

# APA 7 GUIDE

## Paper Formatting

### Basics

APA style papers use the same font throughout, either Times New Roman 12-pt., Calibri 11-pt., or 11-pt. Arial, with 1 in. margins and double spacing. Also, they include a page number in the right corner of every page, starting from the title page.

### Page Order

APA style papers will always begin with a title page, followed by the paper body, and, if needed, the references page.

### Title Page

The title page is the first page of APA style papers. The following information is included in the order presented on separate lines:

- Title of Paper (in bold) with an empty space below it
- Your Name
- Your Institution's Name
- Your Course #: Course Name
- Your Instructor's Name
- Your Assignment's Due Date

This information needs to be centered and in title case, meaning every word with important meaning will be capitalized and every word present for grammar purposes will be lowercase.

An example of how this is formatted is presented below.

### Example (next page)

## **Root Cause Analysis**

Cheyenne Vaughn

North Hennepin Community College

NURS 2901: Nursing Leadership

Linda Carylon

December 5, 2025

# Headings

APA style papers use different levels of headings to create flow and help guide the reader through different sections of the paper. The different levels of headings and their formatting are below:

- Level 1 (bold, centered, and in title case)
- Level 2 (bold, left aligned, and in title case)
- Level 3 (italicized, left aligned, and in title case)
- Level 4 (indented, bold, and in title case with a period)
- Level 5 (indented, italicized, and in title case with a period)

For most papers, students will only use levels 1 and 2.

An example of how this is formatted is presented below.

## Example

### **Level One Heading**

#### **Level Two Heading**

#### *Level Three Heading*

#### **Level Four Heading.**

#### *Level Five Heading.*

# APA Citation Basics

## References Page

As students are doing research for their papers, they should be creating their APA style references page to help them with their in-text citations they will do later on. Every APA style paper that uses outside sources requires a reference page and in-text citations that are directly connected to the citations on the reference page.

## Most Common Citation Formats

Each type of source has its own citation format. In each of the sections below, there will be a general format for that type of source and then an example of the source.

## Book

### General Format:

Author(s) Last Name, First Name Initial. (Year of publication). *Title of book: Subtitle of book*  
(edition #). Publisher.

### Example:

Marquis, B. L., & Huston, C. J. (2021). *Leadership roles and management functions in nursing: Theory and application* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Wolters Kluwer Health.

## Academic Journal

### General Format:

Author(s) Last Name, First Name Initial. (Year of publication). Title of article. *Journal Name*,  
*volume* #(issue #), page #. DOI link

### Example:

Hawthorne, D., & Gordon, S. (2020). The invisibility of spiritual nursing care in clinical  
practice. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, 38(1), 147-155.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0898010119889704>

## Website

### General Format:

Author(s) Last Name, First Name Initial. (Year, Month Day). *Title of webpage*. Website Name.  
URL

### Example:

American Nurses Association. (n.d.). *Ethics and human rights*.

<https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/>

## General Tips

The following are general rules and tips to follow when creating APA reference page citations:

- References pages always are on their own page.

- Each citation needs to have a hanging indent. This indentation option is located under paragraph options and under special indent.
- Each author's name is separated by a comma and an & goes before the last author's name
- Periods go at the end of each section of information to show that section is complete. Commas show a continuation of information.
- If there is no year of publication, use the notation n.d., meaning no date.
- The first word in a title is capitalized, and everything else is lowercase. If there is a subtitle after a colon, the first word in the subtitle is also capitalized. However, if one of the words in the title is a proper noun, it will remain capitalized.
- All titles of sources are italicized except journal articles. In journal article citations, the journal name is italicized.
- Journal article volume numbers are italicized.
- If there is no distinct author, it is understood that the author is the organization that is presenting the information. In website citations, this means you would omit the website name since it would be at the beginning of the citation where the author's name would be.
- DOIs are special URLs for journal articles. If there is not one present, use the URL instead.

## Author Rules

Sometimes sources will have the same author, and APA style citations have rules on how to organize these citations.

### *Same Author, Different Year*

When sources have the same author but are published in different years, they will be organized in chronological order, meaning in the order of which was published first.

### Example

Gunderson, C., & Ziliak, J. P. (2015). Food insecurity and health outcomes. *Health Affairs*, 34(11), 1830-1839. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2015.0645>

Gunderson, C., & Ziliak, J. P. (2018). Food insecurity research in the United States: Where we have been and where we need to go. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 40(1), 119-135. <https://doi.org/10.1093/aep/px058>

Gunderson, C., Hake, M., Dewey, A., & Engelhard, E. (2021). Food insecurity during COVID-19. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 43(1), 153-161.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/aep.13100>

### Same Author, Same Year

When sources have the same author and are published in the same year, they will be organized in alphabetical order based on the source's title. Also, these citations will use the Yeara/Yearb system, where a lowercase letter, starting with a, will be placed directly after the year. The lowercase letter after the year will also appear in the in-text citation.

