

September 22, 2025

APA Citation Style Guide

In-text citations:

- Arnstein (1969) proposed the Ladder of Citizen Participation that is considered one of the mostly influential models in the discourse of public participation.
- The Ladder of Citizen Participation, represented as a metaphorical ladder, includes eight “rungs” of participation (Arnstein, 1969).
- Arnstein (1969) argued that citizen participation “is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society” (p. 216).

Commented [LW1]: If you generally discuss an idea or concept from other sources. This citation consists of the author’s last name and year of publication.

Commented [LW2]: Same to the previous one. It depends how you organize the sentence.

Commented [LW3]: If you think it is unnecessary to paraphrase and it is important to use the original language, then you can directly copy and paste the sentence with quotation marks! This citation consists of the author’s last name, year of publication, and page number.

If the source is more than 40 words and you would rather want to quote the whole section instead of paraphrase, then use block quotation with ½ inch from the left margin.

The idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it in principle because it is good for you. Participation of the governed in their government is, in theory, the cornerstone of democracy – a revered idea that is vigorously applauded by virtually everyone. The applause is reduced to polite handclaps, however, when this principle is advocated by the have-not blacks, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Indians, Eskimos, and whites. And when the have-nots define participation as redistribution of power, the American consensus on the fundamental principle explodes into many shades of outright racial, ethnic, ideological, and political opposition (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216).

Commented [LW4]: This citation consists of the author’s last name, year of publication, and page number at the end of the sentence. Do not use quotation marks for this citation. Itself is a stand-alone paragraph.

Cite every source that is not yours:

- Book/book chapter (Last name, year)
- Journal article (Last name, year)
- Web page (Name, year)
- Document or page on an organization website with author (Last name, year)
- Document or page on an organization website without author (Organization name, year)
- Legal cases, e.g., Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co., 1926)
- Court decisions, e.g., Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co., 272 U.S. 365 (1926)
- Federal and State Statutes, e.g., The Clean Water Act 33 U.S.C. §§ 1251–1387 (1972)
- Multiple authors in one source
- Two or more works in the same parentheses (Arnstein, 1969; Venturi et al., 1968)

Commented [LW5]: Can be either last name of the author or the name of organization. If the dates are unavailable, then put n.d.

Commented [LW6]: Name of the case, year

Commented [LW7]: Name of the case, volume, reporter page (court year)

Commented [LW8]: Name of Act, title, source, section (year)

Commented [LW9]: The format is much similar to single author which is described on page 1.

- Two authors: Krieger and Saunders (1975) or (Krieger & Saunders, 1975)

- Three or more authors: Venturi et al. (1968) or (Venturi et al., 1968)

Commented [LW10]: When your writing piece includes two or more works, put them same way, alphabetically, separated by a semi-colon.

Page format:

- Double-spaced
- 1-inch margins on all sides
- 12pt. Times New Roman font

Disclaimer:

This guide covers the basics of APA formatting and style. Getting every detail of citation 100% correct in academic writing is much more complex and cannot be fully achieved with this guide alone. The goal here is to help you become familiar with citation practices in a short period of time and avoid plagiarism issues. At this stage, the focus is on citing appropriately, not on technical perfection.