APA Referencing

APA is an in-text referencing system. This means that the reference information is enclosed in round brackets in the written text. A reference list, giving more details, is provided at the end of the text. This sheet provides basic APA information. If you require further APA information, consult the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Edition)*. A copy of this is in the Reference section of the Central Library on Level 2. A list of different sources and how to reference them starts on p. 232.

**In-text referencing**

*Referring to a book or any published source with an author in your text:*

This is becoming an international issue (Yates, 2007).

or

Yates (2007) believes that this is becoming an international issue.

*If you are quoting directly (word for word), the exact words are in double quotation marks and include the page number in the reference:*

Smith states, “This is a major breakthrough for mechanical engineering” (2007, p. 22).

*Referring to more than one publication*

*Arrange these in alphabetical order, dividing them with semi-colons:*

Most writers agree that Piaget’s theories are applicable (Brown & White, 2006; Entwhistle, 2003; Martin, 2001; Smith, 1998).

*Referring to a publication by more than one author:*

*If a work has two authors, refer to both every time the work is cited. In the in-text reference and in the reference list, join the two names with an ampersand (&).*

The so-called breakthrough has been questioned by Alan and James (2004).

or

Some researchers question that it is a “breakthrough” (Alan & James, 2004).

*If a work has three, four or five authors, they must all be mentioned, in the order you find them in the source, the first time the work is referenced:*

More recently, a quantitative study has provided useful data (Tapp, Flannel, Plugg, & Washman, 2007).

*Any subsequent references to the same work are just the first name plus et al.:*

The researchers have not taken certain important variables into account (Tapp et al., 2007).

*If you are referring to a work with six or more authors, use et al. from the first citation.*
Referring to a source in your text when the author is a group or organisation:

*Put the name of the group or institution instead of an author’s name:*

(Research and Training Centre on Independent Living, 1993)

Citing a secondary source (information from one source that you found in another source):

Smith and Jones have pointed out that the sample size for this survey was very small (as cited in Brown & White, 2004).

*In the Reference List, cite the work that you read (Brown and White in this example).*

Referring to two authors with the same surname:

*Even if their works were published in different years, distinguish them by including initials:*

T. P. Flannel (2006) and J. S. Flannel (2008) have contributed to this debate.

Referring to a personal communication:

*This category includes letters, emails, messages from non-archived discussion groups, interviews and telephone calls. Personal communications are not listed in the Reference List.*

J. R. Smith remembered problems in the classroom in the 1960s when teachers and children spoke a different language (personal communication, May 2, 2007).


*Sometimes, the person does not want you to mention his/her name:*

An eyewitness at the time reported that the struggle was unprovoked (personal communication, name withheld, January 4, 2008).

Referring to a website in your text:

*If the article you are reading from a website has an author, cite the author as you would for a book, and the year date, if there is one. If there is no date, put n.d.:*

(Johnson, n.d.)

*If there is no author, but the website belongs to an organisation, state the name of the organisation and the date (if there is one):*

(University of California, 1996)

*If it only has a title, use the shortened form of the title in double quotation marks:*

(“Engineering Breakthroughs”, 2007)

*If there is no author, organisation or title, put a shortened form of the website address, ending with the country.*

If you are quoting from a website and there is no page numbering, put either n.p. or p. 1. If paragraphs are numbered, use the ¶ symbol to denote the paragraph number:

Johnson’s belief that “this represents a significant breakthrough” is called into question (¶ 5).
The Reference List

Present this on a separate page at the end of your work and includes only sources to which you have referred in your essay/report. Sources are listed in alphabetical order by author surname (or by the source title if there is no author). Reference lists are double-spaced.

For book, chapter and article titles, capitalise only the first word of the title and of the subtitle, if there is one, and proper nouns. Significant words in journal titles, however, are capitalised.

A book:

Author’s family name; initials; year date of publication in round brackets; name of book in italics; city of publication; name of publisher:


A journal article:

The name of the journal article is in normal font. The title of the journal is in italics. The number in italics after the journal’s title is the volume number. The number in brackets is the issue number. The numbers after that are the page numbers:


A chapter from a book:

The author of the chapter appears in the in-text reference and as the leading name in the reference list. Here, the editor’s initials come before the surname:


A source with a group author, such as an organisation:

The word “Author” replaces the name of the publisher when the organisation is also the publisher:


A source with no author:

Move the title to the author position. Alphabetise by the first significant word in the title:


Edited book:


Entry in an encyclopaedia or dictionary:


Daily newspaper article with no author:


Material from electronic sources in the Reference List
For any reference from a website, the complete website address (URL) is usually detailed in the reference list. If you end with a URL, do not add a full stop. In accordance with the APA Style Guide to Electronic References, no retrieval date is necessary for content that is not likely to be changed or updated. The exact date the information was retrieved is provided only if there is a possibility that the website may be changed.

Internet source with an author

This example, which has an author, is a technical report from a university website:


Internet source with no author

When there is no individual author, begin with the name of the organisation:


Internet source with no author or group:

When there is no author or group, begin with the name of the website:


Electronic copy of an article retrieved from a database:


There is no need to provide the URL if the database is specified.

Electronic Example [of the same article] using a Digital Object Identifier (DOI)

Some publications now provide a DOI (Digital Object Identifier). Follow the guidelines for printed articles, but also include the article’s DOI. This alpha-numeric code usually appears on the article or in the database record. As the number is long, copy and paste whenever possible:


If the article has no DOI, give the home page URL OR database name.