CENTER *for*
WRITING
EXCELLENCE

APA Style In-Text Citations

Academic writers build upon the work of other writers to express new ideas and develop new arguments. It is vital that you credit the writers you use, both because it recognizes their contributions and because it helps readers of your work continue their own research. Whenever you draw upon another's work, be sure to cite it, whether you are using a short quotation or paraphrasing.

Papers written in American Psychological Association (APA) style credit sources using the Author-Date Citation System via **parenthetical** or **narrative** citations in the text. APA papers also include a References page listing all sources used in the text.

Author Type	Parenthetical Citation	Narrative Citation
One author	(Hollars, 2013)	Hollars (2013)
Two authors	(Markel & Selber, 2018)	Markel and Selber (2018)
Three or more authors	(Ellis et al., 1975)	Ellis et al. (1975)
Group author with abbreviation First citation* Subsequent citations	(National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2020) (NIMH, 2020)	National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH, 2020) NIMH (2020)
Group author without abbreviation	(Harvard University, 2020)	Harvard University (2020)

*Define the abbreviation for a group author only once in the text, choosing either the parenthetical or the narrative format. Then, use the abbreviated version for the rest of the text.

Parenthetical Citation Example
"Technical communication shares certain general characteristics with other types of communication" (Markel & Selber, 2018, p. 9).
          *Page number not needed if paraphrasing.

Narrative Citation Example
Markel and Selber (2018) explain, "Technical communication shares certain general characteristics with other types of communication" (p. 9).
          *Page number not needed if paraphrasing.

One to Two Authors
Include the author name(s) in every citation.

Three or More Authors
Include the name of only the first author plus "et al." in every citation (even the first citation).

Unknown Author
Use a shortened version of the title plus the date and page number (if applicable) to identify it:

Linguists have not reached consensus on the pedagogical value of the politically controversial "dialect readers" introduced in Oakland in the 1970s ("Dialect Readers," 2001).

Direct Quotations of 40 Words or More (Block Quotations)
Introduce the quote with a sentence of your own that previews or summarizes it. Then indent the entire quote one tab (the same as a paragraph indent). Double space it, just like the rest of your text. Block quotations do not use quotation marks.

Markel and Selber (2018) state the importance of technical communication to a specific audience:

> When you analyze the members of your audience, you are trying to learn what you can about their technical background and knowledge, their reasons for reading or listening to you, their attitude and expectations, and how they will use the information you provide (p. 89).

Citing Indirect or Secondary Sources
A *primary source* contains the original content, while an *indirect* or *secondary source* uses material originally published in the primary source. If the primary source is available, it's best to read and cite from that source. If the source is no longer available, cite the secondary source by identifying the original author(s) and include the words "as cited in" in either the parenthetical or narrative citation.

Parenthetical Citation:
It is said that "competition from on-line sales and discount stores… reduced the sales of high-end jewelry stores in the [Boston and Hartford] suburbs by 68% in the 1990s" (Cass & Cartier, as cited in McKee & Monroe, 2003, p. 43).

Narrative Citation:
Cass and Cartier concluded that "competition from on-line sales and discount stores. . . reduced the sales of high-end jewelry stores in the [Boston and Hartford] suburbs by 68% in the 1990s" (as cited in McKee & Monroe, 2003, p. 43).

Altering a Quotation
In the example above, note the use of *ellipses* (…) to indicate that you left out some words of the original quotation, and the use of *brackets* ([ ]) to add an explanatory word or phrase that was not in the original or to indicate that the form of a word has been changed to make it fit into the sentence.