

BASIC CITATION GUIDELINES

This writing guide explains basic citation guidelines according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA). APA establishes a national standard for the layout of an academic paper and gives a comprehensive method for referencing sources used in these types of papers. Please note that this guide uses colored font to emphasize examples. In your paper, the font color would be black and have the same typeface as the rest of your document.

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WHAT IS CITATION?

Citation or citing sources means to include select information about books or articles you read on a topic and use in your paper. Citation is required when quoting, paraphrasing, or using the ideas (artwork, photos, videos, etc.) or words of others.

WHY DO WE CITE?

1. Citation is how we give credit to those individuals or organizations whose information we borrow. When we use an individual's or organization's ideas, words, artwork, or anything else, we are to give credit to the source of that information.
2. Citation also provides interested readers with the specifics needed to retrieve the same source and do more research on their own. The in-text citation shows readers where certain ideas or words in your paper came from, and this shortened version of citation cross-references the full citation at the end of the paper. From the full citation, readers have all of the information they need to retrieve a source.
3. Citation additionally prevents plagiarism, which deprives writers of the opportunity to join ongoing conversations about a topic, compromises a writer's integrity and reputation, and usually results in serious consequences, both within the university and in the world of work.

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WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

Plagiarism is using another's words, ideas, results, or images without giving appropriate credit to that person, therefore, giving the impression that it is your own work. Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional. It can be the result of not citing or inaccurately citing the work of someone else, failing to give credit to someone else for his or her ideas or writing, and/or failing to effectively summarize or paraphrase a quote in a writer's own words. See the [Code of Student Conduct](#) for details.

Self-Plagiarism

Self-plagiarism is recycling a paper from a previous class without both permission and revision to make it a new paper. According to the University [Code of Student Conduct](#), students cannot use the same paper for credit for more than one assignment. If you would like to use and expand on an assignment from a previous class, you must first submit your original assignment to your instructor and ask for permission to continue your research on the topic; however, your new assignment should be significantly different from the previous one.

In a professional sense, self-plagiarism is a serious offense because journals that publish your work want the most current research, not previously published research. If you do not let publishers know that your work was previously published, and they run your piece only to find out later that it was published in another journal, you will likely not ever be considered for publication again by either journal unless a publisher specifically says that multiple submissions or previously published manuscripts are acceptable.

Coursework Resubmission Policy

The Coursework Resubmission Policy allows students who are retaking a Purdue Global Course after a failed attempt to reuse previous course work with proper citation and advance notice to the instructor. Read the [Code of Student Conduct](#) and [Coursework Resubmission Policy Resource](#) for details and stipulations. *Note: This policy does not apply to Concord Law students.*

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WHEN DO WE CITE?

Whenever information does not originate in your own mind, you must cite it. This includes when you use someone's words (quotations), ideas (paraphrases and summaries), and illustrations (graphics, tables, figures, and artwork).

Common Knowledge

There are specific times when content that is not originally yours does not need to be cited; use of common knowledge constitutes a time when, unless taken word for word from a source, a citation is not needed. Certain characteristics must be met for content to be considered common knowledge:

- The same information can be located in a minimum of five different research sources.
- Your reader should already know this information.
- The information is easily accessible in general information sources.



- The information comes from folklore, mythology, or well-known stories.
- The facts are well known in your field of study—and will be well known to your audience.

The key concept to remember about common knowledge is that you do not have to cite it as long as it is written in your own words. If you take a well-known fact word for word from a source, a citation is required to attribute the wording to the source and to avoid plagiarism.

Furthermore, if an interpretation of common knowledge is drawn from a source, the source needs to be cited, as the interpretation is not common knowledge or original to your writing. You might not know if something is common knowledge until you find it explained the same way in several sources, so it's best to cite it like you normally would until you adequately prove to yourself that it is common knowledge.

Statistics

Statistics are generally not common knowledge as statistical information is not typically equally represented in general information sources; the source of the statistic, either as a primary or secondary source, therefore needs to be cited. One strategy is to treat statistics as quotations.

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QUOTING

Quoting refers to using a source without altering it in any way; passages are used from a source word-for-word. In college writing, quotations are used sparingly since too many quotations can make a paper sound like a summary whereas your own original ideas become diluted in a sea of other authors' words. Quotations also must include quotation marks in addition to a citation, which can slow down the reading. Additionally, quotations interject another author's voice in your paper, and the switch from your voice to another's can also slow down the reading. Use these three general guidelines for when to use quotations in a paper:

1. When you are critiquing or agreeing with someone's exact words. For instance, if you wanted to argue that a movie reviewer's comments were biased, you would want to quote the exact words of the reviewer, so your reader would understand your comment.
2. When you want to include dialogue in your paper. For example, if you wanted to highlight a point someone made in an interview, you would want to quote the exact words spoken in the interview.
3. When the original author's words are so eloquent or unique (such as research results) that you cannot find a way to paraphrase and still maintain the same meaning or impact of the original passage, you would want to quote those words.

