

# APA In-Text Citations — Frequently Asked Questions

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## When do I need to provide a citation?

You should provide an in-text citation whenever you quote, paraphrase, or summarize research and ideas that are not your own. This may include theories, best practice guidelines, and, of course, statistics. You should also cite whenever you present a fact that is not common knowledge. This means that if the general public would not be aware of the fact, it should be cited.

Situation	Example
General Knowledge (No citation necessary):	The flu is an airborne virus.
Fact from a resource (Citation necessary):	The drug Tamiflu was developed by a company named Roche following an outbreak of H5N1 in China (Grice, 2007).

The rule of thumb is usually: *when in doubt, cite*.

Generally, you should provide a citation for any information that you didn't already know before taking the class or program you are writing for. Even if the information came from a text, lecture, or handout in class, rather than an article or textbook, you should still try to provide a citation to show that you are basing your arguments on facts, rather than guesses, rumours, or assumptions.

## What is the difference between a quote and a paraphrase?

It is very important to recognize the difference between quoting and paraphrasing. If you use the same phrases or words without properly citing your source, this is considered plagiarism, and you could lose marks, or even get a zero. In addition, make sure that your paraphrases are true paraphrases and not patch-writing.

Let us consider the original sentence below:

Canadian students have become very familiar with exhaustion due to many competing life-demands; exhaustion has become a way of life for them.

Description	Example
<p><b>A quote</b> is the <u>exact</u> words from a source included in your own writing; a quote is always surrounded by quotation marks.</p>	<p>(Correct): In his article, Peterson (2014) states that “students have become very familiar with exhaustion; it has become a way of life for them” (p. 45).</p>
<p><b>A paraphrase</b> gives the information from the source but <u>entirely</u> in your own words, not the words of the author.</p>	<p>(Correct): One study shows that students in Canada struggle to manage their workload and live a balanced lifestyle (Peterson, 2014).</p>
<p><b>Patch-writing</b> is when we take some phrases of the original and mix it with our own words without providing proper quotes (This is plagiarism.)</p>	<p>(Wrong): <u>Students</u> in Canada are <u>familiar with exhaustion</u> because of <u>many competing life-demands</u>.</p>

## If I quote one author in my sentence and paraphrase something from another author, how do I cite them together?

It is important that the reader knows where the information is coming from in your text. There are different ways this can be done. Cite the author(s) as close as possible to the respective idea.

**Example:** Kim (2016) believes “shortened school days would improve student performance” (p. 342) while Sanchez (2021) believes studying 10-12 hours a day could be the norm (p. 12).

If you do not include the author’s name in the sentence, you should include it in the parentheses.

**Example:** Experts believe “shortened school days would improve student performance” (Kim, 2016, p. 342) while some believe studying 10-12 hours a day could be the norm (Sanchez, 2021, p. 12).

## How should I refer to the title of an article in my text?

Use quotation marks around the title of shorter texts, such as an article or chapter, when referring to it in-text.

**Example:** In Potterson’s (2013) article, “Nursing in a changing society,” she argues that...

## When should a title be italicized?

All titles of longer or complete texts, such as books, periodicals, films, videos, TV shows, and microfilm publications are italicized in APA formatting.

**Example:** Potterson’s (2011) book, *Nursing in Canada*, details the history of the nursing occupation in Canadian society and how it came to be what it is today.

## When do I use “et al.”?

Use “et al.” when a work has three or more authors. Include the first author’s surname followed by “et al.” If a source listed its authors as: Bogdon, H., Halburd, R., & Bloom, O. (2012). Include only the surname of the first author followed by “et al.”

**Parenthetical Example:** (Bogdon et al., 2020)

**Intext Example:** Bogdon et al. (2020)

But, when the source has two authors, include both the names.

**Example:** (Watson & Smith, 2018)

## How do I show that several separate sources agreed on the same fact?

Include all authors’ names, listed alphabetically, and the dates of the works in the same parentheses. Separate the citations with semi-colons (;).

**Example:** (Lewis, 2020; Miller & Seacrest, 2019; Norton, 2020)

## How do I cite secondary sources that were cited in my research (a citation of a citation)?

Name the original work in-text and add the original date of publication in parentheses after the author's name. Provide the secondary source information in parentheses at the end of the sentence with the words "as cited in."

