

# A Writer's Companion to AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APA)

## REFERENCES

Based on the 6th edition, 2<sup>nd</sup> printing of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

*Intended Uses and Disclaimers:* Please note that consultants do not provide copyediting services for citation styles. Instead, this worksheet is intended to help prompt writers to learn for themselves how to work with citations appropriately. This checklist provides you with some basic formatting rules, but once you apply these rules, you'll also need to look up each type of source that you're working with in an APA guide. Always check with your professor if you have questions.

### **STEP 1: Identifying Your Sources (Preparing to Work with the APA Publication Manual or OWL Purdue)**

- **If you have come to the Center with a draft of your References page**, begin the Writing Center session by identifying (in notes in the margins of the References page) the types of sources listed in the document. Do this for each source. For example, note whether a source is a book, a collection of essays, a scholarly journal article, a newspaper article, a blog, a website, a government document, a YouTube video, etc.
- **If you have come to the Center without a References page** and you need to create one from scratch, begin by going through the paper with the consultant and creating a list of each type of source referenced.

### **STEP 2: Referencing List (Basic Formatting)**

- Your list of sources is **titled** References (and not Works Cited or Bibliography).
- The title, References, is **centered** at the top of the page in **regular print** (no bolding or underlining).
- The entire list of sources is **double-spaced**, without extra spaces between entries. The second and subsequent lines are **indented** a half inch from the left margin. In other words, you're formatting each entry with a hanging indentation.
- Your full list is **alphabetized** by author's last name and/or, for unauthored sources, the first word of the source. If the first word of the title is an article (A, An, The), alphabetize the entry based on the first word of the title that *isn't* an article. (So, both *Monsters* and *The monsters* count as "M" as you're alphabetizing.)

- Authors' names are **inverted** with last name appearing first for **single authors**; first and middle names are reduced to **initials only**: (Medley, A. P.). For sources with **more than one author**, all author names are inverted: (Medley, A. P., Harmony, E., & Discord, J. F.). Use the **ampersand (&)** instead of "and" to set off the final author in the list.
- The **date** is almost always presented in the **second position** in the entry and is placed in parentheses (which is followed by a period). For books, give only the year of publication. For newspapers and magazines, present the year followed by the month and date: (2001, May 12).
- Regarding **capitalization of titles**, follow these rules...
  - **Book** titles and **article** titles: Only capitalize the **first word** in the title and in the subtitle, as well as any **proper nouns** (names of places, people, etc.)
  - **Periodical** titles (journals, newspapers, magazines): Capitalize **first words** in titles and subtitles; also capitalize all words EXCEPT articles, conjunctions, and prepositions.
- All titles of long works should be **italicized**, while titles of short works are left without punctuation (no italics, no quotation marks).
  - NOTE: The decision regarding whether a text is "long" or "short" is more about whether a text is published on its own or as part of a larger work than about actual length. If a ("short") text is published as a subsection of a larger work (like an article in a newspaper), the title of the "short" text is left plain (no quotation marks); the "long" text that contains the subsections should be italicized. (i.e., a book title is italicized, while the chapter titles are left without punctuation; an album title is italicized, while the songs on the album are left without punctuation).
- For **web sources**, use "Retrieved from" to introduce URLs.
- Your References page only includes references actually **cited in the text of your paper**.

### **STEP 3: Looking Up Each Source**

- Once you have followed these basic formatting rules, draw on your marginal notes (from Step 1) that labeled each source for its source type and look up each source in your APA guide (or the OWL Purdue's APA website). Use the guide to double-check the details for each entry.