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# Appropriate Level of Citation

The number of sources you cite in your paper depends on the purpose of your work. For most papers, cite one or two of the most representative sources for each key point. Literature review papers, however, typically include a more exhaustive list of references.

Provide appropriate credit to the source (e.g., by using an in-text citation) whenever you do the following:

- paraphrase (i.e., state in your own words) the ideas of others
- directly quote the words of others
- refer to data or data sets
- reprint or adapt a table or figure, even images from the internet that are free or licensed in the Creative Commons
- reprint a long text passage or commercially copyrighted test item

Avoid both undercitation and overcitation. Undercitation [can lead to plagiarism \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/plagiarism/\)](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/plagiarism/) and/or [self-plagiarism \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/plagiarism#self-plagiarism\)](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/plagiarism#self-plagiarism). Overcitation can be distracting and is unnecessary.

For example, it is considered overcitation to repeat the same citation in every sentence when the source and topic have not changed. Instead, when [paraphrasing a key point in more than one sentence \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/paraphrasing/\)](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/paraphrasing/) within a paragraph, cite the source in the first sentence in which it is relevant and do not repeat the citation in subsequent sentences as long as the source remains clear and unchanged.

Figure 8.1 in Chapter 8 of the *Publication Manual* provides an example of an appropriate level of citation.

## Learn more

Determining the appropriate level of citation is covered in the seventh edition APA Style manuals in the [Publication Manual \(/products/publication-manual-7th-edition/\)](/products/publication-manual-7th-edition/) Section 8.1 and the [Concise Guide \(/products/concise-guide/\)](/products/concise-guide/) Section 8.1



This guidance is the **same** as in the 6th edition.

## Related handouts

- [In-Text Citation Checklist \(PDF, 227KB\) \(/instructional-aids/in-text-citation-checklist.pdf\)](/instructional-aids/in-text-citation-checklist.pdf)
- [Six Steps to Proper Citation \(PDF, 112KB\) \(/instructional-aids/six-steps-proper-citation.pdf\)](/instructional-aids/six-steps-proper-citation.pdf)

## From the APA Style blog



### How to avoid plagiarism

Instructors, teach your students about plagiarism (APA Style On the Go series—Tip 10).

[\(/blog/10-teaching-avoiding-plagiarism/\)](/blog/10-teaching-avoiding-plagiarism/)



### How to help your students "check their style"

Instructors, help your students become effective writers (APA Style On the Go series—Tip 9).

[\(/blog/9-teaching-writing-style/\)](/blog/9-teaching-writing-style/)



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### Heading levels and the benefits of citing personal communications sources

Instructors, learn how to teach APA Style basics inside and outside the classroom (APA Style On the Go series—Tip 6).

[\(/blog/6-teaching-headings-personal-communications/\)](/blog/6-teaching-headings-personal-communications/)



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### How to cite unpublished works

There are many reasons to cite an unpublished work, including referring to emerging research.

[\(/blog/cite-unpublished-works/\)](/blog/cite-unpublished-works/)



### Happy Valentine's Day!

Odes to our favorite aspects of APA Style, from our experts.

[\(/blog/writing-love/\)](/blog/writing-love/)



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**How to cite a work with a nonrecoverable source** (/blog/nonrecoverable-sources)  
In most cases, nonrecoverable sources such as personal emails, nonarchived social media livestreams (or deleted and unarchived social media posts), classroom lectures, unrecorded webinars or presentations, and intranet sources should be cited only in the text as personal communications.



**The “outdated sources” myth** (/blog/outdated-sources-myth)  
The “outdated sources” myth is that sources must have been published recently, such as the last 5 to 10 years. There is no timeliness requirement in APA Style.

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## BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CITATION

APA Style uses the [author–date citation system](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/author-date) (</style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/author-date>), in which a brief in-text citation directs readers to a full reference list entry. The in-text citation appears within the body of the paper (or in a table, figure, footnote, or appendix) and briefly identifies the cited work by its author and date of publication. This enables readers to locate the corresponding entry in the alphabetical reference list at the end of the paper.

Each work cited must appear in the reference list, and each work in the reference list must be cited in the text (or in a table, figure, footnote, or appendix).

