Creating an APA Style Reference List Guide

The reference list contains all the works you cited in the text of your paper.

- In general, there should be a one-to-one correspondence between the works cited in the text and the works listed in the reference list.

- An exception is personal communications, which are cited in the text of your paper but are not included in the reference list (see Section 8.9 in the seventh edition *Publication Manual*).

- If you read a work while doing your literature search but did not end up citing it in the text of your paper, do not include it in the reference list.

Use the section label "References" (not "Works Cited" or "Bibliography").

- Start the reference list on a new page after the text of your paper.

- Center the label at the top of the page and write it in bold.

- It is acceptable to use "Reference" as the label when you cited only one source in your paper.

Format references in seventh edition APA Style.

- Double-space the reference list, both within and between references. Do not add extra lines between references.

- Order references alphabetically, usually by the first letter of the first author's last name.

- Include the authors' first and middle initials (if they have them). Do not write out first or middle names.

- Write author names in inverted format so that the last name comes first, followed by a comma and the initials. Place a period and a space after each initial.

- Apply a hanging indent for all references using the paragraph-formatting function of your word-processing program: The first line is flush left, and all subsequent lines are indented 0.5 in.

- To determine the format to use for a reference list entry, first determine the reference group (e.g., textual works, online media) and reference category (e.g., periodical, social media), and then choose the appropriate reference type within the category (e.g., journal article, Facebook post) and follow that example in Chapter 10 of the *Publication Manual* or the *Concise Guide to APA Style*.

  ○ Reference formats are based on the **document type** (e.g., journal article, report), not the retrieval method (e.g., online, in print).

  ○ Even if you retrieved a work online, determine what type of document it is. Only cite a work as a webpage or website if no other category fits.

Include a DOI or URL at the end of the reference for any work that has one.

- Most references do not require retrieval dates. Include a retrieval date only when (a) a work is inherently designed to change over time (e.g., a Facebook profile page) and (b) you are citing an unarchived version of the work, as described in Section 9.16 of the *Publication Manual*.

- Do not include both a DOI and a URL in a reference entry. If a work has both a DOI and a URL, include only the DOI.

- Copy and paste the DOI or URL directly from your web browser.

- Do not add a period after the DOI or URL.

- DOIs and URLs can be either blue and underlined (usually the default setting for hyperlinks) or plain text that is not underlined.

Avoid the following common mistakes when writing reference list entries.

Author Element

- Use the word "and" between two authors' names in narrative in-text citations. Use an ampersand (&) between two authors' names in parenthetical in-text citations and before the final author's name in reference list entries.

    ○ ***Narrative in-text citation:*** Sanders and Jang (2020) found . . .

    ○ ***Parenthetical in-text citation:*** A positive association was found . . . (Sanders & Jang, 2020).

    ○ ***Reference list entry:*** Sanders, F. A., & Jang, T. D. (2020).

- For a work with 21 or more authors, include the first 19 authors' names, insert an ellipsis (. . .), but no ampersand, and then write the final author's name.

- For a work with a group author (or multiple group authors), include a period at the end of the author element in the reference.

    ○ ***Reference list entry***: American Psychological Association. (2020).

Date Element

- Most references include only the year as the date.

- Use more specific dates, such as the month, day, and year (e.g., 2020, June 10), for works published on a more frequent basis (e.g., newspaper or magazine articles, social media posts). When in doubt, check the templates in Chapter 10.

- For webpages and websites, use the date of last publication or last update. Do not use the copyright date from a webpage footer or the date of last review. If the date is unknown or cannot be determined, write "n.d." as the date.

Title Element

- Titles of **works that stand alone** (e.g., books, reports, webpages) are written in italic sentence case.

- Titles of **works that are part of a greater whole** (e.g., journal articles, book chapters, dictionary entries) are written in sentence case without italics.

- For **book and report references**, place any identifying information (e.g., edition, report number, volume number) in parentheses after the title. Do not add a period between the title and the parenthetical information.

Source Element

- In the source element for **journal article references:**

    ○ Italicize the journal title and volume number.

    ○ Do not italicize the comma between the journal title and volume number, the issue number, and page numbers.

    ○ Place the issue number in parentheses after the volume number with no space in between.

    ○ Use an en dash (–) to separate a page range (e.g., 15–26).

- When the author and the publisher of a work are the same (as in many reports, books, and websites published by group authors), include the group name in the author element and omit it from the source element.