Creating MLA In-Text Citations

MLA In-Text Citations:

- Are used to formally acknowledge the work of others in the text of your document. In-text citations are sometimes called parenthetical citations.
- Are placed in parentheses after a quote or paraphrased passage using an author-page format.
- Generally, are placed before the period at the end of the sentence.
- Must correspond to the source’s entry on the Works Cited page:
  - Tip 1: It is a good idea to complete the Works Cited list before adding in-text citations to your research paper so that the in-text citation matches the format of the entry on the Works Cited page.
  - Tip 2: Provide enough information for the reader to identify which source on the Works Cited page is being used.

Author/Page format—After a quote or paraphrase, add the author’s last name followed by the page number.
Ex. Observers noted that “the sky was blue with a few clouds that day” (Smith 234).

Author’s name used in the text—Do not include author’s name in the parentheses.
Ex. Smith obtained testimony that the sky was blue that day (234).

Three or fewer authors—List all of the authors’ last names in order of their appearance on the title page of the book.
Ex. Paul Revere alerted the town by shouting, “The British are coming!” (Golden, Silver, and Dross 252).

More than three authors—List the last name of the first author, followed by et al.
Ex. George Washington was adamant that he never told lies (Jefferson et al. 36).

Multiple works by one author—Include the title or a shortened version of the title after the author’s last name.
Ex. Geological sources believe that rain in the evening is delightful to sailors (Smith, Sky Colors 245)

Works with no known author—Use the title or a shortened version of the title instead of the author’s last name.
Ex. “The cow jumped over the moon” (Hey Diddle Diddle 82).

Multi-volume works—Include the volume number before the page number.
Ex. Patrick Henry took a stance regarding freedom when he said, “Give me liberty or give me death” (Adams 3: 75).

Indirect quotations—If the source was originally quoted in another source, add qtd. in to the beginning of the citation.
Ex. Smith has never wavered from his belief that “the sky was blue that day” (qtd. in Doe 123).

Block quotations—If a quote is set off from the text, type a space after the concluding punctuation mark of the quotation and insert the in-text reference.
Ex. William Wallace Denslow illustrated the 1901 Mother Goose edition, which includes the following love poem:
The rose is red, the violet is blue,
Sugar is sweet and so are you. (235)

Works with no pagination (Entire books, web publications, films, CDs, other non-print sources)—If the paragraphs or other text dividers are explicitly numbered, include the number of the paragraph or section. If citing an entire book, no page reference is required in the in-text citation.
- The citation should correspond exactly to the first element in the Works Cited entry (author, article title, film title, web site name).
- Unless you must use a URL as a signal phrase in order to get readers to the correct entry, do not include URLs in text; if necessary, provide only partial URLs, such as a domain name (Ex. CNN.com or Dispatch.com).
- Students may avoid an in-text reference entirely with the use of a signal phrase.
Ex. The moon hung low in the sky (Jones par. 5)
Ex. Jane Eyre is a classic gothic romance (Bronte).
Ex. The film, Crash, explores racial tolerance in urban America.

Continued —>
Library Quick Guide: Creating APA In-Text Citations

For more examples of APA citation practices, see:

- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed. (available at the Library (Columbus) and The Learning Center (Delaware), under call # Ref 808 P9769 2010).
- *In-Text Citations: The Basics by the Purdue University Online Writing Lab* http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/
- *APA Style* by the American Psychological Association http://www.apastyle.org/apa-style-help.aspx
- *APA Citations Research Guide* (http://library.cscc.edu/apa) by Columbus State Community College

**APA In-Text Citations:**

- Are used to formally acknowledge the work of others in the text of your document.
- Are placed in parentheses after a quote or paraphrased passage using an author-date format.
- Must appear in the reference list at the end of the article and each entry in the reference list must be cited in the text.

  Two kinds of material are cited only in the text:
  - Classical material, such as the Bible or Qur’an, whose sections are standardized across editions;
  - References to personal communications.

- **Author/Date format**—After a quote or paraphrase, insert the author’s surname and the year of publication, separated by a comma, into the text at the appropriate point.
  - Ex. Observers noted that “the sky was blue with a few clouds that day” (Smith, 2010, p. 234).
- **Author’s name used in the text**—Cite only the year of publication in parentheses.
  - Ex. Smith (2010) obtained testimony that the sky was blue that day (p. 234).
- **Works by two authors**—Cite the surnames of the authors in the order they appear in the article header, followed by the publication year. Cite both names every time the reference occurs in the text. Use the word "and" between the authors’ names within the text and use the ampersand in the parentheses.
  - Ex. Golden and Silver (2007) reported that Paul Revere alerted the town when he shouted, “The British are coming!” (p. 356).
- **Works by three, four or five authors**—Cite the surnames of all authors, separated by commas, the first time the reference is cited. In subsequent citations, use only the first author’s surname, followed by *et al.*
- **Works by six or more authors**—Cite only the surname of the first author followed by *et al.*
  - Ex. According to Kelly et al. (1952), singing in the rain is a pleasurable experience (p. 137).
- **Works with no identified author or with an anonymous author**—Cite the first few words of the reference list entry (usually the title) and the year. Use as many words as necessary to identify the source as it appears in your Reference List. If the author is designated as “Anonymous”, cite the word Anonymous followed by a comma and the date.
  - Ex. “The cow jumped over the moon” (Hey Diddle Diddle, 1765).
- **Short Quotations (fewer than 40 words)**—Incorporate the quote into text enclosed in double quotation marks. Cite the author surname, year, and specific page number.
  - Ex. Churchill said, “I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat” (Cannadine, 1989, p. 149).
- **Block Quotations (40 or more words)**—Display quote in a freestanding block of text on a new line, indented about 1/2 inch. Do not use quotation marks. Double space the entire quotation. At the end of the block, cite the author surname, year, and specific page or paragraph number after the final punctuation mark.
  - Ex. William Wallace Denslow (1901) illustrated the Mother Goose edition, which includes the following love poem:
    - The rose is red, the violet is blue,
    - Sugar is sweet and so are you. (p. 234)