The APA (American Psychological Association) style requires two elements: in-text citations throughout your assignment, and a reference list at the end.

1. Throughout the text: In-text citations

Include information about a source within the text of your assignment:

- the name of the author or authors
- the year of publication
- the page number (see below for further information).

Citations may be placed at the end of a sentence before the concluding punctuation in brackets.

Paraphrase of the source in your own words

Encouraging students to memorise information and then testing their memory has been a consistent criterion of pedagogy (Broudy, 1998).

Broudy (1998, p. 8) explains that memorisation does not result in an ability to solve problems.

Quotation (exact words from the source)

Broudy (1998, p. 9) argues that “on the common criteria for schooling, our sample citizen has failed because he cannot replicate the necessary skill or apply the relevant principles”.

2. At the end: References

At the end of the text, include a list of references; a single list of all the sources of information you have cited in your assignment. Begin the reference list on a new page and title it “References”. Centre the title on the page. Each entry should have a hanging indent.

Each list item requires specific bibliographic information. For example, in the case of a book, ‘bibliographical details’ refers to: author/editor, year of publication, title, edition, place of publication and publisher, as found in the title pages (some details will vary).


List each item in alphabetical order (by author surname). Titles should be in italics. All of the references included in the list must also be cited in the text.

When to include page numbers

When you quote a source (reproduce material word for word), page numbers are required. When paraphrasing or referring to an idea contained in another work, the APA publications manual 6th edn. (p. 171) encourages you to provide page numbers, to help the reader locate the
information in a long text. However, this is not a ‘compulsory’ requirement. Check with your 
lecturer about their preferences on the inclusion or exclusion of page numbers for paraphrased 
information in your assignments.

Next: How to cite using APA referencing