Both [paraphrases](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/paraphrasing) (</style-grammar-guidelines/citations/paraphrasing>) and [quotations](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quotations) (</style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quotations>) require citations.

The following are guidelines to follow when writing in-text citations:

- Ensure that the spelling of author names and the publication dates in reference list entries match those in the corresponding in-text citations.
- Cite only works that you have read and ideas that you have incorporated into your writing. The works you cite may provide key background information, support or dispute your thesis, or offer critical definitions and data.
- Readers may find a long [string of citations](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/multiple-works) (</style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/multiple-works>) difficult to understand, especially if they are using assistive technology such as a screen reader; therefore, include only those citations needed to support your immediate point.
- Cite primary sources when possible, and cite [secondary sources](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/secondary-sources) (</style-grammar-guidelines/citations/secondary-sources>) sparingly.
- Cite sources to document all facts and figures that you mention that are not common knowledge.
- To [cite a specific part of a source](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/parts-source) (</style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/parts-source>), provide an author–date citation for the work plus information about the specific part.
- Even when sources cannot be retrieved (e.g., because they are [personal communications](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/personal-communications) (</style-grammar-guidelines/citations/personal-communications>)), still credit them in the text (however, avoid using online sources that are no longer recoverable).

### Learn more

Basic principles of citation are covered in the seventh edition APA Style manuals in the [Publication Manual](/products/publication-manual-7th-edition) (</products/publication-manual-7th-edition>) Sections 8.1 to 8.36 and the [Concise Guide](/products/concise-guide) (</products/concise-guide>) Sections 8.1 to 8.34



This guidance is the **same** as in the 6th edition.

### Related handouts

- [In-Text Citation Checklist \(PDF, 227KB\)](/instructional-aids/in-text-citation-checklist.pdf) [↗](#)  
(</instructional-aids/in-text-citation-checklist.pdf>)
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(</instructional-aids/six-steps-proper-citation.pdf>)

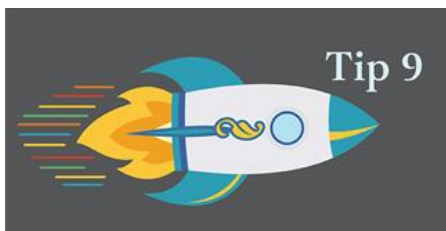
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## CLASSROOM OR INTRANET SOURCES

Some works are recoverable only by certain audiences, which affects how they are cited.

For example, a student writing a paper for a course assignment might cite works from the classroom website or learning management system (LMS; e.g., Canvas, Blackboard, Brightspace, Moodle, Sakai). These sources can be cited in the classroom assignment because they are recoverable by the instructor and fellow students. Likewise, an employee might cite resources from the company intranet when writing an internal company report.

When the audience you are writing for can retrieve the works you used, cite the works using the formats shown in Chapter 10 of the *Publication Manual*, which are organized according to reference group and category. The source element of these references includes the name of the classroom website or LMS and the URL. For sites requiring users to log in, the URL should be a link to the home page or the login page.

For example, use the following format to cite a recorded lecture or PowerPoint presentation available from a classroom website or LMS for a student assignment (see also Chapter 10, Example 102, in the *Publication Manual*). Because the LMS requires users to log in, provide the home page URL of the LMS rather than the full URL of the work.

Mack, R., & Spake, G. (2018). *Citing open source images and formatting references for presentations* [PowerPoint slides]. Canvas@FNU. <https://fnu.onelogin.com/login>  
(<https://fnu.onelogin.com/login>)

Likewise, use the following format to cite a report on a company intranet when writing an internal company report (see also the report formats shown in Section 10.4 of the *Publication Manual*). Because this company intranet requires users to log in, provide the home page URL of the intranet rather than the full URL of the work.

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Policies & procedures manual*.  
<https://apa750.sharepoint.com> (<https://apa750.sharepoint.com>)

However, if the work is for professional publication or intended for a wider audience who will not have access to these sources (i.e., the LMS or the company intranet), cite the sources as personal communications (</style-grammar-guidelines/citations/personal-communications>).

