

OFFICIAL COURSE STUDY GUIDE

Citations, APA Style & Avoiding Plagiarism

Quote, paraphrase, and cite correctly - protect your work and your integrity.

LEARNING & STUDY SKILLS · BEGINNER · 2 MODULES · 43 MIN

Course by Scribbr · Curated and published by MegaCourse

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Citations, APA Style & Avoiding Plagiarism: The Complete Study Guide

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MegaCourse curates the world's best free courses into structured learning paths with study guides, practice material, and certificates. This guide accompanies the MegaCourse course "Citations, APA Style & Avoiding Plagiarism", taught by Scribbr. It is designed to be read alongside the video lessons and to serve as a standalone reference for review.

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Contents

<i>About This Course</i>	<i>4</i>
CHAPTER 1 What Is Plagiarism and How to Avoid It	6
CHAPTER 2 APA Style Made Easy	11
<i>Glossary</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Answer Key</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Where to Go Next</i>	<i>21</i>

INTRODUCTION

About This Course

This study guide accompanies the MegaCourse "Citations, APA Style & Avoiding Plagiarism" course. This program provides clear, practical instruction on a critical academic skill. Mastering citation techniques protects your work and upholds your academic integrity.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or accidental, carries serious consequences in academic and professional settings. This course teaches you how to properly acknowledge sources, ensuring your writing is original and credible. You will learn to integrate research effectively while avoiding common pitfalls.

The course is structured into two modules and twelve lessons, designed for clarity and efficiency. Taught by Scribbr, an authority in academic writing, the lessons offer expert guidance. MegaCourse enhances this content with a structured learning path, clear outcomes, and progress tracking, culminating in a certificate of completion.

Course Facts

FORMAT	2 modules · 12 lessons
VIDEO INSTRUCTION	About 43 min
LEVEL	Beginner
CATEGORY	Learning & Study Skills
INSTRUCTOR	Scribbr
CERTIFICATE	Included with course completion on MegaCourse
COURSE HOME	megacourse.app/courses/citations-apa-style-and-avoiding-plagiarism

What You Will Learn

- Understand what counts as plagiarism, including the accidental kinds.
- Paraphrase and quote without crossing lines.
- Format APA 7 citations and references correctly.
- Build source-tracking habits that make citing painless.

Who This Course Is For

This course is designed for students, researchers, and anyone who writes academic papers, reports, or scholarly articles. It is particularly valuable for those new to formal academic writing or seeking to refine

their understanding of citation standards.

As a beginner-level course in Learning and Study Skills, it serves as an excellent foundation. You do not need any prior experience with academic writing or specific citation styles to begin.

Before You Start

- No prior experience is required.

How to Use This Guide

To get the most from this study guide, we recommend a focused approach. First, watch each video lesson in its entirety. Pay close attention to the examples and explanations provided by the instructor.

After viewing a lesson, turn to this guide. Review the key concepts, definitions, and examples presented here. Use the exercises and practice prompts to reinforce your understanding and apply what you have learned immediately. This active engagement helps solidify your knowledge.

The course is organized into two modules and twelve lessons, totaling about 43 minutes of instruction. You can complete it at your own pace. Consider breaking it into manageable segments, perhaps one or two lessons per study session, to allow for reflection and practice.

CHAPTER 1

What Is Plagiarism and How to Avoid It

This chapter introduces the critical concepts of academic integrity, plagiarism, and the fundamental techniques to avoid it. You will learn to identify different forms of plagiarism, understand why it is a serious academic offense, and adopt essential strategies for proper source attribution.

By mastering the principles in this chapter, you will build a strong foundation for ethical academic work, protecting your integrity and ensuring your research is always presented responsibly.

Defining Plagiarism and Core Prevention Strategies

Covers: Avoid Plagiarism Playlist Introduction | Scribbr · What is plagiarism? | Scribbr · How to Avoid Plagiarism with 3 Simple Tricks | Scribbr

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. It is a serious academic offense with significant consequences, including failing grades, suspension, or even expulsion. Understanding what constitutes plagiarism is the first step in avoiding it.

