A beginner’s guide to the APA 6th ed. referencing style

The guide has been prepared by staff from the UCOL Student Experience Team (SET) Library and Learning Services December 2011
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What is APA?
Your assignment states – Please reference using the APA style - 6th ed. You think to yourself ... “Arrrgghhh... what does that mean, why do I have to do it and how do I do it!”

APA is one of many referencing styles used in academic writing. APA stands for American Psychological Association. The Association outlines the style in the Publication manual of the American Psychological Association [APA] (6th ed.).

UCOL programmes utilise the APA referencing style.

There are many different referencing styles (over 100). It is essential to follow the style specified in your assignments and not to mix styles. Consistency of style is important!

Why reference?
When you reference you use the standardised style to acknowledge the source of information used in your assignment.

It is important (morally & legally) to acknowledge someone else’s ideas or words you have used. Academic writing encourages paraphrasing information you have researched and read. Paraphrasing means re-wording something you have read in to your own words. If you use someone else’s words or work and fail to acknowledge them – you may be accused of plagiarism and infringing copyright.

Referencing correctly enables the marker or reader of your assignment to locate the source of the information. They can verify the information or read further on the topic.

Referencing also allows for you to retrace your steps and locate information you have used for assignments and discover further views or ideas discussed by the author.

By referencing clearly and correctly, it demonstrates you have undertaken research on the assignment topic and located relevant information.

There are two main parts to referencing:

1. The first indicating within your assignment the sources of the information you have used to write your assignment. This demonstrates support for your ideas, arguments and views. Sometimes this is referred to as: citing in text, in text citations or text citations.

2. The second part to referencing is the construction of a reference list. The reference list shows the complete details of everything you cited and appears in an alphabetical list on a separate page, at the end of your assignment.

Tip: Everything you have cited in text appears in your reference list and likewise... everything that appears in your reference list will have been cited in text! Check this is the case prior to handing in your assignment. (The exception is when using a personal communication. Personal communications are cited in text but do not appear in the reference list. See page 20.)
The following guide provides some general rules and examples using the 6th ed. of APA.

For further information and help:

- Refer to the *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) [from here on referred to as the APA manual], especially chapters 6 & 7. Copies are available at the UCOL Library, some for borrowing, some on Desk reserve. [Shelf number: 808.027 PUB]
- Student Experience Team members (Learning Services & Library staff) are available to assist with referencing
- See the APAstyle website ([http://www.apastyle.org/](http://www.apastyle.org/))
- Plus there are APA wizards freely available online and Microsoft Word provides a built-in referencing function (Note: some editing maybe required when using these tools)

**How to reference**

1. **In text citations**
   Even though you have put someone else’s ideas or information in your own words (i.e. paraphrased), you still need to show where the original idea or information came from. This is all part of the academic writing process.

   When citing in text with in an assignment, use the author/s (or editor/s) last name followed by the year of publication.

   **Example:**
   
   Water is a necessary part of every person’s diet and of all the nutrients a body needs to function, it requires more water each day than any other nutrient (Whitney & Rolfes, 2011).

   or

   Whitney and Rolfes (2011) state the body requires many nutrients to function but highlight that water is of greater importance than any other nutrient.

   or

   Water is an essential element of anyone’s diet and Whitney and Rolfes (2011) emphasise it is more important than any other nutrient.

   **Reference list entry:**


   Note: this book did not have a city for place of publication, just a country.
1.1. Three, four or five authors

If a work has three (3), four (4) or five (5) authors, cite all authors the first time and from then on include only the last name of the first author followed by the words et al. (‘et al.’ is Latin for ‘and others’)

Example:

Research can be defined as a systematic method of creating new knowledge or a way to verify existing knowledge (Watson, McKenna, Cowman & Keady, 2008).
Deciding on a research method demands the researcher consider carefully the problem or area of investigation being researched (Watson et al., 2008).

Reference list entry:


Note: The people were identified as the editors, hence ‘(Eds.)’ is a shortened version of Editors.

1.2. Six or seven authors

If a work has six (6) or more authors, cite only the last name of the first author followed by et al. each time you refer to this work.

Example:

(Mikosch et al., 2010)

Reference list entry:

When a source has up to seven (7) authors, include all names in the reference list.


1.3. Eight or more authors

When there are eight (8) or more authors, cite only the last name of the first author followed by ‘et al.’ each time you refer to this work.