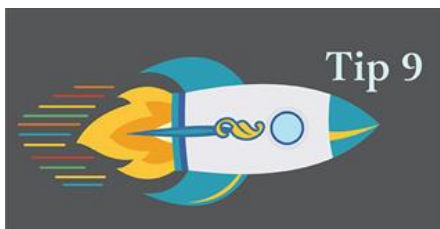
### Learn more

Classroom or intranet sources are covered in the seventh edition APA Style manuals in the [Publication Manual \(/products/publication-manual-7th-edition\)](/products/publication-manual-7th-edition) Section 8.8 and the [Concise Guide \(/products/concise-guide\)](/products/concise-guide) Section 8.8



This guidance is **new** to the 7th edition.

## From the APA Style blog



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(/blog/nonrecoverable-sources)



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## Paraphrasing

A paraphrase restates another's idea (or your own previously published idea) in your own words. Paraphrasing allows you to summarize and synthesize information from one or more sources, focus on significant information, and compare and contrast relevant details.

Published authors paraphrase their sources most of the time, rather than directly quoting the sources; student authors should emulate this practice by paraphrasing more than directly quoting.

When you paraphrase, cite the original work using either the [narrative or parenthetical citation format](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/parenthetical-versus-narrative).

Although it is not required to provide a page or paragraph number in the citation, you may include one (in addition to the author and year) when it would help interested readers locate the relevant passage within a long or complex work (e.g., a book).

Webster-Stratton (2016) described a case example of a 4-year-old girl who showed an insecure attachment to her mother; in working with the family dyad, the therapist focused on increasing the mother's empathy for her child (pp. 152–153).

These guidelines pertain to when you read a primary source and paraphrase it yourself. If you read a paraphrase of a primary source in a published work and want to cite that source, it is best to read and cite the primary source directly if possible; if not, [use a secondary source citation](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/secondary-sources).

## Long paraphrases

A paraphrase may continue for several sentences. In such cases, cite the work being paraphrased on first mention. Once the work has been cited, it is not necessary to repeat the citation as long as the context of the writing makes it clear that the same work continues to be paraphrased.

Velez et al. (2018) found that for women of color, sexism and racism in the workplace were associated with poor work and mental health outcomes, including job-related burnout, turnover intentions, and psychological distress. However, self-esteem, person–organization fit, and perceived organizational support mediated these effects. Additionally, stronger womanist attitudes—which acknowledge the unique challenges faced by women of color in a sexist and racist society—weakened the association of workplace discrimination with psychological distress. These findings underscore the importance of considering multiple forms of workplace discrimination in clinical practice and research with women of color, along with efforts to challenge and reduce such discrimination.

If the paraphrase continues into a new paragraph, reintroduce the citation. If the paraphrase incorporates multiple sources or switches among sources, repeat the citation so the source is clear. Read your sentences carefully to ensure you have cited sources appropriately.

Play therapists can experience many symptoms of impaired wellness, including emotional exhaustion or reduced ability to empathize with others (Elwood et al., 2011; Figley, 2002), disruption in personal relationships (Elwood et al., 2011; Robinson-Keilig,

### Learn more

Paraphrases are covered in the seventh edition APA Style manuals in the [Publication Manual](/products/publication-manual-7th-edition) Sections 8.23 and 8.24 and the [Concise Guide](/products/concise-guide) Sections 8.23 and 8.24



This guidance has been **expanded** from the 6th edition.

### Related handout

- Paraphrasing and Citation Activities (PDF, 357KB) </instructional-aids/paraphrasing-citation-activities.pdf>

2014), decreased satisfaction with work (Elwood et al., 2011), avoidance of particular situations (Figley, 2002; O'Halloran & Linton, 2000), and feelings or thoughts of helplessness (Elwood et al., 2011; Figley, 2002; O'Halloran & Linton, 2000).

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APA Style webinar on citing works in text

Attend the webinar, "Citing Works in Text Using Seventh Edition APA Style," on July 14, 2020, to learn the keys to accurately and consistently citing sources in APA Style.  
(/blog/webinar-citing-text)

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# Personal Communications

Works that cannot be recovered by readers are cited in the text as personal communications. Personal communications include emails, text messages, online chats or direct messages, personal interviews, telephone conversations, live speeches, nonarchived social media livestreams (e.g., Instagram Live, Twitter Spaces), unrecorded webinars, unrecorded classroom lectures, memos, letters, messages from nonarchived discussion groups or online bulletin boards, and so on.

