

Integrating and Using Quotes (APA 7th Style)¹

Why Use Quotes?

It is important to include quotes in your work because they show that your ideas are correct, illustrate your point of view, and demonstrate how you arrived at an original idea of your own.⁶ There are two main ways of integrating quotes into your writing—directly quoting and paraphrasing. This handout will discuss how to smoothly and properly integrate direct quotes into your work. Please note that all examples will be in APA 7th formatting. See [Changes in the 7th Edition](#) for differences between APA 6th and 7th.

Altering Quotes

Sometimes you find a quote for your essay that is written in the wrong tense, grammatically incorrect, is too long to include in your paper, or does not make sense when taken out of the context of its original text. You can still use these quotes in your paper, but it is important that you alter them correctly.

Long Quotes

What determines a long quote varies by style but the format remains the same. In APA, quotes that are 40 words or longer; in MLA, long quotes are quotes that exceed four lines of prose or three lines of poetry; and in Chicago, quotes that are 100 words or longer.⁷

These long quotes are set off from the rest of the paragraph by starting on a new line with no additional space before and after the quote, and indenting the entire quotation by half an inch from the left margin.⁹ You do not include quotation marks and the period should be placed at the end of the sentence rather than after the citation.⁹

For example:

Commenters do not flood the comment section to be rude, and instead attempt to inform Reddit user the_bird_of_legend that they need to be a bit more open when it comes to selecting movies to watch:

¹ This handout was produced by Cristela Alvaran, Sabrina Futia, & Tina Farokhifar, WLS student staff, August 2021.

Out of the over 1,000 films released worldwide annually, less than 10 are probably reboots and remakes. You've got plenty of other films to choose from. You act like the vast majority of films are reboots and remakes...that's far from being the case. (Indiana_Jones_5)

These commenters, as rude or nice as they are being, care about this discussion enough to make their comments.

Note: in a typical paper, the above text would be double-spaced and 12-pt; regardless of if your paper is single- or double-spaced, you must maintain consistent spacing throughout. There is no spacing before and after the quote in APA formatting.

Only use long quotations if you think it would be impossible to eliminate part of it and still retain the quality of your argument.⁷ If you do use long quotations, make sure you do not overuse them as it can affect the flow of your paper.

Ellipses (...)

An ellipsis is used to tell a reader that a part of the original quote has been omitted.⁵ A long quote can be cut down to a short quote by using ellipses to remove the information that is not necessary for your paper. Ensure that there is a space on either side of the ellipses. For example:

Commenters do not flood the comment section to be rude, and instead attempt to inform Reddit user the_bird_of_legend that they need to be a bit more open when it comes to selecting movies to watch: “Out of the over 1,000 films released worldwide annually, less than 10 are probably reboots and remakes ... You act like the vast majority of films are reboots” (Indiana_Jones_5). These commenters, as rude or nice as they are being, care about this discussion enough to make their comments.

Now that this quote is less than 40 words, it can be included directly in the body paragraph, and it is clear from the ellipses that a portion of it has been removed.

[Square Brackets]

If you find a quote that is written in a different tense than your paper, does not make sense when taken out of its original context, or is grammatically incorrect, it is okay to make changes to the quote. These changes are signalled by putting them in square brackets. For instance, the following example uses this quote:

“Nor is meaning in any sense simply ‘in’ the document itself. Rather, it is constructed by

the ‘community of interpretation’ around the text or document under consideration”
(Brown & Duguid, Year, p. #).

But to integrate this quote into their essay, the writer needed to reword the beginning of the sentence without changing its meaning:

Brown and Duguid (Year) say it best: “meaning [is not] in any sense simply ‘in’ the document itself. Rather, it is constructed by the ‘community of interpretation’ around the text or document under consideration” (p. #).

[sic]

If you are quoting a Tweet or comment that has a lot of grammatical errors or slang, you want to show your reader that you did not make a mistake in typing out the quote or forget essay rules.⁸ Rather than correcting these errors with square brackets and changing the meaning of the comment, you can put *[sic]*, italicized and in brackets, after the error.¹⁰ For example, this is a comment from a Reddit post that was used in an essay, is in long quote form (over 40 words), and uses *[sic]*:

This issue I have with things like this is that you may enjoy a remake more than the original. As beloved as It *[sic]* was with Tim curry *[sic]* the new remake was better. Yes a lot of reboots are made solely for the money but that doesn’t mean they are not good. I wish people gave the remakes a chance before crapping *[sic]* all over them for being a remake. Just cuz *[sic]* it’s remade doesn’t mean it can’t be a source of entertainment.
(crazyfool319)

Sic is used here because “It” should be italicized as it is a film title, the C in “Tim curry” should be capitalized because it is a name, and “crapping” and “cuz” are slang terms that should not be included in formal essays.

