

Parenthetical Citation or In-text Citation

A parenthetical citation is when a writer directly puts into the text a note from where he or she got the information. These citations allow your reader to know from what source each idea/fact came. This is how it looks in the text of your paper:

“In 2007, 37 percent of American adults sought medical information from the internet regarding a health problem they were experiencing before consulting a doctor” (Smith 38).

In the example above, notice that the author’s name and the page number on which this fact was found are set off from the text within parentheses. Note the punctuation. The author and page number go inside the parentheses, but the period of the sentence goes outside. The reader would understand from this citation that on page 38 of Smith’s book, this fact is mentioned. Furthermore, since the words are contained within quotes, the above example illustrates that this is a direct quote from that page.

Here is an example of the same idea presented as an indirect quote:

Instead of going to a doctor right away, a recent study found that 37 percent of Americans are now turning to the Internet for medical information (Smith 38).

In the above indirect quote, the information is still worth citing, but the writer used his own words.

Remember:

The purpose of a parenthetical citation is to point your reader to referenced work in your Bibliography or Works Cited.

Parenthetical Predicament	Example
Author in Reference When you do NOT mention the author’s name in your sentence, the author’s name and page number are placed in parentheses at the end of your sentence followed by a period.	The sinking of the Titanic has been called one of the greatest disasters of all time (Benton 28).
Author in Text When you mention the author’s name in your sentence, the page number is placed in parentheses at the end of the sentence followed by a period.	Benton asserts that the Titanic has been called one of the greatest disasters of all time (28).
Work Listed by Title When the work has NO AUTHOR begin with the word by which the resource is alphabetized in your works-cited list. If the work is mentioned in your text, simply give the page reference.	International espionage was as prevalent as ever in the 1990s (“Decade” 26). As discussed in “Decade of the Spy,” international espionage was as prevalent as ever in the 1990s (26).