How to Use In-Text Citations in APA Format

The APA format uses the author-date method for in-text citations. During your degree studies you will require to support your opinions, thoughts or facts through the use of published sources of relevant information, e.g. books, journal articles, websites etc. You are required to credit or cite each source of information used within your assignment/paper and this is termed referencing. While end-text referencing is your Reference List at the end of your Assignment/paper, within the Assignment/paper you are required in-text reference or cite the source used to support your opinion, thought or fact, at each step e.g. sentence or paraphrase.

Each in-text citation will correspond to a fully referenced source within your Reference List. By fully referenced, we mean it will contain all the information for a particular source in order that a reader of your work can find that source. At ECU the APA 6th Referencing style is used and whether you quote, paraphrase or summarise information your work must be presented in the APA style. Significant in this style is the use of in-text referencing, either as a signal phrase or a parenthetical citation (see below for the difference). There are some basic rules and rules that apply to different types of sources.

The basics of in-text citations in APA format

If you are paraphrasing (sometimes called indirect quotes), and this is the preferred method, only the author’s surname and the publication date is required. If you are using a direct quote, the in-text citation in APA style calls for the author’s surname, the publication date and the page number.

Rules for in-text citations in APA format

The rules for in-text citations in APA format change depending on:

- Source type e.g. Book, Journal Article, website etc.
- Number of authors
- Type of quotations you use.
- Whether it is the first reference to the source which has multiple authors or a Corporate Author.

A signal phrase can also be used to introduce a source of information in the text of your Assignment/paper and this will also serve as an in-text reference.

A Parenthetical citation is an in-text reference at the end of a sentence.
Listed below are the APA 6th in-text Referencing rules that you will apply to the most common forms of author combinations seen in published sources of information used to support your Assignment/paper.

One author

- Signal phrase: Stans (2014) found...
- Parenthetical citation: (Stans, 2014).

Two authors

- Signal phrase: Stans and Jubina (2013) found...
- Parenthetical citation: (Stans & Jubina, 2013). [NOTE: the use of the ampersand]

Three, four or five authors

- Signal phrase first use: Coles, Burns, and Kopens (2012) found...
- Signal phrase subsequent use: Coles et al. (2012) found....
- Parenthetical citation first use: (Coles, Burns, & Kopens, 2010).
- Parenthetical citation subsequent use: (Coles et al., 2010).

The same format shown for three authors is used for four and five authors. Simply list the authors, separated by a comma, with either “and” (for a signal phrase in-text reference) or “&” (for a parenthetical citation) and the final author’s surname.

Six or more authors

- Signal phrase: Burns et al. (2010) found...
- Parenthetical citation: (Burns et al., 2010).

If there are six or more authors then the first in-text citation can also use ‘et al.’

Anonymous author

If the author of a source of information is listed as “Anonymous,” use it as the author’s surname in a parenthetical citation.

- Parenthetical citation: (Anonymous, 2010).
It is not recommended that you use a signal phrase in this instance.

**An Organisation as an author (Corporate Author or Groups as Authors)**

When the author of a source is a corporation or an association e.g. a government agency or a company, in-text reference their name in full.

- Signal phrase: The Federal Trade Commission (2011) found…
- Parenthetical citation: (Federal Trade Commission, 2011).

If however an abbreviation is commonly used to refer to the corporation or organisation, then this will also be included in the first in-text reference. Thereafter when using a parenthetical citation, only use the abbreviation. This is not possible when using a signal phrase.

- First parenthetical citation: (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2009).
- Subsequent parenthetical citations: (ABS, 2009).

**NOTE:** the abbreviation must be used by the Corporation or Organisation; it cannot be made up by you.

**No author**

If the source of information you are citing does not have an author, use the title, and the year.

If you are using a signal phrase, use the entire title name. Underline or italicise book titles and reports; put titles of chapters, websites and articles in quotations.

If you are using a parenthetical citation, use the first word or two of the title, and the year.

**Two authors, same last name**

When two works have authors with the same last name, include the first initial of each author’s first name.

- Signal phrase: B. Coles (2010) and F. Coles (2008) found…
- Parenthetical citation: (B. Coles, 2010; F. Coles, 2008).
One author, two or more published sources with same publication year

When two or more sources of information by the same author have the same publication year, use lowercase letters to show that they are two separate sources. The lowercase letters (a, b, c, etc.) are used with the year.

- Signal phrase: Coles (2010a) found…
  - Coles (2010b) found…
- Parenthetical citation: (Coles, 2010a; Coles, 2010b).

Two published sources, one in-text citation

When citing two separate sources related to the same information, include both sources in the in-text citation. They should be in alphabetical order as they appear in your end-text Reference List. Signal Phrase: Coles, (2010) and Darnol, (2007) found ……

Parenthetical citation: (Coles, 2010; Darnol, 2007). [Separate the sources with a semicolon.]

Author citing another author

When you are citing an author referred to in a source of information you have actually read you will need to reference both the author referred to and the author of the source of the information you read.

A signal phrase can in-text reference the original author’s surname, which is then supported by a parenthetical citation to in-text reference the ‘secondary’ source.

- Kent proposed …… (as cited in Coles, 2010)
  Or
  - Kent (as cited in Coles, 2010) proposed ……
  Or
  - Kent cited in Coles (2010) proposed …….. (a parenthetical citation is not required here)

Using a parenthetical citation: (Kent as cited in Coles, 2010).
Published Sources with no publication dates

When there is no publication date listed, use “n.d.” to notate this. This is commonly found with internet sources, and in many cases, no author is listed either.

- Signal phrase: In “The Basics of Web Design” (n.d.), it is argued…..

Referencing page numbers

When using the APA 6th Referencing style if a direct quotation is used then the page number of the source of information must be included in the in-text reference regardless of the number of authors or type of source. A comma separates the year of publication and the page number.

- Signal phrase: Coles (2010) found… (p. 35).
- Parenthetical citation: (Coles, 2010, p. 35).

Indirect quotations or paraphrasing a quote or piece a piece of text does not require the inclusion of a page number(s).
Electronic sources

Electronic sources are in-text referenced in a similar style to print sources.

However sometimes page numbers are not available, which is important if using direct quotes. When in-text referencing in the APA 6th Referencing style for internet and other multimedia sources where page numbers are not available, the retrieval information is used.

Examples are the

- screen number
- Section (sec.)
- Paragraph (para.)
- time frame (minute or second)
- track

This information replaces the page number (when using direct quotes only) in parenthetical citations.

- Parenthetical citation: (Greggi, 2008, section 4).
- Parenthetical citation: (Fredrickson, 2000, Current perspectives on Emotion section, para.2).
  [Note: This example included section and paragraph details]

The above examples are the most common instances of formatting for in-text references when using the APA 6th Referencing style. The way in which you cite sources and whether you include page numbers depends on the type of quotation you are using.

For more detailed information on how to in-text reference either paraphrases or direct quotations using the APA 6th Referencing style refer to the ECU Referencing Guide and the APA Style Guide to Electronic References, which are both available from the ECU Library Website.

Adapted from the following resource: