

# the Writing Centers at Saint Mary's

Winona and Minneapolis

## APA Style: FAQs for In-text Citations

### How do I cite within my essay?

You can cite either in a running text citation or in a parenthetical citation. To cite in running text means to place the author's name in the sentence without parentheses: The trend of decreasing physical activity led Bucksch et al. (2016) to demand "interventions for this population" (p. 421). ← Provide page numbers for exact quotes.

To cite parenthetically means to place the author's name inside parentheses along with the date (and page number, if used), as follows: Currently, most teens do not get the recommended amount of moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) every day (Straatman et al., 2016).← Note end punctuation after citation. See p. 21 of [Intro to APA](#) for more information.

### How often do I have to cite?

You must cite each sentence in which you are using an idea, a paraphrase, or original words (an exact quotation) from a source. In addition, you should cite all information that isn't "common knowledge" even if this is information you learned previously. This might mean that every sentence in your essay is cited, which is not wrong or uncommon. See pp. 19-22 of [Intro to APA](#) for more information.

Here are some ideas on how to vary your wording:

### How can I vary the way I introduce sources?

- Stieglitz and Hernandez (2002) emphasized ...← Use past tense when citing.
- Three earlier studies (Gudmund et al., 2004; Willum, 2000; Wright & Formani, 2006) were inconclusive...← Use & in parenthetical citations.
- According to Khali and Kozumi (2000), earlier research failed to...
- Zarweit (2007) responded, "At no time were the subjects informed" (p. 92).
- Czel (1999) defined sensation seeking as behavior that...
- ...but the results were inconclusive (Hammel, 2003).

See pp. 22-24 of [Intro to APA](#) for more information.

### How do I use *et al.*?

*Et al.* is the abbreviation for the Latin phrase *et alia*, which means "and others." We use it to avoid having to type out multiple names for sources with more than two authors. Here are the rules for using it:

- If a source has one to two authors, you should spell out all of the names for each in-text citation (Matsuda & Smith, 2009).
- If a source has three or more authors, you spell out the first surname and use "et al." (Straatman et al., 2016). Note the period after "al."

You can learn more on p. 22 of [Intro to APA](#).

### What if there is no author or date?

If a source has no named author, you should look for an organizational author and cite it (APA, 2013). If there is no organizational author, you should cite the first part of the title ("Global," 2012). If there is no date listed, you should use the abbreviation n.d., which stands for "no date" (Smith, n.d.). See p. 12 of [Intro to APA](#) for more information.

