

Comparison of MLA and APA Formats

Signal Phrases and In-Text Citations

MLA--used for English & Humanities

APA—used for Social Sciences

<p>Signal phrases required; always in present or present-perfect tense. Ex: Johnson writes. . . or Johnson has written. . .</p> <p>Use author’s last name, not first name.</p> <p>Signal phrase word bank on p. 523 of <i>Everyone’s an Author</i>.</p>	<p>Signal phrases required; always in past or present perfect tense. Year of publication follows author’s last name. Ex: Smith (2014) claimed . . . or Smith (2014) has claimed . . .</p> <p>When reporting study results or widely established facts, use present tense. Ex: The results show . . . or Scientists agree . . .</p> <p>Signal phrases are not required with a statistic or fact. Ex: Drugs cost \$3 per day on average (Duenwald, 2004).</p> <p>When in doubt, use a signal phrase—it’s not wrong.</p>
<p>Parenthetical citations must include author’s last name and page number(s) if available. Ex: (Williams 27).</p> <p><i>If the author’s name is used in the sentence, it does not need to be included in the parentheses.</i></p>	<p>Parenthetical citations must include author’s last name and publication date. Ex: (Williams, 2009). Page numbers, if available, are required for direct quotes. Use p. for one page and pp. for a range. Ex: (Williams, 2009, pp.2-3)</p> <p><i>If the author’s name and date are used in the sentence the do not need to be included in the parentheses.</i></p>
<p>If there is no author, use the title in the parenthetical citation. Long titles can be abbreviated.</p>	<p>Same as MLA.</p>

Essay Format

MLA

APA

<p>No title page. Name, instructor, course title & date are on separate lines in the upper left corner of the first page. Title centered horizontally above first line of text.</p>	<p>Usually has a title page. Information centered horizontally three to five lines from the top margin; full title, author’s name, school name, course number and name, instructor’s name, and due date on separate lines.</p>
<p>Student’s last name & pg. # printed in upper right corner of every page.</p>	<p>Every page has a page number flush with the right margin.</p>
<p>1-inch margins, left-aligned, double-spaced, 12-point font.</p>	<p>Same as MLA.</p>
<p>No headings.</p>	<p>Headings encouraged for each section (centered/bolded).</p>
<p>Indent each paragraph .5 in.</p>	<p>Same as MLA.</p>

List of Citations

MLA—Titled Works Cited

APA—Titled References

Double spaced, aligned left with a hanging indent, alphabetized.	Same as MLA.
Nine core elements: author, title of source, title of container, other contributors, version, number, publisher, publication date, location.	Four core elements: author, date, title, source.
First author listed as last name, first name. Ex: Welty, Eudora. Second author listed as first name last name. Ex: Harris, Ellen, and Susan Smith. If more than two authors, list only the first author followed by “et al.” Ex: Kramer, Rebecca, et al.	Authors listed as last name, initial(s). Ex: Welty, E. Lists up to twenty authors; an ampersand precedes the last author
Book titles in italics; capitalize every important word in title and subtitle. Ex: <i>Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival</i>	Book titles in italics; capitalize only the first word in the title, the first word in the subtitle, acronyms, and proper nouns. Ex: <i>Brewing justice: Fair trade coffee, sustainability, and survival</i>
Article titles in quotation marks; capitalization rules are the same as for book titles. Ex: “Coffee Consumption and Cardiovascular Health.”	Article titles without quotation marks; capitalization rules are the same as for book titles. Most article titles are not italicized. Ex: Coffee consumption and cardiovascular health. Italicize titles of articles that come from online news sites that are not also in print. Ex: articles from CNN or Huffington Post.
Year of publication is located toward the end of the citation.	Year of publication follows the name(s) of the author(s).
Requires the name of the database an article was retrieved from and a DOI if available. Put a period after the DOI.	Does not require the name of the database. Requires DOI if available. Present DOI as a hyperlink. Ex: https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000185
If a DOI is unavailable, use a stable URL to the article. (do not include “http://”)	Works without DOIs from websites require a URL. Works without DOIs from most academic research databases do not require a URL or database information. Present URLs as hyperlinks. Ex: http://civil-engineering.asce.org (include http://)
Always put a period at the end of the citation.	Do not put a period after the URL or DOI. Otherwise, do end the citation with a period.

APA

Grady, J. S., Her, M., Moreno, G., Perez, C., & Yelinek, J. (2019). Emotions in storybooks: A comparison of storybooks that represent ethnic and racial groups in the United States. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 8(3), 207–217. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000185>

MLA

Chan, Evans. “Postmodernism and Hong Kong Cinema.” *Postmodern Culture*, vol. 10, no. 3, May 2000. *Project Muse*, doi: 10.1353/pmc.2000.0021.