

Strategies and Resources for Using Chicago, APA, and MLA Documentation Styles

When writing academic papers, proper citation is crucial to avoid plagiarism and give credit to original sources. Three of the most commonly used documentation styles include Chicago, APA, and MLA. Each has specific requirements for formatting, in-text citations, and reference lists. Below is a detailed guide to help students navigate these styles.

Chicago Documentation Style.

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) offers two systems: Notes and Bibliography (commonly used in humanities) and Author-Date (used in sciences and social sciences).

Notes and Bibliography System:

1. **In-text Citations:** Use superscript numbers corresponding to footnotes or endnotes.
 - Example: The theory was first posited in 1995.
2. **Footnotes/Endnotes:** Provide full citation details the first time a source is mentioned and shortened citations thereafter.
 - Example (first citation): ¹John Smith, *Title of Book* (Place of publication: Publisher, Year), page number.
 - Example (subsequent citation): ²Smith, *Title of Book*, page number.
3. **Bibliography:** A separate page listing all sources used.
 - Example: Smith, John. *Title of Book*. Place of publication: Publisher, Year.

Author-Date System:

1. **In-text Citations:** Include author's last name and year of publication in parentheses.
 - Example: (Smith 1995).
2. **Reference List:** Alphabetically list all sources cited in the text.
 - Example: Smith, John. 1995. *Title of Book*. Place of publication: Publisher.

Resources:

- The Chicago Manual of Style Online: www.chicagomanualofstyle.org
- Purdue OWL: Chicago Style Guide

Tips:

- Pay attention to the type of source (e.g., book, article, website) for correct formatting.
- Use citation tools like Zotero or EndNote for managing references.

APA Documentation Style.

The American Psychological Association (APA) style is widely used in the social sciences, education, and psychology.

In-text Citations:

1. **Author-Date Format:** Include author's last name and year of publication.
 - Example: (Smith, 1995).
2. **Direct Quotes:** Include page number(s).
 - Example: (Smith, 1995, p. 23).

Reference List:

- **Books:** Author's Last Name, First Initial. (Year). *Title of book*. Publisher.
 - Example: Smith, J. (1995). *Title of book*. Publisher.
- **Journal Articles:** Author's Last Name, First Initial. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Journal*, volume number(issue number), page range.
 - Example: Smith, J. (1995). Title of article. *Title of Journal*, 10(2), 123-145.
- **Websites:** Author's Last Name, First Initial. (Year, Month Day). Title of webpage. Site Name. URL
 - Example: Smith, J. (1995, January 15). Title of webpage. Site Name. <https://www.example.com>

Resources:

- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association: [APA Style](#)
- Purdue OWL: APA Style Guide

Tips:

- Ensure accuracy in author names, dates, and titles.
- Utilize the APA Style website for guidelines on less common source types.

MLA Documentation Style.

Overview: The Modern Language Association (MLA) style is commonly used in the humanities, particularly in writing on language and literature.

In-text Citations:

1. **Author-Page Format:** Include the author's last name and page number(s) without a comma.
 - Example: (Smith 23).
2. **Multiple Authors:** For two authors, use both names. For more than two, use the first author's last name followed by "et al."
 - Example: (Smith and Jones 45) or (Smith et al. 78).

Works Cited:

- **Books:** Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year.
 - Example: Smith, John. *Title of Book*. Publisher, 1995.
- **Journal Articles:** Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, vol. number, no. number, Year, pages.
 - Example: Smith, John. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, vol. 10, no. 2, 1995, pp. 123-145.
- **Websites:** Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Webpage." *Website Name*, Day Month Year, URL.
 - Example: Smith, John. "Title of Webpage." *Website Name*, 15 Jan. 1995, <https://www.example.com>.

Resources:

- MLA Handbook: MLA Style
- Purdue OWL: MLA Style Guide

Tips:

- Double-check formatting for various source types, as MLA has specific rules for each.
- Utilize citation generators but always verify their accuracy.

General Strategies for All Documentation Styles

1. **Understand the Basics:** Familiarize yourself with the fundamental principles of each style.
2. **Use Reliable Resources:** Refer to official manuals, trusted academic websites, and university writing centers.
3. **Practice Consistency:** Ensure that the chosen documentation style is applied consistently throughout your paper.
4. **Review Examples:** Look at sample papers and citation examples to understand the application of rules.
5. **Use Citation Tools:** Utilize tools like Zotero, Mendeley, or citation generators like Citation Machine, but always double-check for accuracy.
6. **Seek Assistance:** Don't hesitate to ask professors, librarians, or writing tutors for help with complex citations.