American Psychological Association (APA)
Numeric Sorting Style
Manual

For the Faculties of Engineering
Medicine and Medical Sciences

# APA-Numeric Sorting Style

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APA-Numeric Sorting Style

The numeric sorting style system is favored in technical fields and lab works where you typically report experimental field or lab work in your document. Basically all styles involve both in-text citations and references’ list; to mention that for every in-text citation there should be a full citation in the references’ list and vice versa.

This guide is divided into two main parts, the in-text citations, and the references’ list.

A. In-Text Citations

- The purpose of the in-text citation is to direct the source for the reader and enable to easily locate the source used in the references’ list at the end of the document.
- The in-text citations are placed within sentences and paragraphs so that it is clear what information is being quoted or paraphrased and whose work is being acknowledged.
- The major difference between the numeric sorting style and other styles is that the numeric style encloses citation numbers within the text of a document in square brackets [1] rather than superscripts.
- When using the numeric sorting style, it is your responsibility to indicate in your text, between brackets, a number that corresponds to a source in your references’ list page. The first source you cite in your text holds the number [1]; the second holds number [2], and so on.
- If the same reference of a source is repeated in the text, it retains its original number, therefore; all references to source number [4] receive a [4] after them in brackets on the same line as the text, before any punctuation, with a space before the bracket.
- All other bibliographical information regarding the citation is reserved for the references’ list at the end of the document.

Example:

“According to one technical writing expert, even though IEEE is the most difficult style to learn, it is still the most valuable style for aspiring engineers to pick up [1].”
Author-name substitution

- The numeric sorting style encourages substituting reference numbers for the name of the author whenever appropriate. *Example:*
  
  "As [1], [2], and [3] demonstrate, the natural course of microprocessor evolution will likely lead to computers with..." 
  
  "According to [2], current internet technology is still years behind industry projections..."

- There are occasions in which the author's name is necessary, such as when citing a theory commonly attributed to one person, where identifying it with the author's name is often essential. *Example:*
  
  "To a large degree, quantum mechanics remains dependent on Einstein's theory of relativity, which states that . . . [1]"

Placement

- Place note numbers directly after the reference rather than at the end of a sentence, unless the sentence ends with the reference itself.

- Place all punctuation outside the square brackets. *Example:*
  
  "One study [2] examined the mRNA levels of Jun C, Jun B, and Jun D in mouse tissues."
  
  "Current internet technology is still years behind industry projections, one study suggested [2]."

- Placement of the citation can be important to the understanding of the reader. *Example 1:*
  
  ...some photographs [2] are not easily reproduced.

  - This sentence means that it is hard to reproduce the photographs published by source [2].
  
  The reader will assume that the writer has actually tried to reproduce these photos.

  *Example 2:*

  Some photographs are not easily reproduced [2].

  - This means that source [2] claimed that it is hard to reproduce some (unspecified) photos.
  
  The reader will assume that [2] tried to reproduce the photos.
Multi-reference citation

- When more than one work is involved in the same citation, separate citation numbers with commas without any spaces. **Example:**
  "Though unlikely, the same effect was reported by [2,7,12]."
- If a sequence of three or more sources occurs in the citation, use a single range separated by a hyphen. **Example:**
  "Motion or centrifugation can speed up the diagnosis of some viral infections [19-22]."

Personal communication and other "non-recoverable" information

- The numeric sorting style recommends that you cite published, forthcoming published works, and unpublished materials available to scholars in a library, or in archive.
- For interviews or other "non-recoverable" information, no citation number is necessary. This does not mean that an attempt to identify the author is unnecessary, but that it needs to be done within the text itself. **Example 1:**
  "In a personal interview with Bill Gates, he suggested that he would soon rule the world."
- The following sentence contains information about the origin of the reference, even without citation. If the sentence were "Bill Gates suggested that he would soon rule the world," the reader would not know where that information came from.

Content, biographical, and additional bibliographic notes

In the interest of brevity, the numeric sorting style discourages the use of content, biographical, and additional bibliographic notes.

Direct quotation

- The below passage is an example of a direct quotation. A specific detail from the book was important enough that the writer reproduced it word-for-word, and gave the appropriate credit to the original author.
• The writer used square brackets to indicate that the original source differs slightly from this reproduction.

• In order to fit the quotation into the grammar of the main sentence, the writer has changed the first letter of the original source from uppercase to lowercase.

• Square brackets signify the addition of clarification material to the quoted passage.

• If you quote more than three lines from an outside source, you should indent the quoted material.

• Provide page number from which the quotation is drawn in your citation in the list of references.

> Previous studies did not address this issue, however, because "[T]hey neglected any effects of liquid surface tension and viscosity, so that their results are applicable only to the initial stages of droplet impact, when these forces are negligible compared to their inertial effects [at the time of impact]" [1].

**Paraphrase**

Without proper documentation, the statement would at best function as mere opinion, and would be of little or no professional value; at worst, you would be guilty of plagiarism.