Example:

(Vissing et al., 2004)

Note in the reference list: When there are eight (8) or more authors, include the first six (6) authors names and then use ellipsis points (...) before concluding with the last author’s name.
Reference list entry:


1.4. Groups as authors

The names of groups that serve as authors (e.g., corporations, associations, government agencies) are usually written in full each time they appear in a text citation. The names of some group authors (e.g., associations, government agencies) are spelled out in the first citation and abbreviated thereafter. In deciding whether to abbreviate the name of a group author, use the general rule that you need to give enough information in the text citation for the reader to locate the entry in the reference list without difficulty. Some groups are recognised by an abbreviation (e.g., WHO for World Health Organisation). Refer to the APA manual, 2010, p. 176.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First text citation:</th>
<th>(Ministry of Health [MOH], 2007).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second &amp; subsequent citations:</td>
<td>(MOH, 2007).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reference list entry:


Note: If the author and publisher are the same – Author – can be used to indicate the publisher in place of the full name. See the example above.

Group as author no abbreviation


In-text citation:

(New Zealand House of Representatives, Health Committee, 2007).

1.5. Similar information referred to by more than one author

There may be occasion to refer to more than one source in relation to similar information. In this case, list the sources in alphabetical order within the brackets, separated by a semi-colon.
Example:

Resilience is seen as the ability to overcome adversary, combat stress and bounce back from hardship (Dawson, 2006; Overton, 2005).

Reference list entry:


**1.6. Citing a secondary source**

Where possible use original material. However, if the information you wish to use is cited by another author, **acknowledge the source you have read, showing it is a secondary source**. This demonstrates you have not read the original source but read about it in a secondary source. Within the text citation, use the words “as cited in” to indicate this is a secondary source. In the reference list, include the author and details of the source you actually read. Refer to the APA manual, 2010, p. 178.

Example:

Fawcett (as cited in Polit & Beck, 2008) outlined the four main concepts...

Reference list entry:


**2. Direct quotes**

Quoting directly from a work should be done sparingly, in order to emphasis or stress a point in your essay. When using a quote, it must be copied exactly as written in the original work including any punctuation or incorrect spelling. When using a quote, include the author’s last name, year of publication and page number/s where the quote appears. Refer to the APA manual, 2010, p. 170-173 for further information.

**2.1. Short quote – less than 40 words**

To indicate a short quote (less than 40 words), enclose the quotation within double quotation marks.

Example:

“Cultural safety is based on attitudes which are difficult to measure. It needs to be considered alongside other equally important safety requirements such as clinical, ethical, legal and physical safety” (Wepa, 2005, p. 25).
2.2. Longer quote – 40 words or more
For a quote that is 40 words or more, include it in your essay as a freestanding piece of text or block form and do not use the quotation marks. Double-space the entire quote. At the end of the quote, include the author’s name, year of publication and page number/s after the full stop.

Example:

Cultural safety considerations are similar in that students are interacting in a bicultural (two-personed) context, where they are the giver of a health service and the client is the receiver of that service. These bicultural interactions will be different with every interaction, but the nurse’s awareness of the power differential between themselves and client will be constant.

(Wepa, 2005, p. 25)

Reference list entry:

2.3. Quotations from online resources that do not provide page numbers
The APA manual (2010, p. 171-172) states when using direct quotes from online material provide the author, year and page number within brackets ( ). If the page number is not known, use a paragraph number.
If the paragraph number could confuse the reader, consider including a section heading e.g. discussion section.

Example:

“The WTN exists to “encourage serendipity” -- the happy accidents of colliding ideas and new relationships that cause the biggest breakthroughs for individuals and institutions” (World Technology Network, 2010, para. 2).

Reference list entry:
3. The reference list

All references or information sources cited in any written work (i.e. essays, reports, research papers, etc.) need to be listed in a reference list on a separate page at the end of your assignment, headed ‘References’ or ‘Reference List’. The reference list provides all the details necessary for the person reading and/or marking the assignment to locate and retrieve any information source cited. An accurate and properly constructed reference list provides credibility to the written work it accompanies.

Tip: Everything you have cited in text appears in your reference list and, likewise, everything that appears in your reference list will have been cited in text! Check this is the case prior to handing in your assignment. (The exception is when citing a personal communication. Personal communications are cited in text but do not appear in the reference list. See example 4.21)

Basic rules

1. The reference list is arranged in alphabetical order of the authors’ last names.
2. If there is more than one work by the same author, order them by publication date – oldest to newest (therefore a 2004 publication would appear before a 2008 publication).
3. If there is no author the title moves to that position and the entry is alphabetised by the first significant word, excluding words such as “A” or “The”. If the title is long, it may be shortened when citing in text.
4. Use “&” instead of “and” when listing multiple authors of a source.
5. The first line of the reference list entry is left-hand justified, while all subsequent lines are consistently indented.
6. Capitalise only the first word of the title and of the subtitle, if there is one, plus any proper names – i.e. only those words that would normally be capitalised.
7. Italicise the title of the book, the title of the journal/serial and the title of the web document.
8. Do not create separate lists for each type of information source. Books, articles, web documents, brochures, etc. are all arranged alphabetically in one list.

When creating the reference list entry for an information source you need to identify and record specific details. It might be useful to remember these Ws!

- **Who** – wrote /edited it – **author or editor**
- **When** was it written – **date**
- **What is it** – **title** of book, **title** of the article & serial/journal, **title** of the web document
- **Where was it published** (Books) – publisher’s name and **place of publication**– usually city & country
- **Where was the article located** (Serial/journal) - **volume number, issue number** and **page numbers** of the article
- **Where you located it** (Internet sources) - **URL** – web address
The following are the details for common types of references. The information is usually found on the title page and the back of the title page of a book. For serials/journals, you will find the information included on the article plus the front cover or inside pages of a print serial. Webpages can take a bit of detective work. You may need to scroll to the bottom of the webpage to find a date and an author. Refer to the APA manual, 2010, p. 180-192, for further information.

3.1. Books
1. Author/s or Editor/s last name (surname) appears first, followed by initials (Bloggs, J.).
2. Year of publication in brackets (2010).
3. Full title of the book. Capitalise only the first word of the title and the subtitle, if any, and proper names. Italicise the title. Use a colon (:) between the title and subtitle.
4. Include the edition number, if applicable, in brackets after the title or subtitle (3rd ed.) or (Rev. ed.). Note: No full stop, after the title, if there is an edition.
5. Place of publication. Always include the city and 2-letter state code when published inside the USA, and the city & country, if published outside the USA (Fort Bragg, CA or Auckland, New Zealand or Benalla, Australia or Weybridge, England). If there are two or more places included in the source, then use the first one listed.
6. Publisher’s name. Provide this as briefly as possible. Do not use terms such as Publishers, Co., or Inc. but include the words Books & Press. When the author and the publisher are the same, use the word Author as the name of the publisher.

3.2. Book – one author

3.3. Book – place of publication
Note: always include the city and 2-letter state code when published inside the USA, and city & country if published outside the USA.


3.4. Book – editor
### 3.5. Book – editors & edition

### 3.6. Book – author & publisher are the same

### 3.7. Chapter in an edited book

### 3.8. Serial/journal articles
1. **Author/s** last name (surname) first, followed by initials.
2. **Year of publication** in brackets. (2012)
3. **Title of article.** Capitalise only the first word of the title and the subtitle, if any, and proper names. Use a colon (:) between the title and subtitle.
4. **Title of the serial/journal** in full in *italics*.
5. **Volume number**, in *italics*. Do not use “Vol.” before the number.
6. **Issue number.** This is bracketed immediately after the volume number but not italicised.
7. Month, season or other designation of publication if there is no volume or issue number.
8. Include all **page numbers**.
9. Include any **Digital Object Identifiers [DOI]**.

### 3.9. Serial / journal article (print)

### 3.10. Serial / journal article – more than one author (print)
3.11. **Serial / journal article (online from a database – e.g. EBSCO or Newztext)**
The database name and retrieval date are no longer required. Include the home page of the journal. This may require a quick web search to locate the URL (Refer to the APA manual, p. 191-192, 199).


Otherwise, simply reference the journal article as per the print version (check with your lecturer to ensure this is acceptable)


3.12. **Serial / journal – more than one author (online– DOI)**
The 6th ed. of the APA manual emphasises the use of DOI (Digital Object Identifiers). Many publishers, databases and online journals use DOIs. They are alpha-numeric codes that usually appear on the first page of the article. Copy the DOI exactly as it appears.


If the article has no DOI:
Consider providing the home page URL of the journal. If you are accessing the article from a database, you may need to do a quick web search to locate this URL.

It is not necessary to include the name of the database.

No retrieval date is necessary for content that is not likely to be changed or updated.

These are DOI resolver / locator sites: [http://dx.doi.org/](http://dx.doi.org/) and [http://www.crossref.org/](http://www.crossref.org/)

3.13. **Serial / Journal article – 8 or more authors (online – no DOI)**

Reference list:


In-text citation:

(Crooks et al., 2010).
3.14. **Internet sources**  
Where possible, include similar information, in the same order, as you would for other types of information and other sources (who, when, what) and then add the electronic retrieval information required for people to locate the material you cited (where).

1. Author/s of the document or information – individual or organisation/corporate author.
2. Date of publication. If no date is available use (n.d.).
3. Title of the document or webpage in *italics*.
4. Complete & correct web address/URL.