Use a personal communication citation only when a recoverable source is not available. For example, if you learned about a topic via a classroom lecture, it would be preferable to cite the research on which the instructor based the lecture. However, if the lecture contained original content not published elsewhere, cite the lecture as a personal communication.

When communications are recoverable only in an archive (e.g., a presidential library), cite them as [archival materials \(/style-grammar-guidelines/references/archival/\)](/style-grammar-guidelines/references/archival/). Likewise, if a live social media event was recorded and is now available on another platform (e.g., an Instagram Live video recorded and saved to a public YouTube video), use the corresponding template to create the reference (e.g., create a [YouTube reference \(https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/youtube-references#1\)](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/youtube-references#1) for the Instagram Live video available on YouTube).

Do not use a personal communication citation for quotes or information from participants whom you interviewed as part of your own original research; instead, [quote those participants \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quoting-participants/\)](/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quoting-participants/) directly.

## Learn more

Personal communications are covered in the seventh edition APA Style manuals in the [Publication Manual \(/products/publication-manual-7th-edition/\)](/products/publication-manual-7th-edition/) Section 8.9 and the [Concise Guide \(/products/concise-guide/\)](/products/concise-guide/) Section 8.9



This guidance is the **same** as in the 6th edition.

## Citing personal communications in the text

Because readers cannot retrieve the information in personal communications, personal communications are not included in the reference list; they are cited in the text only. Give the initial(s) and surname of the communicator, and provide as exact a date as possible, using the following formats:

**Narrative citation:** E.-M. Paradis (personal communication, August 8, 2019)

**Parenthetical citation:** (T. Nguyen, personal communication, February 24, 2020)

## Citing information from Traditional Knowledge or Oral Traditions of Indigenous Peoples

The manner of citing Traditional Knowledge or Oral Traditions (other terms are “Traditional Stories” and “Oral Histories”) of Indigenous Peoples varies depending on whether and how the information has been recorded—only certain cases use a variation of the personal communication citation.

- If the information has been recorded and is recoverable by readers (e.g., video, audio, interview transcript, book, article), cite it in the text and include a reference list entry in the correct format for that type of source (e.g., a [recording on YouTube \(/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/youtube-references/\)](/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples/youtube-references/)).
- Also maintain the integrity of Indigenous perspectives. Examine published works carefully (especially older works) to ensure that the information about Indigenous Peoples is accurate

and appropriate to share before citing those works. For example, some stories are told only at certain times of year or by certain people and may not be appropriate to cite and share in a paper.

To describe Traditional Knowledge or Oral Traditions that are not recorded (and therefore are not recoverable by readers), provide as much detail in the in-text citation as is necessary to describe the content and to contextualize the origin of the information. For example, if you spoke with an Indigenous person directly to learn information (but they were not a research participant), use a variation of the personal communication citation.

- Provide the person's full name and the nation or specific Indigenous group to which they belong, as well as their location or other details about them as relevant, followed by the words "personal communication," and the date of the communication.
- Provide an exact date of correspondence if available; if correspondence took place over a period of time, provide a more general date or a range of dates. The date refers to when you consulted with the person, not to when the information originated.
- Ensure that the person agrees to have their name included in your paper and confirms the accuracy and appropriateness of the information you present.
- Because there is no recoverable source, a reference list entry is not used.

The following example illustrates how to incorporate these details into a variation of the personal communication citation. You might include more information or different information depending on the context of your work.

We spoke with Anna Grant (Haida Nation, lives in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, personal communication, April 2019) about traditional understandings of the world by First Nations Peoples in Canada. She described . . .

Also capitalize most terms related to Indigenous Peoples. These include names of specific groups ([/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/racial-ethnic-minorities](https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/racial-ethnic-minorities)) (e.g., Cherokee, Cree, Ojibwe) and words related to Indigenous culture (e.g., Creation, the Creator, Elder, Oral Tradition, Traditional Knowledge, Vision Quest). The capitalization is intentional and demonstrates respect for Indigenous perspectives.