Plagiarism takes many forms. It includes copying text directly without quotation marks and citation. It also includes submitting someone else's paper as your own. Less obvious forms, often called accidental plagiarism, occur when you paraphrase too closely to the original source without proper citation, or when you fail to cite sources for ideas that are not common knowledge. Even reusing your own previously submitted work without permission or proper citation can be considered self-plagiarism. The core principle is clear: if the words or ideas are not originally yours, you must give credit to the original creator.

Avoiding plagiarism is straightforward when you adopt a few simple habits. Here are three essential strategies:

- 1. Cite Everything:** Whenever you use information, ideas, or direct quotes from another source, you must cite it. This includes books, articles, websites, lectures, interviews, and even images or data. A citation tells your reader exactly where you found the information. It acknowledges the original author's contribution and allows your reader to locate the source if they wish to learn more. Develop the habit of noting your sources as you research, not just at the end of your writing process. This makes the citation process much easier and reduces the risk of forgetting to credit a source.
- 2. Paraphrase and Quote Correctly:** You will learn more about these techniques in the next section. For now, remember that paraphrasing means putting someone else's ideas into your own words and sentence structure. Even when you paraphrase, you must still cite the original source. Quoting involves using the exact words of a source, enclosed in quotation marks, and always followed by a citation. Never simply change a few words in a sentence and call it a paraphrase; this is still plagiarism.
- 3. Use a Plagiarism Checker:** Before submitting your work, run it through a reliable plagiarism checker. Tools like the Scribbr Plagiarism Checker compare your text against a vast database of published works and student papers. These checkers highlight sections that match existing text, indicating where you might have forgotten a citation or paraphrased too closely. Treat the report as a

learning tool. It helps you identify potential issues and gives you a chance to correct them before submission. It does not replace your responsibility to cite correctly, but it acts as a valuable final check. Remember that a low similarity score does not guarantee your paper is free of plagiarism, especially if you have paraphrased incorrectly without changing the original structure or meaning sufficiently. Always review your sources and citations carefully.

Mastering Quoting and Paraphrasing Techniques

Covers: How to Quote in Under 5 minutes | Scribbr · How to Paraphrase in 5 Easy Steps | Scribbr

Effectively integrating source material into your writing requires skill in both quoting and paraphrasing. Knowing when and how to use each technique is crucial for academic success and avoiding plagiarism.

When to Quote

You should quote directly when the original author's exact words are essential. This might be because the language is particularly impactful, precise, or unique. Quotes are also necessary when analyzing specific phrasing, definitions, or when supporting your argument with an authoritative voice. Always enclose direct quotes in quotation marks and follow them with an in-text citation.

- **Short Quotes:** If a quote is 40 words or fewer, integrate it into your paragraph. Introduce the quote with a signal phrase, such as 'According to Smith (2020),' or 'As Jones (2019) observed,' followed by the quoted text and the page or paragraph number in parentheses.
- Example: Smith (2020) argued that "effective communication is the cornerstone of successful collaboration" (p. 45).
- **Block Quotes:** For quotes longer than 40 words, set them off as a block quote. Start a new line, indent the entire quote one-half inch from the left margin, and do not use quotation marks. The citation appears after the final punctuation of the quote.
- Example:

Effective communication is the cornerstone of successful collaboration. It ensures that all team members are aligned with project goals, understand their roles, and can address challenges proactively. Without clear communication channels, misunderstandings arise, leading to delays and reduced productivity. (Smith, 2020, p. 45)

How to Paraphrase in 5 Easy Steps

Paraphrasing involves restating someone else's ideas in your own words. It demonstrates your understanding of the source material and allows you to integrate information smoothly into your own writing style. Even when paraphrasing, you must cite the original source. Here are five steps to effective paraphrasing:

1. **Read the Original Carefully:** Understand the main idea and key details. Do not just skim. Read it multiple times if necessary.
2. **Put the Original Aside:** Once you understand the text, put the source away. Try to explain the idea in your own words without looking at the original. This prevents you from simply rearranging words.

