Introduction to APA Referencing

What is APA referencing?

- An author-date referencing style developed by the American Psychology Association.
- Has two key elements: ‘intext’ referencing and a reference list:
  (The author and date are included in text and are first entries in the reference list)

Why reference?

- To show respect to the person whose work you have used in your assignment
- To acknowledge where you got information from
- To allow tutors to verify that what you say is correct
- To show how widely you have read
- To avoid plagiarism (using others work without acknowledging its source)

When should I reference?

- When you copy someone else’s exact words (direct quote)
- When you paraphrase or summarize someone else’s words (indirect quote)

Terms that need to be understood

APA: American Psychological Association’s referencing system
Referencing: An acknowledgement in your work that you have used someone else’s words or ideas
In-text referencing: An acknowledgement of ideas, information or quotes used within the text of your work. These must be listed in full in the reference list
Direct quote: An exact copy of someone’s words
Indirect quote: Someone else’s ideas put in your own words
Paraphrase: Rewriting someone else’s ideas in your own words
Summarizing: A shortened version of what has been written/said using key points
Reference list: A list of resources used in your assignment
Bibliography: A list of resources used as background reading
Plagiarism: Copying someone else’s work/ideas as if it was your own

When should I record information?

- As you find resources
- As you read the resources (and write notes)
- As you are writing your assignment

NOTE: It is often time consuming and sometimes impossible to find reference information if it is not recorded as you go.
What information needs to be recorded?

- Author’s surname and initials or name of group author
- The date the resource was published
- The title of the resource
- (for books) the edition, editor, place of publication and publisher
- (for journals) the volume, issue or number, and page range
- (for electronic resources) the retrieval date, web address or publisher’s web address
- (for audio visual resources) the producer’s name, place of production, company
- The page number if a direct quote is used

What is the basic format?

- **Intext:**
  - Direct quote: (Author’s surname, date of publication, page number)
    (Roundtree & Laing, 2006, p. 23)
  - Indirect quote: (Author’s surname, date of publication)
    (Roundtree & Laing, 2006)

- **Reference List:**
  - Book:
  - Journal:
  - Web page:

**NOTE:**

i) The reference list is organised alphabetically by the first author’s surname.

ii) All entries in the list have a hanging indent – note above (highlight the whole list and press and hold the ctrl key, press T or for Mac’s press the Apple key instead of the ctrl key).

Reference List


Other relevant Learning Resource Centre Handouts:

- In-text referencing
- Making an APA reference list
- Zotero
- Plagiarism

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