For more on citing information from Indigenous Peoples, including how to incorporate quotations from Indigenous research participants and how to share your own experiences if you are an Indigenous person, see Section 8.9 of the *Publication Manual*.

For more insights into creating works about Indigenous Peoples, also consult the following valuable resources by Indigenous writers and publishers. The APA Style team used these works as the foundation for the guidance in the *Publication Manual*.

International Journal of Indigenous Health. (n.d.). *Defining Aboriginal Peoples within Canada*.

<https://journals.uvic.ca/journalinfo/ijih/IJHDefiningIndigenousPeoplesWithinCanada.pdf>

(<https://journals.uvic.ca/journalinfo/ijih/IJHDefiningIndigenousPeoplesWithinCanada.pdf>)

Younging, G. (2018). *Elements of Indigenous style: A guide for writing by and about Indigenous Peoples*. Brush Education.

From the APA Style blog



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Plagiarism is the act of presenting the words, ideas, or images of another as your own; it denies authors or creators of content the credit they are due. Whether deliberate or unintentional, plagiarism violates ethical standards in scholarship (see [APA Ethics Code Standard 8.11, Plagiarism](#) (<https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/>)).

Writers who plagiarize disrespect the efforts of original authors by failing to acknowledge their contributions, stifle further research by preventing readers from tracing ideas back to their original sources, and unfairly disregard those who exerted the effort to complete their own work.

To avoid plagiarism, provide appropriate credit (</style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/>) to your sources by adding author–date in-text citations (</style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/author-date/>) for direct quotations and ideas (e.g., credit the originators of theories). If you model a study after one conducted by someone else, give credit to the author of the original study.

If you wish to reprint or adapt tables, figures, and images or to reprint long quotations or commercially copyrighted test items, you must provide more comprehensive credit in the form of a copyright attribution and may need permission from the copyright holder to use the materials. Even images from the internet that are free or licensed in the Creative Commons need a copyright attribution if you are reproducing them in your paper. For more information about copyright and permissions, see Sections 12.14–12.18 of the *Publication Manual* (7th ed.).

#### Learn more

Plagiarism and self-plagiarism are covered in the seventh edition APA Style manuals in the [Publication Manual](/products/publication-manual-7th-edition/) (</products/publication-manual-7th-edition/>) Sections 8.2 to 8.3 and the [Concise Guide](/products/concise-guide/) (</products/concise-guide/>) Sections 8.2 to 8.3



This guidance has been **expanded** from the 6th edition.

#### Related handout

- [Avoiding Plagiarism Guide \(PDF, 144KB\)](/instructional-aids/avoiding-plagiarism.pdf) [📄](#)

## What specifically “counts” as plagiarism?

Although many cases of plagiarism are straightforward (e.g., passages of text copied from another source without attribution), other cases are more challenging to evaluate. Usually, using incorrect citations (e.g., misspelling an author’s name, forgetting or mistyping an element in a reference list entry, or citing a source in the text that does not have a corresponding reference list entry) is not considered plagiarism if the error is minor and attributable to an editorial oversight rather than an intentional attempt to steal someone’s ideas. However, such errors may still result in deductions on an academic assignment or a request for revision of a manuscript submitted for publication.

Publishers and educators may use plagiarism-checking software (e.g., iThenticate, Turnitin) to identify cases in which entire papers have been copied, passages of specified lengths match, or a few words have been changed but content is largely the same (the latter is known as [patchwriting](https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/words-were-watching-patchwriting) (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/words-were-watching-patchwriting>)).

## Self-plagiarism

Self-plagiarism is the presentation of your own previously published work as original; like plagiarism, self-plagiarism is unethical. Self-plagiarism deceives readers by making it appear that more information is available on a topic than really exists. It gives the impression that findings are more replicable than is the case or that particular conclusions are more strongly supported than is warranted by the evidence. It may lead to copyright violations if you publish the same work with multiple publishers (sometimes called *duplicate publication*).

## What specifically “counts” as self-plagiarism?

Some institutions may consider it self-plagiarism if a student submits a paper written for one class to complete an assignment for another class without permission from the current instructor. Using the same paper in multiple classes may violate the academic integrity policy, honor code, or ethics code of the university.

