

## APA DOCUMENTATION STYLE

A quick guide to parenthetical notes\*

### APA Citation Basics

“When using APA format, follow the author-date method of in-text citation. This means that the author's last name and the year of publication for the source should appear in the text, e.g., (Jones, 1998), and a complete reference should appear in the reference list at the end of the paper.

If you are referring to an idea from another work but **NOT** directly quoting the material, or making reference to an entire book, article or other work, you only have to make reference to the author and year of publication in your in-text reference. “

-from Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL)

In general this means a writer has three alternatives in citing sources in a text: (1) including in the parentheses the complete citation information (name, date, p. number), (2) including the author's name in the text and in the parentheses only the date or the date and page number, or (3) including the author's name and date in the text and in the parentheses only the page number, if a page number is necessary because a quotation or a specific idea is taken from a specific page.

Referring to an idea or study:

- (1) In a study of how hair is tied to cultural identity (Ilyin, 2000)...
- (2) Ilyin argues that Americans have a cultural obsession with blonde hair (2000).
- (3) For her 2000 book on blonde identity, Ilyin illustrates the difference between having blonde hair and being a *blonde*.

Using a specific statement or referring to a specific quotation:

- (1) “No matter where I am or what I am doing, deep down, I always want to be a blonde” (Ilyin, 2000, p. 19).
- (2) “No matter where I am or what I am doing, deep down, I always want to be a blonde,” argues Ilyin (2000, p.19)
- (3) “No matter where I am or what I am doing, deep down, I always want to be a blonde,” argues Ilyin in her 2000 book (p. 19).

### Work with One Author

See above examples

### Work With Two Authors

List all the authors in the signal phrase or the parenthetical each time you cite that work. (1) Use “and” between the names in your signal phrase and (2) an ampersand in the parenthetical citation.

- (1) Schilb and Clifford (2005) maintain that literature...
- (2) (Schilb & Clifford, 2005)

### Work by Three to Five Authors

List all the authors in the parenthetical citation or signal phrase the first time you cite that work, and in subsequent citations, use the first author's last name followed by “et al.” in the signal phrase or parentheses.

First: (Greenwood, Starling, Bart, & Bergson, 2006) \_ or \_ Research by Greenwood, Starling, Bart, and Bergson (2006) highlights...

Then: (Greenwood et al., 2006)

Note: For six or more authors, use the first author's last name followed by “et al.” in signal phrases and parenthetical citations

### Unknown Author/Unsigned Work

If the author is unknown, cite the work by its title in the signal phrase or by the first word or two in the parenthetical citation.

Thesis statements should be clear and specific (“Learning Argumentation,” 1998).

\*This guide is intended for quick reference only. For more detail, see the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> ed., 2009), check online at [apastyle.org](http://apastyle.org), or check with your instructor.

+Note: Selections of the above text have been extracted directly from Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL). See <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> for further details.