When using the words of others or quoting someone else, do these four things:

1. Copy the words exactly as they are written in the original piece.
2. Enclose the quote in quotation marks, which look like this: "quotation."
3. Include an in-text citation with the quotation and a full citation on the reference list.



4. Integrate the quote into a paragraph by introducing it with a signal phrase.

Integrating Quotations

When quoting, use signal words and phrases to integrate the ideas of others in your writing instead of just dropping quotations into your text as in this example:

“Most conventional healthcare providers prescribe medicine that only alleviates a patient’s symptoms” (Jones, 2004, p. 3). “Alternative medicine seeks to help patients prevent illness by understanding underlying causes” (Smith, 2007, p. 99). Some people think there is a good way to balance the two for optimal health.

Although the last sentence in the paragraph suggests the two quotations are on the same topic, the relationship between the quotations is unclear as is how those points led to the concluding thought.

Signal words or phrases leading into the quotation can help develop and synthesize ideas while also making your point for using the quotation clearer by indicating the position of the author as well as your neutrality, agreement, or disagreement. Table 1 lists common signal words for integrating quotations. Note that in APA format, when reporting what an author said, you will want to use a past tense verb.

Table 1. Sample Signal Phrase Verbs

Neutral Position	Shows Agreement	Shows Disagreement
commented	admitted	defended
described	agreed	contended
explained	conceded	held
illustrated		insisted
noted		maintained
observed		warned
pointed out		suggested
said		
explained		

A revision of the previous paragraph that integrates the quotes might look something like this:

Conventional medicine is often viewed as providing immediate relief for illness. Jones (2003), a 13-year DO in New York City, contended that “Most conventional healthcare providers prescribe medicine that only alleviates a patient’s symptoms” (p. 3). This sentiment is echoed by another healthcare provider who explained that “Alternative medicine seeks to help patients prevent illness by understanding underlying causes” (Smith, 2007, p. 99). It seems logical, therefore, that optimal health can be achieved by balancing conventional and alternative approaches to medicine because they both have benefits to patients.

The highlighted areas use signal words that help develop and create clear relationships between the ideas, making the point of the paragraph more developed while also making the writing flow.

Long or Block Quotations

In APA format, quotations that are 40 or more words are considered long or “block” quotations that



must be set off from the rest of the paragraph in an indented “block.” The block format makes it easier for readers to differentiate the quote from the rest of the text.

To format a block quote, you do not use quotation marks. Instead, you indent the quotation ½ inch from the left margin. The period is inserted at the end of the quotation, and the in-text citation goes after the period. The opposite is done for a short quotation where the end punctuation follows the parenthetical citation to enclose it inside the sentence: “Quote” (citation).

The following paragraph includes a block quote (highlighted yellow):

Students do not necessarily have to be geographically placed all over the world in order to experience cross-cultural interactions because of the high rate of immigration worldwide. For instance,

The United States is in the midst of the largest wave of immigration in its history, with over a million new immigrants per year for a total foreign-born population of over 35 million people, equaling 12 percent of its total population. In Canada, Switzerland, and Australia the rates of immigration are nearly double the US rate. (Suárez-Orozco, 2007, p. 9)

Thus the mobility of the world’s population is providing opportunity for global instruction even within a country’s own boundaries.

Notice the paragraph continued after the quote. Quotes are more effectively integrated when the quoted information is followed by some analysis or commentary to help your reader understand its purpose or point in relationship to your own ideas.

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PARAPHRASING

Writers can paraphrase sources by expressing the meaning of an original passage in their own words. Paraphrasing is preferred when you want to incorporate research into your writing. Paraphrasing shows you understood what you read and therefore know what you are talking about, for you have taken what someone else said and rephrased it, so it sounds like you and so the idea fits seamlessly in your paper. When you paraphrase, you choose the vocabulary and writing style that would appeal to your intended readers (versus your source’s intended readers). **Please note** that replacing a few words in an original passage or sentence with synonyms is **not** effective paraphrasing and could result in unintentional plagiarism, even when correct citation is included.

Here are some guidelines to help you avoid plagiarism when paraphrasing:

1. When researching, notate the full citation in APA format at the top of your notebook page.
2. Read the original passage several times to completely understand the idea being expressed and the context in which the material is being used before paraphrasing it.
3. Write down in your own words the idea of the passage without looking back at the original.



4. Ensure the wording in the paraphrase captures the exact meaning of the original.
5. Ensure the paraphrase is being used in the same context and serves the same purpose as the original. Taking an idea out of context is faulty research as it changes the original intent, so you would no longer be paraphrasing what another person meant.
6. Ask someone else to read the original and then read the paraphrase and compare the meaning and context between the two.

The following examples show an acceptable and an unacceptable paraphrase:

Original passage quoted: "Educational leaders posed with the task of integrating ethics into undergraduate general education curriculum are faced with finding faculty who are interested in the topic instead of forcing faculty who are not interested into teaching a subject they are not committed to" (Stevenson, 2007, p. 5).

Acceptable paraphrase: When it comes to teaching ethics in undergraduate programs, it is preferable to use faculty who have a profound interest in the subject to teach such courses (Stevenson, 2007).

Unacceptable paraphrase: Educational leaders have to find faculty who are interested in ethics instead of forcing teachers who are not interested in teaching a subject they are not committed to (Stevenson, 2007).

The acceptable paraphrase is fine because it rewords the main idea of Stevenson's original passage about the effectiveness of using willing and interested faculty to teach ethics in undergraduate courses. The unacceptable paraphrase is plagiarized because too many words from the original passage are used without quotation marks around those words.

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SUMMARIZING

Writers can summarize a source by relating the main ideas of a text or passage in their own words. Summarizing is similar to paraphrasing in that you read information from a source and put it into your own words, but a summary differs from a paraphrase in the following ways:

- A summary is a condensed version of a long passage of writing.
- A summary captures only the main points of a writing.
- A summary helps you learn material through close reading in order to comprehend what the main points of a reading are and understand the material so well that you can express the main ideas in your own words instead of using someone else's words.

The following is an example of how to summarize information.

Original passage quoted:

Collaboration with others is part of living and working in the professional world. A high portion of our daily communication occurs in groups, such as family, coworkers, and friends. Regardless of career choice, it is likely that individuals will spend a considerable part of their personal and professional lives working in collaboration with others. The changing



environment of the workplace has caused an increase in the use of virtual teams for collaborative projects. The major difference between a virtual team and a team that meets face-to-face is the distance that lies between members. It is distance that affects the interaction between group members. Technologies, such as teleconferencing, email, web enabled chat, groupware, and shared file programs, have made communication at a distance and virtual collaboration possible. Through technology, virtual teams are able to interact, complete projects, and resolve conflicts. (Martinez et al., 2008, p. 167)

Step 1: First highlight the main ideas of the paragraph as shown here:

Collaboration with others is part of living and working in the professional world. A high portion of our daily communication occurs in groups, such as family, coworkers, and friends. Regardless of career choice, it is likely that individuals will spend a considerable part of their personal and professional lives working in collaboration with others. **The changing environment of the workplace has caused an increase in the use of virtual teams for collaborative projects.** The major difference between a virtual team and a team that meets face-to-face is the distance that lies between members. **It is distance that affects the interaction between group members. Technologies,** such as teleconferencing, email, Web-enabled chat, groupware, and shared file programs, **have made communication at a distance and virtual collaboration possible.** Through technology, virtual teams are able to interact, complete projects, and resolve conflicts. (Martinez et al., 2008, p. 167)

Step 2: Rewrite those highlighted ideas in your own words and identify the source.

Summarized passage:

Martinez et al. (2008) made the point that today's workplace is quite different than it was 20 years ago; more people are working remotely or companies are so large that they have different sites throughout the world. Martinez et al. explained that this change in the workplace has increased the need for virtual teams; however, the need for collaboration has not changed. Distance can affect how well a group works together, but modern technologies have made communication with virtual team members possible and an effective means for getting the job done (Martinez et al).

Notice in the example that throughout the summary, the author is identified, so it is clear that the ideas in each sentence, while written with original wording, are the ideas of that author. Summarized material in your paper needs to be cited, just as paraphrased material needs to be cited, so readers know where the ideas in the text came from and where to retrieve the same source.

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IN-TEXT CITATIONS

An in-text citation is a shortened version of a source's bibliographic information that is inserted right into the text of a paper such as at the end of a sentence to indicate to readers that the information in that sentence was borrowed from someone else. The bibliographic information is shortened because a full entry with all of the specifics needed to look up a source would interfere with reading your paper. In-text citation format varies between quotations and paraphrases and depending on what



information is available to you from the original document, but most in-text citations in APA format will include the author's last name and the publication year.

