



## UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

cultivating purpose-driven writers, communicators, & influencers  
write + revise + persuade

### Inserting In-Text Citations

Sydney Aguas

The purpose of this article is to help students construct usable citations throughout their essays and to help them recognize the differences between several citation formats.

#### In-Text Citations

Most college- and graduate-level essays will require you to use information from other sources to support your claims – whether a quote from a book, the paraphrasing of an article, or a statistic from a website. Anytime you use information that is not original to you, you need to acknowledge the work that helped you write your paper. In addition to writing a bibliography page, you must include in-text citations, either parenthetical or footnote references, in the body of your essay.

The in-text citation includes information that corresponds to the citation in the bibliography. Your readers should be able to read the reference in your sentence and be directed to the bibliography to find out how they can access the material you have used in your paper. This information will usually include the author of your source and a page number or year. There are three main ways to write in-text citations: **narrative**, **parenthetical**, and **footnotes**. In a narrative in-text citation, include the name or title of the source in your sentence and then insert the date or page number in parentheses at the end of your sentence. In a parenthetical in-text citation, include all your source information in the parentheses at the end of your sentence. In footnotes, cite your source information in numbered notes listed in the footer at the bottom of your page.

#### A Note About Formatting Styles

In-text citations look slightly different depending on which formatting style you are using. The three formatting styles most commonly used are **APA** (American Psychological Association), **MLA** (Modern Language Association), and **CMOS** (Chicago Manual of Style). APA format is typically used for essays in the sciences, while MLA format is typically used for essays in the arts and humanities. CMOS is also used for the humanities and sciences. For APA, include the author's last name and the date of the source in your in-text citation. For MLA, include the author's last name and the page number in your in-text citation. For CMOS, there are two different methods for in-text citations: the *notes and bibliography system* and the *author-date system*. The notes and bibliography system uses footnotes, while the author-date uses a parenthetical citation. Footnotes must include the author's full name, the source title, the place of publication, the publisher, the date, and the page numbers referenced. The author-date system uses a parenthetical citation, which includes the author's last name, the date of the source, and the page number.

#### Examples

*In-Text Citations: APA*

##### Narrative

Williams (2015) claims that "writing is the highest form of communication" for all people.

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951-343-4349 • [writing@calbaptist.edu](mailto:writing@calbaptist.edu) • @cbuwrites

### Parenthetical

Of the ways we can communicate our beliefs, “writing is the highest form of communication” (Williams, 2015).

### *In-Text Citations: MLA*

#### Narrative

Judy Williams argues that “writing is the highest form of communication” (17).

#### Parenthetical

Essays should be written carefully because “writing is the highest form of communication” (Williams 17).

### *In-Text Citations: CMOS*

#### Notes and Bibliography

In college, students quickly discover that “writing is the highest form of communication.”<sup>1</sup>

#### Author-Date

Scholars and educators agree that “writing is the highest form of communication” (Williams 2015, 17).

### **Tips**

1. When researching and writing, keep a list of required information for each source (i.e., author, date, page number) so you don’t have to search for it later. Better yet, write down the full citation on a Word or Google doc or use a digital research assistant like Zotero.
2. Incorporate in-text citations as you research and take notes. That way, you are sure to credit your sources properly, avoiding accidental plagiarism by forgetting to cite.
3. Remember that APA focuses on the date while MLA focuses on page numbers. CMOS requires footnotes instead of parenthetical citations.

### **Works Consulted**

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