However, incorporating previous classwork into one’s thesis or dissertation and building on one’s own existing writing may be permissible; students who wish to do this should discuss their ideas

with their instructor or advisor and follow their university's honor code, ethics code, or academic policies when reusing their previous work.

In specific circumstances, authors may wish to duplicate their previously used words without quotation marks or citation (e.g., in describing the details of an instrument or an analytic approach), feeling that extensive self-referencing is undesirable or awkward and that rewording may lead to inaccuracies. When the duplicated material is limited in scope, this approach is permissible.

General guidelines for using an acceptable amount of duplicated material are in the *Publication Manual* in Sections 1.16 and 8.3.

## Exceptions

An exception to the prohibition against self-plagiarism is publishing a work of limited circulation in a venue of wider circulation. For example, authors may publish their doctoral dissertation or master's thesis in whole or in part in one or more journal articles. In such cases, authors would not cite their dissertation or thesis in the article text but rather acknowledge in the author note that the work was based on their dissertation or thesis.

Similarly, an article based on research the authors described in an abstract published in a conference program or proceeding does not usually constitute duplicate publication. The author should acknowledge previous presentation of the research in the article's author note.

Seek clarification from your journal editor or course instructor if you are concerned about duplicate publication or self-plagiarism.

## From the APA Style blog



### Navigating the not-so-hidden treasures of the APA Style website

This post links directly to APA Style topics of interest that users may not even know exist on the website.

(/blog/navigating-the-apa-style-website)

Last updated: July 2022    Date created: 2019

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# Quotations From Research Participants

Because quotations from research participants are part of your original research, do not include a reference list entry for them in the reference list and do not treat them as personal communications.

For the formatting, follow the same guidelines as for other quotations ([/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quotations](#)):

- Present a quotation of fewer than 40 words in quotation marks within the text.
- Present a quotation of 40 words or more in a block quotation indented below the text.

State in the text that the quotations are from participants, as in this example:

In focus group discussions, participants described their postretirement experiences, including the emotions associated with leaving work and its affective and practical implications. “Rafael” (64 years old, retired pilot) mentioned several difficulties associated with retirement, including feeling like he was “in a void without purpose . . . it took several months to develop new interests that motivated [him] each day.” Several other participants agreed, describing the entrance into retirement as “confusing,” “lonely,” “purposeless,” and “boring.” In contrast, others described the sense of “balance” and “relaxation” retirement brought to their lives.

### Learn more

Quotations from research participants are covered in the seventh edition APA Style Publication Manual ([/products/publication-manual-7th-edition](#)) Section 8.36



This guidance is **new** to the 7th edition.

## Ethical considerations when quoting participants

When quoting research participants, abide by any ethical agreements regarding confidentiality and/or anonymity agreed to between you and your participants during the consent or assent process. Take care to obtain and respect participants’ consent to have their information included in your report. To disguise participant information, you may need to

- assign pseudonyms to participants,
- obscure identifying information, and/or
- present aggregate information.

Agreements regarding confidentiality and/or anonymity may also extend to other sources related to your methodology (e.g., quoting a school policy document when conducting a case study at a school). In that case, you might need to employ similar strategies (e.g., rather than referring to a school by name, refer to “an elementary school in Atlanta, Georgia”).

For detailed discussion of ethical considerations for sharing data and protecting confidentiality in your research, see Sections 1.14, 1.15, and 1.19 of the *Publication Manual*.

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# Quotations

A direct quotation reproduces words verbatim from another work or from your own previously published work. It is best to [paraphrase sources rather than directly quoting them \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/paraphrasing\)](#) because paraphrasing allows you to fit material to the context of your paper and writing style.

Use direct quotations rather than paraphrasing:

- when reproducing an exact definition (see Section 6.22 of the *Publication Manual*),
- when an author has said something memorably or succinctly, or
- when you want to respond to exact wording (e.g., something someone said).

Instructors, programs, editors, and publishers may establish limits on the use of direct quotations. Consult your instructor or editor if you are concerned that you may have too much quoted material in your paper.