The following is an example of an in-text citation for a paraphrase or summary:

(Martinez, 2008).

If the information being cited was a quote, in addition to quotation marks ["..."] being put around the quoted text, the parenthetical citation would also include the page number:

(Martinez, 2008, p. 4).

If individual authors are not named, you would use the name of the sponsoring organization as the author. For example, if you were paraphrasing from this Basic Citation Guidelines writing guide, you would use the following format:

(Purdue Global Writing Center, 2017).

If neither an author nor sponsoring organization is unidentified, you would instead enclose the title of the article in quotation marks along with year of publication as shown here:

("The Good Student," 2009).

This shortened version of a source's bibliographic information in text is meant to be unobtrusive to the reader, whereas a full citation is reserved for the reference list at the end of the paper.

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REFERENCE LIST CITATIONS

A reference or full citation is a notation that provides all the information readers need if they want to retrieve an article, book, or other source cited in your paper. In APA format, these citations are listed on a separate page called the reference page or reference list. Readers use in-text citations to cross-reference the full citation at the end of the document. For instance, if an in-text citation looks like this: (Smith, 2002), a reader can turn to the reference page, scan down the list of full citations and look for the book or article written by an author with the last name Smith and published in the year 2002.

The information provided in a full citation is based on the *type* of source it is because the way you find a book is different from the way you retrieve a website or an article from an online library database.

A sample full citation in APA for a book looks like this:

Smith, T. (2002). *A life well-lived*. Hoboken, NJ: Insight Publications.

A sample full citation for a webpage looks like this:

East Coast Gardeners Association. (2009). Winter gardens. Retrieved from

<http://www.eastcoastgardens.com/wintergardens.html>

The examples show how books are retrieved by looking up an author's name, the year the book was published, the title, and the publisher. This information is given to ensure the reader can find the same book that you used in your paper. A webpage, however, is an electronic source, so it is retrieved



by knowing the URL (web address) and the name of the author or organization that sponsors the website along with the title of the specific webpage.

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CITING ELECTRONIC SOURCES

Writers commonly conduct research online using library databases, websites, videos, and podcasts. To cite electronic sources, you use the same information as for print sources. In-text citations should provide the author and year. Articles published online do not always have page numbers, however, so when quoting, you would provide the paragraph number instead:

(Author, year, para. #).

The full citation on the reference page then provides the author, publication year, title, and the retrieval information such as a doi (digital object identifier) or the url (uniform resource locator, i.e., website address).

The basic APA format for an article published on a webpage would like this this:

Author, A. A. (year). Title of article. Retrieved from <http://www.webpageaddress>

If your source does not provide some of the information needed for the citation, APA offers this guide: "[What to Do When Information is Missing.](#)"

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CITING GRAPHICS

Tables, graphs, images, and artwork that you borrow from a source and insert in your paper must be cited according to the type of source the image was retrieved from. Additionally, because images are whole works unlike an excerpt quoted from an article, the copyright must allow for reproduction. Permission is often required. Refer to the [Fair Use](#) section of this guide for additional details.

When using a borrowed graphic, both in-text and reference citations are needed. In APA style, graphics are "Figures," so the in-text citation goes after a figure number: Figure 1, for example. Here is the formula for a graphic borrowed from a webpage:

From [or Adapted from/Data in column 1 are from] "Title of Web Document," by A. N. Author and C. O. Author, year (<http://URL>). Copyright [year] by Name of Copyright Holder. Reprinted [or Adapted] with permission.

The following is an example of a graphic integrated into a paragraph with an in-text citation:

APA Style Blog contributor, Lee (2010), used the image of a fried egg (Figure 1) to distinguish between common sources, easily cited, and

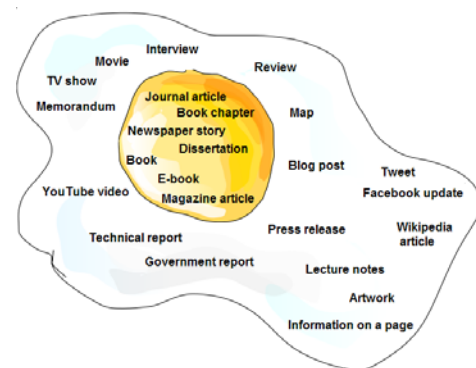


Figure 1. How to cite something you found on a website in APA style: The egg [Artwork]. From C. Lee (2010). Copyright 2010 by C. Lee.



less common sources that writers struggle to cite.

