

APA Formatting Quick Guide

Quick Reference Guide • PaperYak.com

In-Text Citations

One author:	(Smith, 2020)	<i>Smith (2020) argues that...</i>
Two authors:	(Smith & Jones, 2020)	<i>Smith and Jones (2020) found...</i>
3+ authors:	(Smith et al., 2020)	<i>Smith et al. (2020) demonstrated...</i>
Direct quote:	(Smith, 2020, p. 45)	<i>According to Smith (2020), "quote here" (p. 45).</i>
No author:	(Title, 2020)	<i>Shorten long titles if needed</i>
No date:	(Smith, n.d.)	<i>Use n.d. when date is unknown</i>

Reference List Examples

Journal article:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of article. Journal Name, volume(issue), pages. DOI

Book:

Author, A. A. (Year). Title of book. Publisher.

Website:

Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Title of page. Site Name. URL

Chapter:

Author, A. A. (Year). Chapter title. In Editor (Ed.), Book title (pp. x-y). Publisher.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- ✗ Don't write 'Smith states' — use past tense: 'Smith stated' or 'Smith (2020) found'
- ✗ Don't forget the comma before the year: (Smith, 2020) not (Smith 2020)
- ✗ Don't use 'ibid.' — APA requires full citation each time
- ✗ Don't put URLs in the text — they belong in the reference list only
- ✗ Don't manually number your reference list — it should be alphabetical
- ✗ Don't italicise journal article titles — only the journal name is italicised

■ Pro Tips:

- Use a reference manager like Zotero or Mendeley to automate formatting
- Double-check DOIs — they're permanent identifiers and should always be included for journal articles