**B. References**

The second part of this document is the list of references, which should include a list of all sources used by the writer. A good reference contains enough information to lead your reader to the source you used, as concisely as possible. Sources cited or used in the text of a paper must appear in the list of references. Follow the below instructions when formatting and typing the list of references.

• Start the list on a new page titled: References (centered and 12pt.)

• **Arrangement:** Arrange the reference list by the numerical order of the citations, not by alphabetical order.

• **Spacing:** Use double-space all through the list of references, no blank line between entries.
• **Indentation:** Place the number of the entry at the left margin, enclosed in square brackets. Indent all subsequent lines for 1/2 inch (1.27cm) or use tab button to form a "hanging indent".

• **Font:** Use Times New Roman, size 12pt.

• **Margins:** Use uniform margins of 1 inch (2.54cm) at the top, bottom, and left. Leave the right margin ragged.

• **Authors:** Write out the last name and initials for all authors of the used work. Use an ampersand (&) instead of the word "and" when listing multiple authors of a single work. e.g. Smith, J. D., & Jones, M. Use a full stop and one space after each initial.

• **Titles:** Capitalize only the first word of a title or subtitle, and any proper names that are part of a title, as well as titles of journals.

• **Italics:** Use italics for titles of works (e.g., books, journals, e-books, report [technical, government, etc.], dissertation, thesis, film, video, television series, podcast, YouTube video, artwork, map, music album, unpublished manuscript) and volume numbers of periodicals. Do NOT italicize issue numbers.

• **Pagination abbreviation:** Use the abbreviation p. or pp. to designate page numbers of articles from periodicals that do not use volume numbers, especially newspapers; the same applies to encyclopedia articles and chapters from edited books.

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### 1. Types and Variations

For online accessed works and besides following the basic format of each type and variation, additional two pieces of information should be included:

• **Internet address:** A stable internet address should be included to direct the reader as close as possible to the actual work. If the work has a digital object identifier (DOI), use it. If there is no DOI, use a stable uniform resource locator (URL). If the URL is not stable, as is often the case with online newspapers and some subscription-based databases, use the home page of the site you retrieved the work from.

  Break long URL before major punctuation (/ or -) and remove hyperlink.

• **Date:** If the work is a finalized version published and dated, as in the case of a journal article, the date within the main body of the citation is enough. However, if the work is not dated and/or is subject to change, as in the case of an online encyclopedia entry, include the date that you retrieved the information.

A DOI, or digital object identifier, is a unique alphanumeric and permanent identifier, usually found on the abstract page, which will take you straight to a document no matter where it is located on the Internet. Example: doi:10.1108/03090560710821161

### 1.1 Periodicals (Articles in Journals, Magazines, Newspapers, & Newsletters)

• **Articles in Journals**

References for periodicals’ articles should include the following elements: **author(s)**, **date of publication**, **article title**, **journal title**, **volume number**, **issue number** (if available), and **page number(s)**.

In case accessed online and has an assigned DOI number, include it at the end after the pages. If no DOI assigned, add retrieved from followed by the exact URL.

**Basic format:**


**Journal article**


**Journal article, one author, accessed online, with DOI**


Articles in magazines, newspapers, and newsletters

Provide specific date (year, month day) for monthly magazines, newspapers, and newsletter articles.

Magazine article

**Magazine article, accessed online**

**Newspaper article, no author**

- **In case accessed online**

**Newspaper article, multiple authors, discontinuous pages**

**Newsletter article, accessed online**

**Abstract as original source**

### 1.2 Books
References for books should include the following elements: **author(s) or editor(s), date of publication, title and subtitle (edition if applicable), place of publication, and the name of the publisher.** In case no author and no editor available, the title of the book or the chapter will take the first place in the reference.

In case accessed online, you may include the [e-reader book format] in brackets after the title. Add the DOI if available or retrieved from the URL at the end of the reference.

**Basic format:**

Author, A. A. or Editor(s). (year). *Book title: Subtitle* (xxx ed.). Place: Publisher.

**One author**


**Two authors**


**Corporate author, author as publisher**


**Edited book**


- **Essays or chapters in edited books**

References to an essay or chapter in an edited book should include the following elements: **essay or chapter author(s), date of publication, essay or chapter title, book editor(s), book title, essay or chapter page numbers, place of publication, and the name of the publisher.**
Chapter in an edited book

E-Book
- In case the book was accessed online, follow the basic format of referencing a book and add doi or retrieved from URL.


1.3 Reference Work (Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, etc…)
References for encyclopedias should include the following elements: author(s) or editor(s), date of publication, title of the entry, title of the work and pages, place of publication, and the name of the publisher.
For sources accessed online, include the retrieval date after the title as the entry may be edited over time and add the URL.
In case the author is not available the entry of the title will take the place of the author.

Basic format:

Entry in a reference book

**Entry in a reference work, no author, no editor, no date, accessed online**

**Entry from an online encyclopedia, accessed online**

**Entry in Wikis (Wikipedia)**
- Kindly note that Wikis are not recommended in academic research, yet we included an example, as it is included in APA style.