The reference citation for a graphic requires the same four elements required in other full citations with the addition of the type or format of the product (artwork, video, blog post...) in brackets:

Author (year). Title. [Format description]. Retrieved from <http://url>

For the egg artwork, the full citation for the reference list would be the following:

Lee, C. (2010). How to cite something you found on a website in APA style: The egg [Artwork].

Retrieved from <http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2010/11/how-to-cite-something-you-found-on-a-website-in-apa-style.html>

The APA Style Blog provides examples of the in-text and full citations for images borrowed from other sources as well, such as [books](#) and [social media](#). Also refer to Academic Writer (Formerly APA Central) in the Purdue Global Library for citation examples.

Whenever inserting a graphic such as an image into your paper, insert it as close as possible to where it is mentioned in the paper, so readers understand why it is there. Graphics are not to be used solely for aesthetic reasons but to illustrate a point or support the overall purpose of your writing.

Fair Use and Public Domain

According to the U.S. Copyright Office (2009), it is advised that whenever information is borrowed for any reason, an author should seek permission to use it. However, the fair use doctrine, which is part of the U.S. copyright law states that there are particular instances when reproducing some else's work, within certain limitations, may be fair. These instances may include "criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research" (U.S. Copyright Office, 2009, para. 2). Borrowing words and ideas or graphics and artwork for educational purposes therefore falls into the realm of fair use. This is what enables students, for example, to borrow excerpts of another author's work for use in academic writing and research without obtaining permission as long as the work is properly cited.

The public domain is information or works that have not been published or that were published prior to certain dates set forth by the U.S. Copyright Office, or information that is open to the public, such as most government information. Information that falls in the public domain should be cited, but you do not need permission to use it.

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HOW DO WE CITE?

Most style guides are written for particular disciplines; therefore, citation rules and formats are designed for the kind of information used within that profession. For instance, *Bluebook* is a style guide used in the legal field. *Bluebook's* style and format cater to displaying pertinent information for retrieving court cases, legislation, and briefs. On the other hand, *American Psychological Association* (APA) style is used in the social sciences and some health, business and technology fields. Readers in these fields are expecting writers to use the most current information from credible and verifiable



sources, and APA is known as an author-date citation style.

Cross-Referencing

The key to properly citing your sources is to learn how to cross-reference. This means that you take your source, a journal article, for instance, and you look up in your style guide how to cite a journal article—what elements to include in the citation and in what order to put them. It will also indicate the capitalization, font, and punctuation rules to follow. Here’s an example:

Information available to you in a printed journal article: Diane Martinez, “Writing in an Online Environment” in the *Journal of Online Writing* published in May of 2009. The journal volume is 3, and the issue number is 2. The article is 17 pages long beginning on page 17 and ending on page 34.

According to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed) (APA, 2010), you would put this information in the following format:

Author, Middle initial. First initial. (Year of publication). Title of article. *Title of the Journal*, volume(issue), page-page.

The APA citation would then look like this:

Martinez, D. (2009). Writing in an online environment. *Journal of Online Writing*, 2(3), 17-34.

You do not need to memorize citation formats. The key is to use your style guide or a resource such as the [Common Citations in APA Format](#) in the Writing Center and match your sources with the rules in the guide.

Rules for Citation

At Purdue Global, the most used citation style is APA, so you will find many helpful resources on APA citation on our public [Citation Guides](#) page, the Using Sources area of Writing Center Resources in the Academic Success Center Study Studio, and in Academic Writer (Formerly APA Central) in the Purdue Global Library. Additionally, APA and many other style guides have official manuals as well as websites where you will find accurate information about how to cite. Table 2 lists online resources for various style guides.

Table 2. Online Resources for Various Style Guides

AP (Associated Press)	http://www.apstylebook.com
APA (American Psychological Association)	http://www.apastyle.org
AMA (American Medical Association)	http://www.amamanualofstyle.com
Bluebook	https://www.legalbluebook.com/
Chicago Manual	http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html
Government	http://www.gpo.gov
IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)	http://www.ieee.org/portal/site
Oxford	http://www.oup.com

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References

Lee, C. (2010). How to cite something you found on a website in APA style: The egg [Artwork].

Retrieved from <http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2010/11/how-to-cite-something-you-found-on-a-website-in-apa-style.html>

U.S. Copyright Office. (2009). *Fair Use*. Retrieved from <http://www.copyright.gov>

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