

APA CITATIONS

How to cite sources in the text of your paper

In the APA system, the sources of all research information must be identified in-text, whether quoted or summarized in your own words. Sources are identified by citations that appear in parentheses in the text of your essay. The citation leads the reader to the corresponding item in the **References** list where the full details on each source are given (see handout: **APA References List: Page Format**).

SUMMARIZED INFORMATION:

When the summarized information represents the **overall point** of an article, a study, or a book:

- **Option A:** Author's last name and date follow the research information:

Items in people's short-term memory are lost very quickly unless the information is repeated mentally or orally without delay (Smith, 1999).

- **Option B:** Author is named directly in the essay, with date following immediately:

According to Smith (1999), items in people's short-term memory are lost very quickly unless the information is repeated mentally or orally without delay.

When the summarized information represents **only one point** or one segment of the source:

- **Option A:** Author, date, and page number(s)—or chapter number, paragraph number, etc.—follows the research information:

Items in people's short-term memory are lost very quickly unless the information is repeated mentally or orally without delay (Smith, 1999, p. 12).

- **Option B:** Author named in the essay; year follows name; page number appears at the end:

Smith (1999) has determined that items in people's short-term memory are lost very quickly unless the information is repeated mentally or orally without delay (p. 12).

A QUOTATION:

- **Option A:** Author, date, and page number(s) follow the quotation:

One researcher has confirmed that “unlike sensory memory, which can hold a vast amount of information briefly, short-term memory has a very limited capacity” (Jones, 2001, pp. 76–77).

- **Option B:** Author named directly in the essay, with date and page number(s) following:

Jones (2001, pp. 76–77) states that “unlike sensory memory, which can hold a vast amount of information briefly, short-term memory has a very limited capacity.”



APA CITATIONS

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SPECIAL CASES:

- If there are two authors for a source, give both last names, using an ampersand for “and.”
(Leung & Whitfield, 2009) OR (Leung & Whitfield, 2009, p. 6)
- If there are three or more authors, give the first author's surname, followed by “et al.”
(Wolynski et al., 2020) OR (Wolynski et al., 2020, p. 117)
- When citing a source with a ‘group author’ (e.g., an organization, government agency, or a corporation), give the full name. If an abbreviation would be convenient for your reader, include the abbreviation in square brackets in the first citation. Abbreviate it in all following citations.

First citation: *(National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2020)*

All later citations: *(NIMH, 2010)*

Or, in all citations when the name is brief: *(Health Canada, 2011)*

- When no author’s name is available, use a shortened version of the title, followed by the year. Use quotation marks for article, chapter, or web page titles; use italics for book, periodical, report, or pamphlet titles. Remember to use title case (Title Case is Written Like This), even though sentence case (Sentence case is written like this) is used in the References list.

(“Sleep Disorders,” 2008) (The Memory, 2010)

- If the information you cite appears in several books or articles, you may list them all in one citation, in alphabetical order, separated by semicolons.

(Gustav, 2008; Singh, 2006; Wilson, 2007)

- If referring to sources with the same author(s) and date, add a lower case letter to the date to distinguish them in your References list. The dates in the citation are written the same way.

(Murad, 2010a) (Murad, 2010b)

HOW TO WRITE AN APA IN-TEXT CITATION:

- After summarizing information: ...clear insight into compulsive behaviour (Baker, 2002).
 ... a recent study by Wilson (2010) indicates that ...
- After a brief quotation: ...complexities of "the human psyche" (Shlovski, 2009, p. 8).
- After a long block quote: ... the world of the subconscious. (Aziz, 2001, pp. 67–68)

For more information, consult the APA manual or contact the Academic Skills Centre.