### Example

American Nurses Association. (n.d.a). *Ethics and human rights*.

<https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/>

American Nurses Association. (n.d.b). *Immunize*. <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/work-environment/health-safety/immunize/>

American Nurses Association. (n.d.c). *What is nursing?* <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/workforce/what-is-nursing/>

### References Page Example (next page)

## References

American Nurses Association. (n.d.a). *Ethics and human rights*.

<https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/>

American Nurses Association. (n.d.b). *Immunize*. [https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-](https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/work-environment/health-safety/immunize/)

[policy/work-environment/health-safety/immunize/](https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/work-environment/health-safety/immunize/)

American Nurses Association. (n.d.c). *What is nursing?* [https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-](https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/workforce/what-is-nursing/)

[policy/workforce/what-is-nursing/](https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/workforce/what-is-nursing/)

Gunderson, C., & Ziliak, J. P. (2015). Food insecurity and health outcomes. *Health Affairs*,

34(11), 1830-1839. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2015.0645>

Gunderson, C., & Ziliak, J. P. (2018). Food insecurity research in the United States: Where we

have been and where we need to go. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 40(1),

119-135. <https://doi.org/10.1093/aep/px058>

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19. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 43(1), 153-161.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/aep.13100>

Hawthorne, D., & Gordon, S. (2020). The invisibility of spiritual nursing care in clinical

practice. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, 38(1), 147-155.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0898010119889704>

Marquis, B. L., & Huston, C. J. (2021). *Leadership roles and management functions in nursing:*

*Theory and application* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Wolters Kluwer Health.

## In-text Citations

As students begin writing their APA style papers, they will need to include in-text citations that connect to the sources in their references page whenever they use information from the sources. Doing so helps prevent students from plagiarizing another person's work.

### When Should I Cite?

Students often struggle with knowing when they should cite information by inserting an in-text citation. The following are the most common instances of when to do so:

- You should cite when the information you are presenting is not common knowledge amongst everyday people.
- You should cite when you use technical language.
- You should cite when you are including information that is not your own claims or thoughts.

### In-text Citation Types

There are four different types of in-text citations that can be categorized into two groups: parenthetical vs. narrative and direct quote vs. paraphrase. There are explanations and examples of each of these types below.

#### *Parenthetical vs. Narrative*

Parenthetical and narrative citations focus on how one presents the credentials of the source being cited.

#### Parenthetical

Parenthetical citations usually appear at the end of a sentence with source credentials placed in between parentheses. This type of citation allows the writer to include the source information without disrupting the potential flow of the writing.

#### *General Format*

(Author's Last Name/Organization Name, Publication Year)

#### *Example*

“Wellness, a term that is often associated with health, is an active state of being healthy by living a lifestyle that promotes good physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health” (Taylor et al., 2019, p. 11).

#### Narrative

Narrative citations appear within running text, meaning that the source credentials are somewhere within the sentence. They may use attributive tags, such as “According to...,” “As defined by...,” and more.

### *General Format*

Author's Last Name/Organization Name (Publication Year)...

#### *Example*

As defined by Taylor et al. (2019), “wellness, a term that is often associated with health, is an active state of being healthy by living a lifestyle that promotes good physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health” (p.11).

### *Direct Quote vs. Paraphrase*

Direct quote and paraphrase citations focus on how one presents the information they are referencing from a source.

#### **Direct Quote**

Direct quote citations insert an author's exact words into one's own writing from the source they are referencing. The exact word for word information that is used is set off by quotation marks and a page number is required.

#### *Example*

“Wellness, a term that is often associated with health, is an active state of being healthy by living a lifestyle that promotes good physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health” (Taylor et al., 2019, p. 11).

#### **Paraphrase**

Paraphrase citations take key words from the original author's words and restructure the sentence into their own words. No page number is required for this citation type.

#### *Example*

Taylor et al. (2019) states the promotion of a healthy lifestyle that focuses on maintaining all aspects of health, such as physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual, is wellness.

### **Author Rules**

When there is more than one author of a source, APA style citations use specific rules to show this for in-text citations, specifically parenthetical citations. If there are two authors, both authors' last names will be written with an & in between them. Here is an example: (Smith & Yang, 2024). If there are three or more authors, only the first author's last name is written, and it is followed by the notation “et al.,” meaning and others. Here is an example: (Taylor et al., 2019).