**In-text citation example:** Choi's (2005, as cited in Pitt, 2009) research indicates that fog can make some people feel calm and at ease.

Provide only the secondary source in the reference list.

Reference entry example:

Pitt, B. (2009). *Male celebrities: Toil and trial*. Great Publishing Incorporated.

## What if I use the same source for a whole paragraph? Should I keep citing it again and again?

Basically, you need to make sure that it is clear where the information is from in each sentence. When writing a paragraph that refers to the same source several times, there are three options for formatting in-text citations, but you can use a combination of these. Include page numbers or paragraph numbers as necessary.

- 1) When the author's name is written in the narrative, include the date in parentheses only the first time after the author's name is mentioned.

**Example:** Similarly, **Clark's** study (**2013**) demonstrated that walking for 20 minutes every day could improve people's health (p. 10). **Clark** urges people to consider how they could integrate more walking into their own lives.

- 2) If the author's name is included in the parenthetical citation with date, then include the citation every time you reference the source in the paragraph.

**Example:** One study in particular (**Clark, 2013, p. 11**), demonstrated findings that were different from the rest. This study (**Clark, 2013**) explored the relationship between fruits and vegetables.

- 3) When both the date and the author's name are stated in-text, do not include any parenthetical information.

**Example:** In **2013**, **Clark** observed that a large number of students struggled with balancing their schoolwork and their personal lives. **Clark** suggests several

reasons for this. Firstly,...

## How do I cite a website that has no author?

If there is no personal, corporate, or organizational author provided on the website, use the title of the webpage in-text or the first few words of the title in parentheses. In both cases, the title should be in quotations.

**Example:** “Apes in their natural habitat” (2014), suggests that many apes live longer in the wild than in captivity...

**Example:** Research shows that many apes survive longer in the wild than in captivity (“Apes in their natural habitat,” 2014).

## How do I cite a website that has no date?

If there is no date provided on the webpage, use the abbreviation “n.d.” (stands for “no date”) instead.

**Example:** Johnson and Johnson (n.d.) celebrate the fact that...

**Example:** One extensive study (Johnson & Johnson, n.d.) demonstrates that...

## When do I need to include page numbers in my citation?

In APA style, always provide a page number for a direct quotation and for statistics whenever possible.

**Example:** In his article, Peterson (2014) states that, “students have become very familiar with exhaustion; it has become a way of life for them” (p. 45).

The APA Manual also encourages writers to provide a page or paragraph number when paraphrasing specific material from a source, but it is not always required. Ask your teacher if they would prefer page numbers for all references.

## How do I cite a website that has no page numbers?

If no page numbers are available, include paragraph numbers instead (para. number). If no paragraph numbers are available, you can count paragraphs starting at the top of the

document and moving downwards.

**Example:** (Alderdice, 2014, para. 2)

## How do I cite AI-generated content?

In APA style, the in-text citation only requires the developer and the version year. As a result, it is best practice to include the prompt you used whenever you quote or paraphrase text generated by an AI tool. Since your reader can't access the exact AI-generated text, you may also consider including a copy of the text as an appendix or as part of supplemental materials. If you are including a copy of the generated text, you may refer to it in the body of your text, or as part of the in-text citation such as in the example below.

**Example:**

- Given the prompt "What are large language models?" the text generated by Microsoft Copilot described them as "computational models notable for their ability to achieve general-purpose language generation and other natural language processing tasks" (Microsoft, 2024).
- When provided with a follow up prompt of "What are examples of large language models?," Copilot listed OpenAI's GPT-3 and Google's BERT as examples (Microsoft, 2024; see Appendix A for the full transcript).

## How do I cite an AI-generated image?

If you are inserting the AI-generated image in your coursework, start with a figure number followed by an image title. Beneath the image, include a note with details about the prompt and the source (see example below).

**Example:**

Figure 3

*Example of an AI-generated image*



Note: Image generated using the prompt "Two puppies playing by the sea in the style of Renoir," by OpenAI, DALL-E, 2023 (<https://labs.openai.com>).