3. **Write Your Paraphrase:** Draft your version of the text. Focus on conveying the original meaning using your vocabulary and sentence structure. Your paraphrase should be significantly different from the original in wording and sentence structure, not just a few words changed.
4. **Compare to the Original:** Check your paraphrase against the original source. Ensure you have accurately represented the original meaning without copying phrases or sentence structures. If you find any unique phrases you want to keep, put them in quotation marks.
5. **Add an In-text Citation:** Always include an in-text citation for your paraphrase. This gives credit to the original author for the idea. For example, (Johnson, 2021).

Common Mistakes to Avoid: A common error is 'patchwork plagiarism,' where you change only a few words or phrases in the original text while keeping the overall sentence structure. This is not a true paraphrase and still counts as plagiarism. Always aim for a complete restructuring and rephrasing of the ideas.

APA 7th Edition In-Text Citations and Plagiarism Reports

Covers: APA 7th Edition: The Basics of APA In-text Citations | Scribbr · The Scribbr Plagiarism Report Explained | Scribbr

Accurate citation is fundamental to academic integrity. The American Psychological Association (APA) style, currently in its 7th edition, provides clear guidelines for citing sources. This section focuses on the basics of APA 7 in-text citations, which are crucial for acknowledging sources within the body of your paper.

Basics of APA 7 In-Text Citations

APA in-text citations follow an author-date format. This means you include the author's last name and the year of publication. For direct quotes, you also include the page number or paragraph number. There are two main ways to integrate citations:

1. **Parenthetical Citation:** The author and date appear in parentheses at the end of the sentence or clause containing the information.
 - Example (paraphrase): Research shows that students benefit from active learning strategies (Davis, 2018).
 - Example (direct quote): "Active learning strategies significantly improve student engagement" (Davis, 2018, p. 72).
2. **Narrative Citation:** The author's name is part of your sentence, with the year of publication in parentheses immediately following the author's name.
 - Example (paraphrase): Davis (2018) found that students benefit from active learning strategies.
 - Example (direct quote): Davis (2018) stated, "Active learning strategies significantly improve student engagement" (p. 72).
 - **Multiple Authors:** For two authors, cite both names (e.g., Smith & Jones, 2021). For three or more authors, cite the first author's name followed by "et al." (e.g., Miller et al., 2019).

- **No Author:** If a source has no author, use the title of the work in place of the author's name. If it is a long title, shorten it (e.g., *The Impact of Technology*, 2020).

Every in-text citation must correspond to a full entry in your reference list at the end of your paper. The reference list provides complete publication details for all sources cited in your work.

The Scribbr Plagiarism Report Explained

Plagiarism reports are powerful tools for learning and improving your academic writing. A tool like the Scribbr Plagiarism Report scans your document and compares it against a vast database of academic papers, journals, books, and web content. It then generates a report highlighting sections of your text that match existing sources.

When you receive a plagiarism report, focus on understanding its findings. The report will typically show a similarity score, which indicates the percentage of your text that matches other sources. It will also provide a detailed breakdown, showing which specific sentences or phrases are similar and linking to the original sources.

How to Interpret and Use the Report:

- **High Similarity Score:** A high score (e.g., above 10-15%, depending on your institution's guidelines) often indicates potential issues. Review every highlighted section carefully.
- **Highlighted Text:** For each highlighted section, ask yourself: Is this a direct quote? If so, is it enclosed in quotation marks and properly cited? Is this a paraphrase? If so, is it truly in my own words and cited correctly, or have I inadvertently copied too much of the original structure or wording? Is this common knowledge? If not, does it have a citation?
- **Missing Citations:** The report helps identify places where you might have forgotten to cite a source for an idea or fact that is not common knowledge.
- **Poor Paraphrasing:** It can reveal instances where your paraphrase is too close to the original, prompting you to rephrase more effectively.