### 1.4 Technical and Research Reports

References for reports should include the following elements: **author(s), date of publication, title of document, place of publication, name of publisher, retrieved from URL.** In case the organization assigned a number (e.g., report number, contract number, or monograph number) to the report, give that number in parentheses immediately after the title.

In case accessed online, include the URL.

**Working paper with report number**
Corporate author, government report, accessed online

Research report from non-governmental organization, accessed online

Report from a private institution, accessed online

1.5 Meetings, Symposia, Conference Paper, and Proceedings
Proceedings of meetings and symposia may be published in book or periodical form; for referencing use the same format as for a chapter in a book or journal article.

*Basic format:*

Paper presented in a conference/meeting

**Contribution to a symposium, accessed online**
In D. D. Chairperson (Chair), *Title of symposium*. Symposium conducted at the meeting of Organization Name, Location. Retrieved from URL.


**1.6 Doctoral Dissertations and Master’s Theses**
References for dissertations and theses should include the following elements: **author, year, title, (type of work), name of institution, location.** In case accessed online add retrieved from the name of database or the URL.

- For unpublished work: Identify (Unpublished type of document) in parentheses after the title.
- If retrieved from a commercial database; use: Available from name of the database followed by the Accession or Order No. in parentheses at the end of the reference.

**Dissertation/Thesis, unpublished**

**Dissertation/Thesis, accessed from a commercial database**
Young, R. F. (2007). *Crossing boundaries in urban ecology: Pathways to sustainable cities*
Dissertation/Thesis, accessed from the web

1.7 Translated Works

- If the original version of a non-English work is used as the source, cite the original version. Give the original title the English translation in brackets right after the title.


- If you used the English translation of a foreign work, include the translator’s name followed by a coma and Trans. in parentheses after the title, also add (Original work published date xxxx) at the end of the reference.


1.8 Website Content, Software, Blogs, and Data Sets

For content that does not easily fit into categories such as journals, books, and reports; keep in mind the goal of a citation is to give the reader a clear path to the source material. For electronic and online materials, include the *author, date, title, format description in brackets, and source.* If a DOI is listed on the database record, include it or provide the stable URL or database name.

**Basic format:**

Author, A. A. (year). Title of entry [Description of entry form, i.e. software, blog post, etc…]. Retrieved from http://xxxxx
• Do not italicize the title of entries from a website, the names of software, apps, programs, or languages. Italicize only the title of data set or a published measurement instrument.
• Provide a retrieval date for entries when the content changes over time. Check example below.

Entry from a website


Software


Mobile application software


Blog post

Data set from a database


Entire website
- When citing an entire website (and not a specific document on that site), no reference list entry is required if the address for the site is cited in the text of your paper.

Witchcraft in Europe and America is a site that presents the full text of many essential works in the literature of witchcraft and demonology (http://www.witchcraft.psmedia.com/).

1.9 Audio-Visual Media
References for audio-visual media should include the following elements: name and function of the primary contributors (e.g., producer, director), copyright year, title, the medium in brackets, location or place of production, and name of the distributor.
In case retrieved online include the URL (address of webpage).

Basic format:
Producer, A. A. (Producer), & Director, B. B. (Director). (year). Title of work [DVD, video file, etc.]. Place: Company name. Retrieved from URL

- Provide home page URL or database name if retrieved online.

DVD/Videocassette
Television series (Entire)/ Motion picture

Streaming video, e.g. YouTube video
- Add the username of the person who posted the video online between brackets after the author.

Interview recording, email
- Personal communication that is not recoverable shall not be included in the references’ list; instead, parenthetically cite the communicator's name, the phrase "personal communication," and the date of the communication in the main text only.
  
  A. P. Smith also claimed that many of her students had difficulties with APA style (personal communication, November 3, 2002).

- In case the interview may be found online, use the basic format of the audio-visual media.

Television show from a series, episode, or webisode
- Use the same format as a chapter in a book, replacing the script writer and director in the author position, and the producer in the editor position.
Music recording

Work of art (photograph, drawing, painting, sculpture, etc.)

**Basic format:**
Artist, A. A. (year). *Title of work* [Photo, painting, drawing, etc.]. Retrieved from URL

- **Original work**

- **Retrieved online**

1.10 Lecture Notes & PowerPoint Slides

**Basic format:**

**Lecture Notes, accessed online**

**PowerPoint slides, accessed online**

**Lecture Notes, not accessed online**
Lecture notes taken by a person are considered 'personal communication' as they are unpublished and 'non-retrievable'. For this reason, they are only cited within in the text and not included in the references’ list. For example, lecture notes taken for a lecture given by Professor N. M. Johnson:

- It is reported that ..... (Professor N. M. Johnson, personal communication, May 15, 2015)
Appendix A: References Example

References


Other citation guides and useful websites:
American Psychological Association's [Website](https://www.apa.org)

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