



Learning Centre

In Text Citation Using APA Style:

How can you let your reader know where you found the information you are using?

Introduction

As you write an academic paper for a college course, you need to let your reader know where you found your information each time you use ideas or wording that you found in other sources. To do this using APA style, you use the author's last name and the date of publication either in the text of the sentence you are writing or in parentheses. This provides just enough information inside a sentence to allow the reader to go to the list of References at the end of your paper to find the complete details about each source.

This handout only provides a brief introduction to using APA style for acknowledging sources inside the text of your paper. To find the range of details you will need when creating your References page at the end of your paper, you need to learn how to use other resources such as Library APA handouts, APA web sites (which you can find on the Library web site), and the complete APA style manual (available in the Learning Centres and in the library) to find more detailed explanations for citing sources in your writing.

Using Parentheses to Identify a Source

You need only three (3) pieces of information in a sentence when you include someone else's words, ideas, or facts in a sentence that you are writing:

- a) the author's last name, or authors' last names
- b) the year of publication of the book or article
- c) the page number (only if you have quoted exact words)

Adults who are faced with changing careers half way through their working lives are often faced with the problem of "not keeping pace" with changes in technology and new ways of doing work that are becoming a part of many jobs (Jones, Zunker, & Smith, 1990, p. 345).

You can use any of the following three ways to include documentation in a sentence:

a) all together in parentheses before the information is given

Some authors (for example Jones, Zunker, & Smith, 1990) suggested that mature workers who are faced with job change face problems because they have not been able to keep pace with changing technology.

b) all together in parentheses after the information is given

Adults who are faced with changing careers half way through their working life are often faced with the problem of "not keeping pace" with changes in technology and new ways of doing work that are becoming part of many jobs (Jones, Zunker, & Smith, 1990, p. 345).

c) split up so that the date is in parentheses after the author's name, and the page number is in parentheses at the end of the information

Jones, Zunker, and Smith (1990) stated that "a variety of changes in technology, occupational structure, organizational format, and management techniques" brought into greater focus the issue of "job obsolescence" (p. 345).

The best way to document is this final split up way shown in the third example because it helps the reader know where the cited material begins and ends. This makes it easy for the reader to see the difference between your ideas and the sources that you use to support your point. However, for variety, it's a good idea to alternate the ways in which you insert documentation.

What should be documented?

Your essay or paper needs to have evidence, or support, or proof of the points you are making. One of the main ways to give support to your points is to include the ideas or words of an expert on the topic you are writing about. Below is a list of the situations where you should acknowledge the sources of information you use.

A) WHEN QUOTING: if you quote an author's exact words

Jones, Zunker, and Smith (1990) stated that "a variety of changes in technology, occupational structure, organizational format, and management techniques" raised the issue of "job obsolescence" (p. 345).

B) WHEN PARAPHRASING: if you use your own words, but you use another author's ideas or facts. Notice that when you do not quote, you do not need to include the page number:

Research focussed on the problem of jobs being lost to changes in the way companies organize and supervise their workforce and bring in new technology (Jones, Zunker, & Smith, 1990).

C) WHEN SUMMARIZING: if you summarize one or more important main points from another author's work. You should note that, when you summarize, you do not need to include the page number.

One of the main points that Jones, Zunker, and Smith (1990) made was that career counsellors must have the proper skills and knowledge to help mature workers deal with the problems of losing a long held job, and preparing and looking for another one.

D) STATISTICS OR FACTS: if you use a fact or a statistic that is not common knowledge.

Statistics showed that most men changed occupations at least once, and that this change was reasonably frequent in mid-life (Kimmel, 1990).

Pay Attention “TO THE DETAILS” of Documenting Correctly

Quote only the words or parts of an author's sentence that you want to emphasize. So, rather than quoting several lines as in the following example:

According to Kimmel (1990), "In general, women earn less than men; this is termed an earnings gap" (p. 286).

it is better to quote only the important words that you wish to emphasize, as in the following example:

Kimmel (1990) calls this difference (between what men make and what women make for similar jobs) an "earnings gap" (p. 286).

PUNCTUATION OF SHORT QUOTATIONS: notice that in all of the quotations used above, the period at the end of the sentence comes after the parenthesis.

Block Quotations

Occasionally, it is necessary to use long quotations. If a quotation is longer than **forty (40)** words, the format and punctuation is different than for shorter quotations. These longer quotations are called "Block Quotations." As in the following example, a block quotation is set off from your writing by indenting it 0.5 inch from the left margin; do not use quotation marks around it, and double space the lines:

Kimmel (1990) described some of the effects of employment on working mothers:

Research on the effects of employment on morale indicates that employment can provide either a psychological boost or a stress. Most studies do indicate a higher level of satisfaction among employed mothers, but stress can result when the demands of the dual role are excessive. (p. 291)

Whether work gives a "boost" or more "stress" depends to an extent on the kind of work.

Notice that in block quotations, the period at the end of the sentence comes "before" the parentheses.

What do you do if you want to use information or a quotation that another author also used, but you don't have the original source?

Use the words "cited in" in parentheses to show in which secondary source you found the quotation or information. For example, if an author whom you are using is named Kimmel, and you find information about a study by Kohen in a chapter or article by Kimmel, then your reference to these authors should appear like this:

In a five-year study, Kohen (1975) found that one out of four middle-aged men changed jobs near retirement (as cited in Kimmel, 1990).

Note: Only the source you actually read should appear in the reference list.

Multiple Authors

For more than one author, usually include all of the authors' last names unless the list includes six or more authors. Look at the examples on the next page. If there are two authors, always give both authors' last names. However, if there are three to five authors, give all of the last names only for the first time that you mention a source, but after the first mention, just give the first author's last name plus the abbreviation "et al." (which means "and others" in Latin). For six or more authors, provide the first author's last name followed by "et al."

First Mention of a Multiple-Author (3-5 authors) Source:

Smith, Barnes, Kohen, and Sekon (1985) suggest that ...

Second Mention of a Multiple-Author (3-5 authors) Source:

Smith et al. (1985) provide examples of ...

Final words: this handout focuses only on one specific aspect of APA style—how to cite sources inside the body of a paper. For help with other features of APA, such as formatting the Title Page, or formatting the References page at the end of your paper, you will need to use other resources such as the Library APA handout, APA web sites (which you can find on the Library web site), and the complete APA style manual (available in the Learning Centres and in the library). YouTube also provides very useful "how to" guides for formatting APA papers.