

This document addresses the basics of when to cite, in-text citation format, and block quotations.

In the beginning, you were born with a brain. You have developed that brain very well...well enough to attend college. You have many original and creative thoughts originating in your brain- you own those, no one else! Likewise, others have original and creative thoughts- they own them, as you own yours. This is (basically) the legal concept of Intellectual Property. Your brain and thoughts are your real estate. Others may not trespass.

All students write papers with a combination of creative, original thoughts and information that was found elsewhere. For example, if you are discussing statistics supporting your position in underage drinking and write (I made this up), "There are 3,201 alcohol-related automobile crashes, annually, for those under the age of sixteen"- you must cite this.

'Cite' is short for 'citation'; this is also referred to as 'in-text citations'. Citations are in the text of the paper. Citations are a method to give others' credit for trespassing on their brain real estate. Citations generally take the form of (author, year, page or paragraph number where the information was found) and are placed before the period at the end of a sentence.

EXAMPLE: There are 3,201 alcohol-related automobile crashes, annually, for those under the age of sixteen (Straight, 2013, para. 13).

RULE: You must cite every thought that does not come from your brain.

All you have to do is give credit. It is no big deal. It becomes a big deal when you use another's brain real estate and do not cite. This implies to me (the professor) that you are claiming that the sentences and thoughts are your own. Essentially, not citing equates to stealing another's thoughts (trespassing on their brain real estate). This is called plagiarism. This could ultimately lead to dismissal from college with negative marks on your transcripts.

If you directly quote a source (copy it word for word), all you need to do is place quotation marks at the beginning and end of the quoted material; next, place (author, year, page or paragraph where the information was found) before the period. **Use single-spaced, block formatting if the quote is longer than 40 words- and there are no quotation marks.** Note how this paragraph is formatted; this is 'block formatting'.

See APA Publication Manual 6th Edition, 2010, Rule 4.08.

EXAMPLE: “There are 3,401 ducks in the pond” (Straight, 2013, para. 12).

See APA Publication Manual 6th Edition Rules 6.04 & 6.05

What paragraph number am I talking about? When using an online source- you literally count (from top to bottom) down until you locate the paragraph where you found the information. This is the paragraph number to use in the citation.

If you paraphrase someone else's brain real estate (meaning that you only change a few words), then place (author, year, page or paragraph where the information was found) at the end of the sentence before the period. Easy? Good, moving on...

NEXT, you must provide a Reference Page. A Reference Page comes at the end of your paper. Write the word 'References' at the top center of the page. Then, follow the APA Guide according to where you found the other person's brain real estate. If you found it on a web page (for example), go the APA guide section that says, "Reference Page Formats", find the "Electronic Sources" section, and look for the example on how to reference a web page. There are hundreds of places where another person's brain real estate is found and there are various ways that the APA requires you to format these sources.

Alphabetize your references. There is also something called a 'hanging indent' that the APA requires for reference page formatting; this is where the second line is indented under the first line. The easiest method to accomplish this is press CTRL + T at the very beginning of where you start typing your reference (Microsoft Word). Need an example? Look at how this paragraph is formatted.

See? How easy is that? APA formatting is truly that simple. Now you are an APA Ninja. You will get your black belt when you turn in an assignment with no APA citation errors.