Note: APA 6th ed. does not require a retrieval date for most online information, although, the APA manual states to include a retrieval date for material that may change over time (e.g. Wikis) (p.192).

3.15. **Internet – no author, no date**  
When using information from the Internet consider carefully the origins of the information. Is it credible, valid and reliable? Sometimes it is not clear who (author) wrote it or when (date) it was written.

**Reference list:**


**In-text citation:**

(Pet therapy, n.d.).

3.16. **Internet – Organisation / Corporate author**  
**Reference list:**


**In-text citation:**

First time cited: (Ministry of Health [MOH], 2008).

Second and subsequent citations: (MOH, 2008).


**In-text citation:**

(SPCA New Zealand, 2011).
4. Examples of various types of information sources

The following are examples of various types of information sources UCOL students and staff may use for their study and assignments. For further details and examples see the APA manual (2010), especially chapters 6 & 7.

4.1. Act (statute / legislation)

Reference list:


In-text citation:

(Copyright Act 1994, 2011).

4.2. Blog post

Reference list:


In-text citation:

(Liz and Ellory, 2011).

4.3. Brochure / pamphlet


4.4. Brochure / pamphlet (no author)

Reference list:

*Ageing well: How to be the best you can be* [Brochure]. (2009). Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Health.

Same brochure accessed online


In-text citation:

(“Ageing well,” 2009).
4.5. Clickview
see DVD / Video / Motion Picture

4.6. Conference Paper
Reference list:


In-text citation:

(Williams & Seary, 2010).

4.7. Conference paper (online)
Reference list:


In-text citation:

First time cited: (MacColl, Ker, Huband, Veith & Taylor, 2009).

Second and subsequent citations: (MacColl et al., 2009).

4.8. Dictionary (print)
Reference list:

4.9. Dictionary (online)

Reference list:


In-text citation:

(Cambridge dictionaries online, 2011).

4.10. Specific entry in an online dictionary (no author or editor)

Reference list:

webster.com/dictionary/acquiescence

In-text citation:

(Acquiescence, 2011).

4.11. Specific entry in an online dictionary (editor)

Reference list:


4.12. DVD / Video / Motion Picture (including Clickview & Youtube)

Reference list:


In-text citation:

(Gardiner, Curtis, Michael & Waititi, 2010).

Reference list:

Boland, M. (Producer & Director). (2009). *Job seeking skills for young people* [Clickview DVD]. Australia: VEA.


In-text citation:

(elearningNZ, 2009).
4.13. e-book (including Safari and Google books)
Reference list:


4.14. Magazine
Reference list:


In-text citation:

(Ng, 2011).

4.15. Moodle
Note: It is advisable to check with your lecturer prior to referencing information from Moodle. Some lecturers may not permit it. Provide enough details to clearly show where you retrieved the information.


4.16. Music recording (Whole album)
Reference list:


In-text citation:

(Midler, 2010).

Reference list:


In-text citation:

(Nga Pihi, 2011).
4.17. Music recording (Song from album)
Reference list:

In-text citation:
The heartfelt “The folks who live on the hill” provides an ideal vehicle for Midler to showcase her talents (Midler, 2010, track 5).

Reference list:

In-text citation:
The children responded positively to “Korikori” (Nga Pihi, 2011, track 14).

4.18. Newspaper article

4.19. Newspaper article (no author)
Reference list:

In-text citation:
Shorten the title and enclose in quotation marks.
(“Little blue penguins”, 2011).

4.20. Newspaper (online)

4.21. Personal communication
This refers to letters, including email, interviews, telephone conversations and discussions on placement or work experience. Personal communications are cited in-text only and are NOT included in the reference list. Refer to APA manual, 2010, p.179.

In-text citation:
The no-tillage technology has revolutionised the way arable farmers manage their operation (W.R. Ritchie, personal communication, September 30, 2011).
4.22. **Podcast (audio or video)**


4.23. **Software (including apps)**


4.24. **Television programme**


4.25. **Thesis (print)**


4.26. **Thesis (online)**


4.27. **Wikis (including Wikipedia)**

Wikis can generally be written and edited by more than one person. Use wiki information wisely. Wikipedia can be a good starting point to discover background information on a topic and you can use the citations and links in any entry to verify information and locate original sources. Check with your lecturer – Are you allowed to use Wikipedia as a reference source?

Reference list


In-text citation

(Moodle, 2011).

4.28. **Youtube see – DVD / Video / Motion picture**
5. Reference List


*Ageing well: How to be the best you can be* [Brochure]. (2009). Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Health.


Boland, M. (Producer & Director). (2009). *Job seeking skills for young people* [Clickview DVD]. Wellington, New Zealand: VEA.