This page addresses how to format short quotations and block quotations. Additional information is available about how to:

- [include page numbers for quotations \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quotations/page-numbers\)](#)
- [cite quotations from material without page numbers \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quotations/no-page-numbers\)](#)
- [cite quotations that include errors \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quotations/errors\)](#)
- [indicate changes to quotations \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quotations/changes\)](#)
- [present quotations from research participants \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/quoting-participants\)](#)

## Learn more

Quotations are covered in the seventh edition APA Style manuals in the [Publication Manual \(/products/publication-manual-7th-edition\)](#) Sections 8.25 to 8.35 and the [Concise Guide \(/products/concise-guide\)](#) Sections 8.25 to 8.34



This guidance has been **expanded** from the 6th edition.

## Related handout

- [In-Text Citation Checklist \(PDF, 227KB\) \(/instructional-aids/in-text-citation-checklist.pdf\)](#)

## Short quotations (fewer than 40 words)

For quotations of fewer than 40 words, add quotation marks around the words and incorporate the quote into your own text—there is no additional formatting needed. Do not insert an ellipsis at the beginning and/or end of a quotation unless the original source includes an ellipsis.

Effective teams can be difficult to describe because “high performance along one domain does not translate to high performance along another” (Ervin et al., 2018, p. 470).

For a direct quotation, always include a full citation ([parenthetical or narrative \(/style-grammar-guidelines/citations/basic-principles/parenthetical-versus-narrative\)](#)) in the same sentence as the quotation, including the page number (or other location information, e.g., paragraph number).

- Place a parenthetical citation either immediately after the quotation or at the end of the sentence.
- For a narrative citation, include the author and year in the sentence and then place the page number or other location information in parentheses after the quotation.
- If the quotation precedes the narrative citation, put the page number or location information after the year and a comma.
- If the citation appears at the end of a sentence, put the end punctuation after the closing parenthesis for the citation.

- If the quotation includes citations, see Section 8.32 of the *Publication Manual*.
- If the quotation includes material already in quotation marks, see Section 8.33 of the *Publication Manual*.
- Place periods and commas within closing single or double quotation marks. Place other punctuation marks inside quotation marks only when they are part of the quoted material.

## Block quotations (40 words or more)

Format quotations of 40 words or more as block quotations:

- Do not use quotation marks to enclose a block quotation.
- Start a block quotation on a new line and indent the whole block 0.5 in. from the left margin.
- Double-space the entire block quotation.
- Do not add extra space before or after it.
- If there are additional paragraphs within the quotation, indent the first line of each subsequent paragraph an additional 0.5 in. See an example in Section 8.27 of the *Publication Manual*.
- Either (a) cite the source in parentheses after the quotation's final punctuation or (b) cite the author and year in the narrative before the quotation and place only the page number in parentheses after the quotation's final punctuation.
- Do not add a period after the closing parenthesis in either case.

Block quotation with parenthetical citation:

Researchers have studied how people talk to themselves:

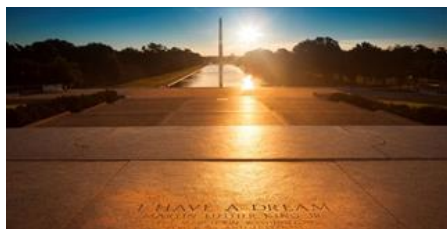
Inner speech is a paradoxical phenomenon. It is an experience that is central to many people's everyday lives, and yet it presents considerable challenges to any effort to study it scientifically. Nevertheless, a wide range of methodologies and approaches have combined to shed light on the subjective experience of inner speech and its cognitive and neural underpinnings. (Alderson-Day & Fernyhough, 2015, p. 957)

Block quotation with narrative citation:

Flores et al. (2018) described how they addressed potential researcher bias when working with an intersectional community of transgender people of color:

Everyone on the research team belonged to a stigmatized group but also held privileged identities. Throughout the research process, we attended to the ways in which our privileged and oppressed identities may have influenced the research process, findings, and presentation of results. (p. 311)

## From the APA Style blog



How to cite quotations from speeches

Create a reference that matches the source where readers can retrieve the speech.