Use the report as an opportunity to revise and improve your paper. It is a diagnostic tool, not a judgment. By understanding and acting on the feedback from a plagiarism report, you strengthen your writing skills and ensure your work meets academic standards for originality and citation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own, whether intentionally or accidentally.
- Always cite your sources for any information, ideas, or direct quotes that are not common knowledge.
- Paraphrasing means restating an author's ideas in your own words and sentence structure, always with a citation.
- Quoting involves using an author's exact words, enclosed in quotation marks, and always followed by a citation including a page or paragraph number.
- APA 7 in-text citations use an author-date format to give credit to sources within your paper.
- Plagiarism checkers are valuable tools for identifying potential citation issues and improving your paraphrasing before submission.
- Academic integrity requires diligent source tracking and correct attribution for all borrowed material.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Answer these before moving on. Model answers are in the Answer Key at the back of this guide.

1. What is the fundamental definition of plagiarism, and why is it considered a serious academic offense?
2. Explain the difference between paraphrasing and quoting. When should you use each technique?
3. What are the three simple tricks to avoid plagiarism mentioned in this chapter?
4. Describe the basic components of an APA 7 in-text citation for a paraphrased idea.
5. How should you use a plagiarism report to improve your academic writing?

CHAPTER 2

APA Style Made Easy

This chapter guides you through the essential components of APA Style, 7th Edition. You will learn how to format your academic papers, correctly cite sources within your text, and build a comprehensive reference list. Mastering these skills ensures your work is professional, credible, and free from plagiarism.

We will cover the foundational rules for paper layout, then move into the specifics of in-text citations. Finally, you will learn to construct accurate reference entries and format your complete reference page. This practical instruction prepares you to apply APA style confidently in your academic writing.

Setting Up Your APA Style Paper

Covers: APA 7th Edition: Set up an APA Format Paper in 6 Minutes

Properly formatting your paper in APA Style, 7th Edition, is the first step toward presenting professional academic work. This section details the general layout requirements for student papers. Adhering to these guidelines ensures readability and consistency.

General Paper Formatting

All text in an APA Style paper should use a legible font. Common choices include 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode, 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Georgia, or 10-point Computer Modern. Double-space the entire paper, including the title page, abstract, body, and reference list. Set all margins to 1 inch (2.54 cm) on all sides: top, bottom, left, and right. The first line of every paragraph should be indented 0.5 inches (1.27 cm) from the left margin.

Page Numbers

Every page of your paper must include a page number. Place the page number in the top right corner of the header, starting with page 1 on the title page.

The Title Page

For student papers, the title page includes specific elements. Center the paper title in bold text, positioned about three or four lines down from the top margin. Use title case capitalization, meaning major words are capitalized. The title should be concise and descriptive. Below the title, on separate double-spaced lines, list your name, your university affiliation (or institution), the course number and name, your instructor's name, and the assignment due date. Do not bold these lines.

Headings

APA Style uses a five-level heading system to organize your paper. Most student papers will use only two or three levels.

- **Level 1 Heading:** Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading
- Used for major sections like "Introduction," "Methods," "Results," "Discussion," and "References."
- **Level 2 Heading:** Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading
- Used for subsections within a Level 1 heading.
- **Level 3 Heading:** Flush Left, Bold, Italic, Title Case Heading
- Used for subsections within a Level 2 heading.
- **Level 4 Heading:** Indented, Bold, Title Case Heading, ending with a period. The text begins on the same line and continues after the period.
- **Level 5 Heading:** Indented, Bold, Italic, Title Case Heading, ending with a period. The text begins on the same line and continues after the period.

Ensure consistent use of headings to create a clear hierarchy for your reader. Do not use a heading for the introduction unless your instructor requires it. The introduction is assumed to be the first section of your paper.

Abstract (Optional)

Some academic papers require an abstract, a concise summary of the paper's content. If an abstract is required, it appears on a new page, immediately following the title page. Center the word "Abstract" in bold at the top of the page. The abstract paragraph itself is not indented. It typically ranges from 150 to 250 words. Below the abstract, you may include "Keywords:" (italicized and indented) followed by relevant keywords. Check your assignment guidelines to see if an abstract is necessary for your paper.

By following these formatting rules, you establish a professional foundation for your academic writing. This structure allows your readers to focus on your content without distraction.

Mastering APA In-text Citations

Covers: APA 7th Edition: The Basics of APA In-text Citations

In-text citations are fundamental to academic integrity. They acknowledge the sources of your information and guide readers to the full details in your reference list. APA Style, 7th Edition, uses an author-date system for all in-text citations.

