The biblatex-asa Package
American Sociological Association Style for biblatex

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Abstract

The biblatex-asa package provides a complete implementation of the American Sociological Association (ASA) citation and bibliography style for LaTeX using the biblatex package. This implementation follows the format requirements of the *American Sociological Review* and provides native ASA formatting without requiring external style dependencies.

Contents

1 Introduction

The biblatex-asa package provides citation and bibliography formatting according to the American Sociological Association (ASA) style guide. This package is particularly useful for:

- Students writing sociology papers or theses
- Researchers submitting to sociology journals
- Anyone requiring ASA-style citations and references

1.1 Key Features

- Complete ASA citation and bibliography formatting
- Support for all major entry types (articles, books, datasets, etc.)
- Proper handling of multiple authors and publication dates
- Correct page number formatting
- No external style dependencies required
- Full integration with biblatex

2 Installation

2.1 Package Requirements

You will need to be using a recent LaTeX distribution and the following packages:

- **LaTeX distribution:** TeX Live 2020 or later, MiKTeX 2020 or later

- **biblatex:** Version 3.14 or later (provides the underlying bibliography system)
- **biber:** Version 2.14 or later (recommended backend for processing bibliography data)
- **etoolbox:** (automatically loaded by biblatex, provides programming facilities)

Important notes:

- The biblatex-asa package is built on top of the `standard` and `authoryear` styles from biblatex
- While bibtex backend is supported, **biber is strongly recommended** for full functionality and better Unicode support
- If you're using an older LaTeX distribution, some features may not work correctly
- The package automatically loads biblatex with appropriate ASA-specific options

2.2 Installation Methods

2.2.1 Automatic Installation (Recommended)

For most users, the package can be installed automatically through your TeX distribution's package manager:

- **TeX Live**: The package is available through `tlmgr`

```
tlmgr install biblatex-asa
```

- **MiKTeX**: The package is available through the MiKTeX Package Manager or automatically installed when first used
- **Overleaf**: The package is pre-installed and ready to use

2.2.2 Manual Installation

If automatic installation is not available or you need the latest development version:

1. Download the package files from CTAN or GitHub
2. For local use in a single project, copy these files to your project directory:

- `biblatex-asa.sty`
- `asa.bbx`
- `asa.cbx`

3. For system-wide installation, place the files in your local `texmf` tree:

   ```
   texmf/tex/latex/biblatex-asa/
   ```

4. Update your filename database:
   - TeX Live: run `texhash` or `mktexlsr`
   - MiKTeX: run `initexmf -update-fndb`

3 Usage

3.1 Basic Usage

To use the biblatex-asa package in your document:

```
\documentclass{article}
\usepackage{biblatex-asa}
\addbibresource{references.bib}

\begin{document}
This is a citation \parencite{key2023}.
\textcite{author2022} argues that...
\printbibliography
\end{document}
```

3.2 Direct Style Usage

Alternatively, you can use the ASA style directly with biblatex:

```
\usepackage[backend=biber,style=asa]{biblatex}
\addbibresource{references.bib}
```

3.3 Package Options

The biblatex-asa package accepts the following options:

`giveninits` Use initials for given names

`nogiveninits` Use full given names (default)

`backend=biber` Use biber backend (recommended)

backend=bibtex Use bibtex backend

Example with options:

```
\usepackage[giveninits,backend=biber]{biblatex-asa}
```

4 Citation Commands

4.1 Standard Commands

The package supports all standard biblatex citation commands:

\parencite Parenthetical citation: (Author Year)

\textcite In-text citation: Author (Year)

\cite Bare citation: Author Year

\footcite Footnote citation

4.2 Convenience Commands

The package also provides convenience commands:

\asacite Equivalent to `\parencite`

\asatextcite Equivalent to `\textcite`

5 Compilation

5.1 Overleaf Compilation (Recommended for Beginners)

If you're using Overleaf, the compilation process is much simpler:

