p.1298).

**No author:** If no author is given, write a short version of the title in place of the author's name.

**Example:**

A ten-year federal government study revealed that most dogs prefer red frisbees over blue ones ("Canine Frisbee Preferences," 1996).

[If the work has no author and no date, put the abbreviation n.d. in the place of the date.]

**Personal communications:** For e-mails, interviews, letters, cite as shown in the following **example:**

My mother, however, claims that the government study doesn't hold for all dogs. Poodles, she says, prefer rosy pink frisbees (personal communications, August 13, 1999).

**Multiple authors:** When a work has one or two authors, give names and date of publication whenever you refer to their work. When a work has three to five authors, cite all names and the date in the first citation, but in subsequent citations give only the first author followed by et al. and the date. For groups of six or more authors, cite only the last name of the first author followed by e al. and the date.

**Multiple references:** To list several sources for a piece of information, give the author's name and the date. For each source put a semicolon between sources. Names are placed in alphabetical order.

**Example:**

Several recent studies conducted with "smart" Frisbees demonstrate that the methodology of Farnsworth's 1998 analysis was extremely silly (Griddle, 2000; Smarmy, 2001; Wagglewort, 2001).

[Note: to save space, examples are single spaced. In a paper they would be double spaced.]

### **Basic Rules for Reference Pages**

- On a new page, begin with the word References, centered at the top.
- List references in alphabetical order according to the last name of the author (or the first author if there is only one).
- All citations in the text must refer to a source listed in references.
- Begin the first of the references in the left margin. Additional lines are indented a few spaces to create a hanging indent (you may want to use the hanging indent feature on your word processor).
- Single space within citations; double space between them.
- Put titles of books, newspapers, magazines, and journals in italics (if you are using a typewriter, underline them). Leave titles of the chapters from books and articles from newspapers, magazines and journals in regular roman type.

### **Format for listing sources**

**An article in a periodical** (journal, magazine, newspaper). Pay close attention to the order of information and to the punctuation and capitalization. These are basic examples. Go to a handbook, or to one of the websites listed on the first page of this handout, for information about referencing such sources as government documents, anonymous works, edited anthologies, television series, video tapes, music recording, movies, and newsgroups. They all have their special requirements.

Author, A.A. (year, month, and day). Title of article, *Title of Periodical*, volume number, pages.

Example:

Farley, P.Q., & Rhesus, F.A. (1998, July 4). Do chimps prefer big Macs or whoppers.

*Science*, 436, 346-352.

**A book report, brochure, or audiovisual media**

Author, A.A (year of publication). Title of work. Location: publisher.

**Example:**

Smithers, R.B. (2001). *Seating Charts: Key to academic performance*. New York: The Cheapskate Press.

**Online journal articles**

Handles these the same way as print sources but add the date you received the document and the website at the end of the entry. Example:

Farley, P.O., & Rhesus, F.A. (1998, July 4). Do chimps prefer big Macs or whoppers.

*Science*, 436. Received July 8, 2002, from: <http://www.science.com/chips/fastfood.htm>.