Quoting Sources in APA

Basic Notes

- Citations in APA usually include three elements: the author’s last name (surname), the year the work was published, and the page number the quote comes from. The writer may choose to use signal phrases to include this information, but APA also allows the writer to place all the information in a parenthetical citation at the end of the source information.
- For more examples of the two strategies, refer to APA In-Text Citation Basics.
- APA always uses either present-perfect or past-tense verbs in signal phrases.
- Unlike MLA, APA states that “the first letter of the first word in a quotation may be changed to an uppercase or a lowercase letter” without any explanation.
- The closing punctuation of a sentence may be changed as well “to fit the syntax.”
- However, use brackets when inserting “an addition or explanation” of the quoted data.
- Reference list entries will have a different format depending on what type of source is being referenced. Moreover, there are sometime different formats depending on what part of a source is used. For example, citing only the introduction of a book may require a different format than citing information from the main body of the work.
- As with MLA, all in-text citations should correspond with a reference list entry.

Example 1

Example one In-Text Citation:
Many students today believe they can just quickly throw together an acceptable manuscript; however, “writing is an art, a craft, a skill, a technique” (Jones, 1998, p.11) that takes time and effort.

- The example above does not use a signal phrase.
- In this example, the first t of the quotation has been changed to a lower case letter to maintain grammatical correctness.

Matching Reference Page Citation for Example 1:

- The print version of an entire book is cited above.
- Format:
  Author, A. A. (year). Title of book. Location: Publisher.
Example 2

Example 2 In-Text Citation:
Jones (1998) stated that “technical prose, like any other prose, is often ineffective because writers not only fail to remember they are writing for people, no matter how technical the subject, but also because writers take too much for granted about the craft of writing” (p. 11).

- This quotation is introduced by a signal phrase, which must include, at minimum, the author’s last name, the year of publication in parentheses, and a past-tense verb.

Matching Reference Page Citation for Example 2:

- This second example cites only the chapter in a printed book. Since only one chapter is used, a slightly different format than was used in Example 1 should be followed.
- The editor of this work is the Series’ Ed. so he is noted as such.
- Format:
  Author, A. A. (year). Title of chapter. In A. Editor (Ed.) Title of book (pp. xx-xxx). Location: Publisher.