

FAQs for APA In-text Citations

What is an in-text citation?

In the simplest terms, an in-text citation is you giving an author credit within your essay whenever you mention his or her work.

Why do I need them?

Most importantly, in-text citations will prevent you from being accused of plagiarism. They give credit to the authors of the works that you use, and they help your reader to recognize and find your research.

When do I need them?

You'll need an in-text citation any time you mention or depend on someone else's writing or research in your own writing. They should be present in every sentence that utilizes a secondary source. Remember, just because you don't have a quote in a sentence doesn't mean that you don't need an in-text citation.

What needs to be included in them?

Every format has its own rules for in-text citations. In APA, in-text citations include the author's last name and the year the work was published. If you are using a direct quote, it will also include the page number of the quoted material. Often, your citations will be parenthetical, meaning they will be inside parentheses at the end or inside of your sentence.

How do I do them?

Ah. Here's the big question. In-text citations are pretty easy once you have the hang of them, but they can be confusing when you're first starting out. Let's look at this in detail on the next page.

How to Do In-text Citations in APA

How to create the in-text citation will depend on how you are using the secondary source within a particular sentence and on the structure of that sentence. Let's look at a few examples sentences using this article:

Le Roux, M.C., & Kemp, R. (2009). Effect of a companion dog on depression and anxiety levels of elderly residents in long-term care facilities. *Psychogeriatrics*, 9, 23-26. doi: 10.1111/j.1479-8301.2009.00268.x

Example 1: Le Roux and Kemp (2009) found that companion dogs decreased the rates of depression in nursing home residents but had no effect on rates of anxiety.

Note: When you use the author's name(s) in the sentence, you will put the year in parentheses directly after the author's name.

Example 2: In recent years, studies have shown that companion dogs can decrease depression among nursing home residents (Le Roux and Kemp, 2009).

Note: If you do not use the author's name in the sentence, then both the name and the year will come in parentheses at the end of the sentence. The name and year will be separated with a comma, and the period for the sentence will always go after the parentheses.

Example 3: In 2009, Le Roux and Kemp's study showed that companion dogs can lower rates of depression in nursing home patients.

Note: Since both the author's name and the year are mentioned within the sentence, nothing needs to be in parentheses.

Using Quotes

Example 4: One study found that "AAA visits can make a difference in the depression levels of residents in long-term care facilities" (Le Roux and Kemp, 2009, p. 25).

Note: If you use a quote, then your in-text citation must include a page number in addition to the author's name and year. The page number should be preceded with "p." and it will follow the name and year. All three should be separated with commas.

Example 5: Le Roux and Kemp's (2009) study found that "AAA visits can make a difference in the depression of residents in long-term care facilities" (p. 25) but did not find that these visits had any effect on rate of anxiety.

Note: If you use the author's name in the sentence, put the year directly after the name in parentheses as you would normally. Then put the page number in parentheses directly after the quotation marks.

All information for this handout is taken from the sixth edition of the APA manual. Hopefully, this handout gives you a basic idea of what in-text citations are and how to do them. However, it is in no way an exhaustive list of all of the rules of in-text citations. For questions about repeated citations, citing information from websites, citing sources with multiple authors, or anything else, we encourage you to take a look at the APA handbook or come visit us in the Writing Center.