Basic Author-Date Format

Every time you use information from another source, whether you quote directly or paraphrase, you must include an in-text citation. The basic format includes the author's last name and the year of publication.

- **Parenthetical Citation:** Place the author and date in parentheses at the end of the sentence or clause.
- Example: Learning to cite correctly prevents plagiarism (Scribbr, 2023).
- **Narrative Citation:** Integrate the author's name into your sentence, followed by the year in parentheses.
- Example: Scribbr (2023) explains that learning to cite correctly prevents plagiarism.

Citing Direct Quotes

When you use a source's exact words, you must include the author, year, and the specific page number or paragraph number.

- **Short Quotes (Under 40 Words):** Enclose the quote in double quotation marks. Include the author, year, and page number (p.) or page range (pp.) in the citation.
- Example (Parenthetical): "Quote, paraphrase, and cite correctly" is essential for academic integrity (Scribbr, 2023, p. 1).
- Example (Narrative): Scribbr (2023) states, "Quote, paraphrase, and cite correctly" (p. 1). If a page number is not available, use a paragraph number (para. 3).
- **Block Quotes (40 Words or More):** Do not use quotation marks. Start the block quote on a new line, indented 0.5 inches (1.27 cm) from the left margin for the entire block. Double-space the block quote. Place the parenthetical citation (author, year, page number) after the final punctuation of the block quote.
- Example:

This curated learning path is organized into 2 modules and 12 lessons, taught by Scribbr. MegaCourse adds structure, learning outcomes, progress tracking, and a shareable certificate of completion. (Scribbr, 2023, p. 2)

Citing Paraphrased Information

When you restate information from a source in your own words, you still need an in-text citation. Include the author's last name and the year of publication. While not strictly required, including a page or paragraph number for paraphrases can be helpful.

- Example (Parenthetical): Academic honesty requires proper acknowledgment of all borrowed ideas (Scribbr, 2023).
- Example (Narrative): According to Scribbr (2023), academic honesty requires proper acknowledgment of all borrowed ideas.

Multiple Authors

- **Two Authors:** Cite both authors' last names every time. Use "and" in narrative citations and an ampersand (&) in parenthetical citations.
- Example (Narrative): Smith and Jones (2022) found...
- Example (Parenthetical): (Smith & Jones, 2022)
- **Three or More Authors:** For all citations, use the first author's last name followed by "et al." and the year.
- Example (Narrative): Williams et al. (2021) concluded...
- Example (Parenthetical): (Williams et al., 2021)

No Author

If a source has no author, use the title of the work in place of the author's name. If the title is long, use a shortened version. Enclose article or chapter titles in quotation marks and italicize book or report titles.

- Example: The new guidelines emphasize clarity ("APA Style Updates," 2020).
- Example: (*Publication Manual*, 2020)

Avoiding Common Mistakes

Always include a page or paragraph number for direct quotes. Cite the source once per paragraph, or at the first instance of the information, if the source remains clear. When in doubt, cite.

Consistent and accurate in-text citations protect your academic integrity and strengthen your arguments.

Crafting APA Reference Entries and the Reference Page

Covers: APA 7th Edition: Creating APA Reference Entries · APA 7th Edition: Formatting the APA Reference Page

The reference list, located at the end of your paper, provides full bibliographic information for every source you cited in your text. This allows your readers to locate and verify the sources you used. Accurate reference entries and correct reference page formatting are crucial for academic credibility.

Formatting the Reference Page

The reference page begins on a new page after the main body of your paper.

- **Title:** Center the word "References" in bold at the top of the page.
- **Spacing:** Double-space the entire reference list.
- **Hanging Indent:** Each entry must have a hanging indent. The first line is flush left, and all subsequent lines are indented 0.5 inches (1.27 cm).
- **Order:** List all entries alphabetically by the first author's last name. If no author, alphabetize by the first significant word of the title.

The Four Elements of a Reference Entry

Most APA Style, 7th Edition, reference entries are built upon four core elements: Author, Date, Title, and Source.

