

# Using the APA Citation Style

P. Luvisa

Citations give credit to other people's words and ideas, works that have directly influenced your work. Citations are used only for works that you have personally read. The only information you should **not** cite is **common knowledge** held by people in your field (colleagues). For example, we all know that Brian Mulroney was the Prime Minister who gave us the Free Trade Agreement with the U.S.A. Your audience will determine what common knowledge is.

It is important to provide detailed and accurate citations for all the resources that you used to construct your paper. **Citations/References tell the reader that you are being transparent, that you are not hiding the sources that you used. It is the first step in assuring the teacher that you have not plagiarized. You are offering the reader the opportunity to see your sources and to look them up herself if she wants to check the accuracy of your paper (or to get further information).** Citations are also the first impression your teacher gets of your paper. She may look at your reference list even **before** reading the first sentence you have written in order to get an understanding of how current your research is, how reputable your sources are, and if you have focused on a specific author too much (bias). Please do NOT pad your reference page with citations that you did not read. It is dishonest.

The APA citation format asks you to provide much the same information that the MLA format does. For both, you are looking for an author, titles (articles, books, etc.), publication information, etc. **Your ultimate goal should be to provide the information that readers need to find whatever sources you used so that they can review them.**

- The APA citation format is used in psychology, education, engineering, business, and social sciences.
  - APA emphasizes the year of publication (immediately after the author's name).
  - APA uses a "**Reference List**" and not a Works Cited or a Bibliography at the end of a paper/essay.
  - When writing titles, capitalize **ONLY** the **FIRST** word in the title (like a sentence) and the first word after a colon in the title.
  - Entries are arranged alphabetically according to author's last name.
  - Multiple entries for the same author are arranged according to the publication date (2003 before 2004)
  - Single author entries come before multiple author entries (**Smith, B.** before **Smith, B., and Jones, P.**)
  - Invert **ALL** author's names and provide up to and including seven authors' names. If more than seven, write the first **six** only, then put in three dots (ellipses) and then add the last author's name.
  - Author's first name always appears as an initial (Steve = S.)
  - The First line of each entry is NOT indented, but all subsequent lines are.
  - For in text citation, include the author's name and date of publication (Luvisa, 2009). If the author's name was incorporated into the sentence, only provide the year of publication. For example, "Luvisa (2009) explains that citations are important".
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# EXAMPLES

## Book by one author:

Author's last name, First initial. (Year of publication). *Title of book in italics*. Place of publication:  
Publishing Company.

## Book by several authors:

Author's last name, First initial. & Author's last name, First initial. (year of publication). *Title of book in italics*. Place of publication: Publishing company.

\*\* remember, up to and including seven authors. More than that, go with first six and then three ellipses and the last author.

## Book by Editor(s):

Editor's last name, First initial, Editor's last name, First initial, & Editor's last name, First initial. (Eds.)  
(year of publication). *Title of book in italics*. Place of publication: Publishing company.

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## Encyclopaedia (online)

**NOTE:** provide web address only up to article #

Title of article. (year of publication). *Title of encyclopaedia italicised* [online]. Date retrieved, web address

Example:

Canada. (2016). *Encyclopaedia Britannica* [online]. Retrieved March 30, 2016, from  
<http://search.eb.com/eb/article?eu=119645>



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## Journal Article (online)

Author's last name, First initial. (year of publication). Title of article. *Title of online journal in italics*,  
volume (number). Retrieval date, web address

Example:

Luvisa, P. (2009). Great citations. *Journal of library studies*, 6(3). Retrieved March 26, 2016, from  
<http://www.my citation.com>



## Article in online database

Author's last name, First initial. (year of publication). Title of article. *Title of the periodical in italics*, date  
of publication, volume (number), pages. Date retrieved *Title of the database in italics*, web address

Example:

Finn, A. (2010). Great teaching practices. *Journal of education*, October 23, 2010, 5(9), 126-128. Retrieved  
March 26, 2016, from *Best practices database*, <http://www.stmo-lib.hwcdsb.ca>





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Luvisa, P. (2009). Great citations. *Journal of library studies*, 6(3). Retrieved  
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## Article in online database

Author's last name, First initial. (year of publication). Title of article. *Title of the periodical in italics*, date of publication, volume (number), pages. Date retrieved *Title of the database in italics*, web address

Example:

Finn, A. (2010). Great teaching practices. *Journal of education*, January 23, 2010, 5(9), 126-128. **Retrieved** March 26, 2018, **from** *Best practices database*, <http://www.stmo-lib.hv.cdsb.ca>

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## Internet Sites (entire)

*Name of web site in Italics*. (date updated or published...use n.d. if not given).  
Name of editor (Ed.). Retrieval date, from what web address

Example:

*McMaster university English Department home page*. (2007). **Retrieved** March 16, 2018, **from** <http://www.mcmaster.ca>

## Web page with author

Author's last name, first initial. (year of publication/update). *Title of web page/article in italics*. Retrieval date, retrieved from which site

Example:

Luvisa, P. (2008). *How to score high in your sat's*. **Retrieved** March 28, 2018, **from** <http://www.thissite.com>