(/blog/cite-speeches)

APA Style webinar on citing works in text

Attend the webinar, "Citing Works in Text Using Seventh Edition APA Style," on July 14, 2020, to learn the keys to accurately and consistently citing sources in APA Style.

(/blog/webinar-citing-text)

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# Secondary Sources

In scholarly work, a *primary source* reports original content; a *secondary source* refers to content first reported in another source.

- Cite secondary sources sparingly—for instance, when the original work is out of print, unavailable, or available only in a language that you do not understand.
- If possible, as a matter of good scholarly practice, find the primary source, read it, and cite it directly rather than citing a secondary source. For example, rather than citing an instructor's lecture or a textbook or encyclopedia that in turn cites original research, find, read, and cite the original research directly (unless an instructor has directed you to do otherwise).

## Learn more

Secondary sources are covered in the seventh edition APA Style manuals in the [Publication Manual \(/products/publication-manual-7th-edition/\)](/products/publication-manual-7th-edition/) Section 8.6 and the [Concise Guide \(/products/concise-guide/\)](/products/concise-guide/) Section 8.6



This guidance has been **expanded** from the 6th edition.

Follow these directions when citing a secondary source:

- In the reference list, provide an entry for the secondary source that you used.
- In the text, identify the primary source and write “as cited in” the secondary source that you used.

If the year of publication of the primary source is known, also include it in the text citation.

For example, if you read a work by Lyon et al. (2014) in which Rabbitt (1982) was cited, and you were unable to read Rabbitt's work yourself, cite Rabbitt's work as the original source, followed by Lyon et al.'s work as the secondary source. Only Lyon et al.'s work appears in the reference list.

(Rabbitt, 1982, as cited in Lyon et al., 2014)

If the year of the primary source is unknown, omit it from the in-text citation.

Allport's diary (as cited in Nicholson, 2003)

## From the APA Style blog



### Real or fake? Predatory journals and journal hijacking

Not every online article is a trustworthy source.  
([blog/predatory-journals/](/blog/predatory-journals/))



### How to avoid plagiarism

Instructors, teach your students about plagiarism (APA Style On the Go series—Tip 10).  
([blog/10-teaching-avoiding-plagiarism/](/blog/10-teaching-avoiding-plagiarism/))



### How to help your students “check their style”

Instructors, help your students become effective writers (APA Style On the Go series—Tip 9).  
([blog/9-teaching-writing-style/](/blog/9-teaching-writing-style/))



**Understanding the importance of journal articles** (/blog/5-teaching-journal-articles)  
Instructors, help your students develop their knowledge of how journal articles work (APA Style On the Go series—Tip 5).



**Part 2: AI as a search engine and AI integrated into common software** (/blog/cite-generative-ai-search-software)  
Guidance on how to cite AI as a search engine and integrated into common software (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Perplexity).



**How to evaluate sources** (/blog/1-teaching-evaluate-sources)  
Instructors, help your students become effective researchers (APA Style On the Go series—Tip 1).



**Happy Valentine's Day!** (/blog/writing-love)  
Odes to our favorite aspects of APA Style, from our experts.



**The importance of integrating APA Style into high school classrooms** (/blog/high-school-classrooms)  
Read insights from a recent high school graduate about the value of learning APA Style in high school.



**Part 3: Is AI “allowed” in APA Style?** (/blog/cite-generative-ai-allowed)  
Guidance on whether AI is “allowed” in APA Style (e.g., ChatGPT, ai-allowed) Claude, Gemini, Perplexity).



**Citing generative AI in APA Style: Part 1—Reference formats** (/blog/cite-generative-ai-references)  
Guidance on how to cite generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Perplexity).



**How to cite unpublished works** (/blog/cite-unpublished-works)  
There are many reasons to cite an unpublished work, including referring to emerging research.



**How to cite quotations from speeches** (/blog/cite-speeches)  
Create a reference that matches the source where readers can retrieve the speech.



**How to cite a chapter written by someone other than the book’s authors** (/blog/citing-book-chapter-written-by-other-authors)  
This post describes how to cite a chapter, foreword, or other part of a book written by someone other than the book’s author(s) and how to cite a book that credits additional people on the cover.

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