1. **Author:** Who is responsible for this work? Last name first, followed by first and middle initials.
 - Example: Smith, J. A.
2. **Date:** When was this work published? Year in parentheses, followed by a period. For specific dates, include month and day.
 - Example: (2023). or (2023, October 26).
3. **Title:** What is this work called? For articles, chapters, or web pages, use sentence case capitalization. For books, reports, or journals, use title case capitalization. Italicize the titles of stand-alone works

(books, journals, reports). Do not italicize article or chapter titles.

- Example (Article title): The impact of social media on student learning.
- Example (Book title): *APA style made easy*.

4. **Source:** Where can readers retrieve this work? This includes the journal title and volume for articles, the publisher for books, or the URL for websites.

Common Reference Entry Examples

1. Book Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of work* (Edition, if applicable). Publisher.

- Example (Single Author): Smith, J. A. (2020). *The complete guide to academic writing*. University Press.
- Example (Two Authors): Jones, K., & Miller, R. (2018). *Effective research methods*. Academic Publishing.

2. Journal Article with DOI Author, A. A. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, volume(issue), pages. DOI

- Example: Williams, S. L. (2021). Understanding citation practices. *Journal of Academic Integrity*, 15(2), 112-125. <https://doi.org/10.xxxx/xxxx.xxxx>

3. Webpage Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). *Title of webpage*. Site name. URL

- Example (With Author): Chen, L. (2023, October 15). *Tips for citing sources*. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/apa-style/citation-tips/>
- Example (No Author): *APA Style introduction*. (2022, January 10). Purdue Online Writing Lab. https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

Important Considerations

- **DOIs:** Always include a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) if available. Present it as a hyperlink (e.g., <https://doi.org/10.xxxx/xxxx>).
- **Retrieval Dates:** Include a retrieval date only for sources likely to change over time (e.g., wikis, continuously updated news sites). Most online scholarly works do not require one.
- Example: Retrieved October 26, 2023, from <https://example.com/live-document>
- **Capitalization:** Use sentence case for article/chapter titles and title case for stand-alone works (books, journals).

By meticulously constructing each reference entry and applying the correct formatting to your reference page, you provide a clear and accessible guide for your readers to explore your sources further.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- APA Style 7th Edition requires specific formatting for papers, including 1-inch margins, double-spacing, and page numbers in the top right corner.
- The title page for student papers includes the paper title, author's name, institution, course information, instructor's name, and the assignment due date.
- In-text citations use an author-date format to acknowledge sources within the body of your paper, appearing either parenthetically or narratively.
- Direct quotes require author, year, and a specific page or paragraph number in the in-text citation.
- Paraphrased information also needs an author-date in-text citation to properly credit the original source.
- The reference page lists full bibliographic details for all cited sources, formatted with a hanging indent and arranged alphabetically by author's last name.
- Each reference entry typically includes four core elements: Author, Date, Title, and Source, which guide its construction for various source types.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Answer these before moving on. Model answers are in the Answer Key at the back of this guide.

1. What are the general formatting requirements for an APA Style 7th Edition paper regarding margins, spacing, and font?
2. Explain the difference between a parenthetical and a narrative in-text citation.
3. When must you include a page number in an APA in-text citation?
4. Describe the key formatting rules for the APA reference page.
5. What are the "Four Elements" that typically make up an APA reference entry?

REFERENCE

Glossary

Academic integrity

A commitment to honesty and responsibility in academic work, including proper citation and original thought.

Apa style

The formatting and citation guidelines established by the American Psychological Association, widely used in social sciences and other fields.

Citation

A reference to the source of information used in a document, giving credit to the original author.

Doi (digital object identifier)

A unique alphanumeric string used to permanently identify and link to online scholarly articles and other digital objects.

Hanging indent

A paragraph formatting style where the first line is flush left, and all subsequent lines are indented 0.5 inches (1.27 cm).

In-text citation

A brief reference within the body of a paper that directs the reader to the full source information in the reference list.

Narrative citation

An in-text citation where the author's name is incorporated directly into the sentence, with the publication year in parentheses immediately after the author's name.