- Overleaf automatically handles the compilation sequence for you
- Simply click the **Recompile** button and Overleaf will run the necessary commands in the correct order
- Make sure your project settings use:
  - **Compiler:** pdfLaTeX
  - **TeX Live version:** 2020 or later (recommended)
- You can access these settings via `Menu > Settings > Compiler`

5.2 Local Compilation (Command Line)

To compile a document using biblatex-asa on your local machine, you need to run the following commands in your terminal/command prompt. Make sure you are in the same directory as your `.tex` file:

1. `pdflatex document.tex`

   What this does: Compiles your LaTeX document into a PDF for the first time. This creates auxiliary files needed for the bibliography, but the references won't show up yet.

2. `biber document`

   What this does: Processes your bibliography file (`.bib`) and creates the formatted reference list according to ASA style. Note: use the filename *without* the `.tex` extension.

3. `pdflatex document.tex`

   What this does: Compiles the document again, now incorporating the processed bibliography. Your citations and reference list will appear.

4. `pdflatex document.tex`

   What this does: Final compilation to ensure all cross-references, page numbers, and table of contents are correct.

Important notes:

- Replace `document` with your actual filename
- You must have a working LaTeX installation (TeX Live, MiKTeX, etc.)
- Open your terminal (Mac/Linux) or Command Prompt (Windows)
- Navigate to your document's folder using `cd /path/to/your/folder`

6 ASA Format Implementation

6.1 Citation Format

- Single author: (Smith 2020)
- Two authors: (Smith and Jones 2020)
- Three or more authors: (Smith et al. 2020)
- Multiple citations: (Smith 2020; Jones 2021)

6.2 Bibliography Format

- Authors: First author inverted (Last, First), others normal order
- All authors listed (no "et al." truncation)
- Proper handling of organizational authors
- Correct page number formatting

7 Supported Entry Types

The biblatex-asa package supports all standard biblatex entry types with proper ASA formatting:

- `@article` - Journal articles
- `@book` - Books
- `@incollection` - Book chapters
- `@inproceedings` - Conference proceedings
- `@misc` - Miscellaneous sources
- `@online` - Online sources
- `@report` - Reports
- `@thesis` - Theses and dissertations

8 Troubleshooting

8.1 Common Issues

References not showing Ensure you run `biber` (not `bibtex`).

How to do this:

- If you use the command line, compile your document with this sequence:
  1. `pdflatex yourfile.tex`
  2. `biber yourfile`
  3. `pdflatex yourfile.tex`
  4. `pdflatex yourfile.tex`
- If you use an editor (TeXShop, TeXworks, Overleaf, VS Code with LaTeX Workshop), make sure the bibliography tool is set to `biber`, not `bibtex`. In Overleaf, go to `Menu > Settings > Compiler` and select `biber`.

File not found errors Solutions depend on your installation method.

For automatic installation (recommended):

- **TeX Live:** Check if installed: `tlmgr list -installed | grep biblatex-asa`
- If not found, install: `tlmgr install biblatex-asa`
- Try updating: `tlmgr update -all`
- **MiKTeX:** Open MiKTeX Console > Packages, refresh database, search for "biblatex-asa"
- **Overleaf:** Package should be pre-installed; if issues persist, contact Overleaf support

For manual installation:

- Local: Ensure `biblatex-asa.sty`, `asa.bbx`, `asa.cbx` are in your project directory
- System-wide: Files should be in `texmf/tex/latex/biblatex-asa/`
- Run `texhash` (TeX Live) or `initexmf -update-fndb` (MiKTeX) after installation
- If using
  `def`
  `input@path{{../../src/}}`, ensure the path is correct

Encoding problems Save all files as UTF-8.

How to do this:

- In most editors (VS Code, Sublime Text, TeXShop, etc.), choose `Save with Encoding` or `Save As` and select UTF-8.
- In Overleaf, files are saved as UTF-8 by default.
- If unsure, open the file in your editor and check the encoding setting at the bottom of the window or in the menu.

9 License and Contact

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10 Acknowledgments

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