



Parentetical Documentation - APA Style ()

Quick Reference Guide - Herkimer County Community College Library

What is Parentetical Documentation?

As you write a research paper, you will need to refer to sources of information. You must clearly indicate what those sources are, either in the text of your paper or in parentheses. The reader will be able to look at your References list and find complete information about your source. See the handout “APA References Format” for more information.

The parentetical documentation in this example indicates that the information was found in a work by Olsen:

Shakespeare does not portray bailiffs as servants in his plays (Olsen, 2002).

It refers to this source in the References list:

Olsen, Kirstin. (2002). Servants. In *All Things Shakespeare: an Encyclopedia of Shakespeare's World*.

(Vol. 2, p. 594). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

EXAMPLES – PRINTED SOURCES

❖ **Parentetical references typically consist of the author’s last name and the year:**

Critics have tried to label Nabokov’s methods as innovative (Gould, 2003).

❖ **If the author’s name is used in the text, the year of publication follows the author’s name.**

Gould (2003) argued that Nabokov was not an amateur but a talented, fully qualified taxonomist.

❖ **Page numbers are included only for direct quotations or references to a very specific part of the source, such as a figure, a table or an equation. Use the abbreviation *p.* for a single page, or *pp.* for multiple pages.**

Nabokov “worked so long and so intensely in grueling and detailed observation of tiny bits of insect anatomy that his eyesight became permanently compromised” (Gould, 2003, p. 33).

Gould (2003) said that “Nabokov’s excessive love of detail made him a laboratory drudge” (pp. 49-53), a trait he shared with many brilliant theoreticians.

❖ **If the source does not have an author, use a shortened version of the title (if it is very long). If the source is an article, enclose the title in quotation marks. If you have already named the title in your text, give the year in parentheses after the title.**

A shortage of water is an ever-present threat to the people of Israel (Facts About Israel, 2001).

According to “How Companies Are” (2003), applying for various job categories is acceptable.

❖ **A work by two or three authors. Use the ampersand “&” when the authors are in parentheses. If you have already named the authors in your text, give the year in parentheses after their names:**

A recent study (Jacobson & Wauch, 1985) shows that the death penalty is not always warranted.

Research by Jacobson and Wauch (1985) shows that the death penalty is not always warranted.

❖ **More than three authors – use “et al.” after the first author’s name:**

Photographic enlargers usually use a tungsten or quartz-halogen light bulb (Upton et al., 2004).

❖ **A work produced by a corporation, government, or organization:**

- **Refer to the full name and acronym of the group in the first reference:**

New figures for stress-related illnesses reveal a disturbing trend (National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 1999).

- **Use only the acronym if you refer to this source again:**

Researchers differ in approaches to dealing with these new challenges (NIMH, 1999).

- **If there is no acronym, give the name, but shorten it if it is very long:**

By 1992, it was apparent that the health care system had to be changed (Public Agenda Foundation, 1998).

❖ **Two or more sources by different authors in the same parenthetical citation – separate with a semicolon:**

Recent research (Bolter, 2001; Dugan, 1997; Lutz, 2002; Monroe, 1999) confirms this finding.

❖ **A direct quote of forty or more words: Indent the entire quotation ½ inch, double spaced, with no quotation marks. Place your parenthetical citation after the final punctuation mark.**

Gould (2003) says:

Over and over again, Nabokov debunks symbolic readings in the name of respect for factual accuracy as a primary criterion. For example, he criticizes Poe’s symbolic invocation of the death’s-head moth because Poe didn’t describe the animal and even worse, because he placed the species outside its true geographic range. (p. 41)

EXAMPLES – WEB SITES AND INTERNET/DATABASE ARTICLES

Use the same author-date method used for printed materials.

If there is no author, enclose the article title in quotation marks.

Sales of sport utility vehicles dropped significantly in 2005 due to high gasoline prices (Naughton, 2005).

Al Capone entered the United States in 1894 (“Mob Boss Biographies: Al Capone”, 2003).

- **If directly referring to a very specific part of the site (a quotation, table, figure, equation, etc.) give the page number, just like a printed source.**

Some companies have customers with “strong views” (“Culture Wars”, p. 5) on social issues.

- **If there is no page number, use the abbreviation “para.” and give the paragraph number. If there is no paragraph number, use “n. p.”.**

Fagan (1995) predicts a landslide victory in the New Hampshire senatorial election (n. p.).