Paraphrasing

Restating someone else's ideas or information in your own words and sentence structure, while retaining the original meaning.

Parenthetical citation

An in-text citation where the author's name and publication year appear in parentheses, usually at the end of a sentence or clause.

Plagiarism

Presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, without proper attribution.

Plagiarism checker

A software tool that compares a submitted document against a database of existing texts to identify similarities and potential instances of plagiarism.

Quoting

Using an author's exact words from a source, enclosed in quotation marks, and accompanied by a citation.

Reference list

A complete list of all sources cited in a paper, providing full publication details for each entry.

REFERENCE

Answer Key

Chapter 1: What Is Plagiarism and How to Avoid It

1. What is the fundamental definition of plagiarism, and why is it considered a serious academic offense?

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own without proper attribution. It is a serious academic offense because it undermines the principles of intellectual honesty, fair evaluation, and the integrity of scholarly work. It also devalues the original author's contributions.

2. Explain the difference between paraphrasing and quoting. When should you use each technique?

Paraphrasing involves restating an author's ideas in your own words and sentence structure, while quoting uses the author's exact words. You should paraphrase when you want to integrate information smoothly and demonstrate your understanding. You should quote when the original phrasing is particularly impactful, precise, or needs to be analyzed directly.

3. What are the three simple tricks to avoid plagiarism mentioned in this chapter?

The three simple tricks to avoid plagiarism are: always cite everything you use from other sources, paraphrase and quote correctly following established guidelines, and use a plagiarism checker as a final review tool for your work.

4. Describe the basic components of an APA 7 in-text citation for a paraphrased idea.

For a paraphrased idea in APA 7, an in-text citation typically includes the author's last name and the year of publication. This can be done parenthetically, such as (Smith, 2020), or narratively, as in Smith (2020) argued that...

5. How should you use a plagiarism report to improve your academic writing?

You should use a plagiarism report as a diagnostic and learning tool. Review highlighted sections to ensure proper citation for all borrowed ideas or direct quotes, and to identify instances where paraphrasing might be too close to the original source. It helps you catch and correct potential issues before submission.

Chapter 2: APA Style Made Easy

1. What are the general formatting requirements for an APA Style 7th Edition paper regarding margins, spacing, and font?

APA Style papers require 1-inch (2.54 cm) margins on all sides and double-spacing throughout the entire document. Common fonts include 11-point Calibri or 12-point Times New Roman. Page numbers appear in the top right corner of every page.

2. Explain the difference between a parenthetical and a narrative in-text citation.

A parenthetical citation places the author's last name and the year of publication in parentheses,

typically at the end of a sentence or clause. A narrative citation integrates the author's name directly into the sentence, with the year appearing in parentheses immediately after the author's name. Both serve to acknowledge the source of information.

3. When must you include a page number in an APA in-text citation?

You must include a page number (or paragraph number, if pages are unavailable) whenever you use a direct quote from a source. While not strictly required, including page numbers for paraphrased information can also be helpful for readers to locate the specific passage in the original text.

4. Describe the key formatting rules for the APA reference page.

The reference page starts on a new page with "References" centered and bolded at the top. All entries are double-spaced and arranged alphabetically by the first author's last name. Each entry uses a hanging indent, where the first line is flush left and subsequent lines are indented 0.5 inches (1.27 cm).

5. What are the "Four Elements" that typically make up an APA reference entry?

The four core elements are Author, Date, Title, and Source. The Author identifies who created the work, the Date indicates when it was published, the Title names the work itself, and the Source provides retrieval information (e.g., publisher, journal title, URL).

CLOSING

Where to Go Next

Upon completing this course, your next step is to consistently apply these skills in your own writing. Practice paraphrasing and quoting sources accurately in every assignment. Make source tracking a habit from the very beginning of any research project.

Consider exploring other citation styles, such as MLA or Chicago, if your field or institution requires them. The principles of academic integrity and proper source attribution remain universal, regardless of the specific format.

Further study in academic research methods or advanced academic writing will naturally build upon the foundational skills you have gained here. These subjects will help you refine your ability to find, evaluate, and synthesize information effectively for complex projects.



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