When and How to Use Quotes

Usually, quotes are not used in the introduction of an essay or in the first sentence of a body paragraph. Quotes come after the topic sentence of a body paragraph to illustrate your claim.⁶ A quote should never go in a sentence by itself because you risk using it out of context.⁶

When using a quote, think of it as an essay in itself—it provides an argument and needs an introduction and conclusion to give context and clarity.⁷ There are **six steps** to integrating a quote into your work:

Step One: Topic Sentence

The topic sentence is a statement that tells the readers what the rest of the paragraph will be about and what your quote will be referring to.⁶ For example:

The lack of precision in Kanye West’s (2016) lyrics is not necessarily a problem when it comes to understanding the message of his song “Famous,” as the meaning of the lyrics can be interpreted even though they are not grammatically correct.

Step Two: Introduce the Quote

The first time you use a quote from a source, introduce the author’s full name and the title of the work that the quotation comes from.⁷ For example:

The lack of precision in Kanye West’s (2016) lyrics is not necessarily a problem when it comes to understanding the message of his song “Famous,” as the meaning of the lyrics can be interpreted even though they are not grammatically correct. **As Jila Ghomeshi (2010) writes in *Grammar Matters: The Social Significance of How We Use Language*,**

Try not to get stuck saying “he says/she says” before the quote.⁶ Use **signal phrases**: words that transition smoothly into the quote.⁶ Some signal phrases are:

Adds	Claims	Illustrates	Reasons
Admits	Comments	Implies	Says
Agrees	Compares	Insists	States
Argues	Demonstrates	Notes	Suggests
Asserts	Denies	Observes	Thinks
Believes	Emphasizes	Points Out	Writes

(list taken from *The Learning Centre*)

If there are two authors, follow the same rule of including their surnames, with “**and**” between the names if they are outside the brackets, and “**&**” between the names if they are inside the brackets.¹¹ For three or more authors, include only the first author’s surname followed by “**et al.**”¹¹ If there is no known author, include only the title.

Examples:

There are some who believe that out of all the fruit, the apple is the best (Adams & Reed, 2021).

Adams and Reed (2021) are among those who believe that out of all the fruit, the apple is the best.

Patel et al. (2018) are among those who believe that the orange is the superior fruit.

In 2018, one of the topics that arose on the “trending list” on Twitter was an unsettling question: “is water wet?” (Nowak et al., 2019).

For more information, see: Purdue Owl’s [In-Text Citations: The Basics](#) and [In-Text Citations: Author/Authors](#) (APA 7th).

Step Three: State the Quote

This is where you write the quote itself. Unless the quote is written in the right tense, has no grammatical errors and is short enough to fit in the body paragraph, ensure that you follow the guidelines for using long quotes, ellipses, square brackets, and sic. For example:

The lack of precision in Kanye West’s (2016) lyrics is not necessarily a problem when it comes to understanding the message of his song “Famous,” as the lyrics can be interpreted even though they are not grammatically correct. As Jila Ghomeshi (2010) writes in *Grammar Matters: The Social Significance of How We Use Language*, “**precision ... can only be assessed in terms of how accurately a message has been conveyed, not in the terms of the form the message has taken**” (p. 62).

There are a number of ways to transition from the introduction of the quote to the quote itself:

1. Write a complete sentence followed by a colon and then the quote:⁶

Example: Jila Ghomeshi (2010) writes the following in *Grammar Matters: The Social Significance of How We Use Language*: “precision ... can only be assessed in terms of how accurately a message has been conveyed, not in the terms of the form the message has taken” (p. 62).

2. Write an incomplete sentence followed by a comma and then the quote:⁶

Example: As Jila Ghomeshi (2010) writes in *Grammar Matters: The Social Significance of How We Use Language*, “precision ... can only be assessed in terms of how accurately a message has been conveyed, not in the terms of the form the message has taken” (p. 62).

3. Write a statement that ends in *that* or a signal phrase and then the quote:⁶

Example: In *Grammar Matters: The Social Significance of How We Use Language*, Jila

Ghomeshi (2010) writes that “precision ... can only be assessed in terms of how accurately a message has been conveyed, not in the terms of the form the message has taken” (p. 62).

4. Move right into the quote without using a signal phrase:⁶

Example: In *Grammar Matters: The Social Significance of How We Use Language*, Jila Ghomeshi (2010) explains that a metaphor “refers to the use of the one concept to understand and talk about another, unrelated concept” (p. 60).

Step Four: Summarize the Quote

This step is important as it allows the reader to understand the quote in a way similar to your own understanding.⁶ To do this, rephrase the quote in your own words by saying “In other words...”, “This refers to...”,⁷ “This quotation shows that...”, etc. For example:

The lack of precision in Kanye West’s (2016) lyrics is not necessarily a problem when it comes to understanding the message of his song “Famous,” as the lyrics can be interpreted even though they are not grammatically correct. As Jila Ghomeshi (2010) writes in *Grammar Matters: The Social Significance of How We Use Language*, “precision ... can only be assessed in terms of how accurately a message has been conveyed, not in the terms of the form the message has taken” (p. 62). **This quotation explains that precision in grammar is not necessary to communicate.**

Step Five: Analyze the Quote

Analyzing is different from summarizing. When analyzing the quote, you are breaking it down and examining its parts in order to reach its meaning.⁷ This can be done by identifying key words or phrases to help explain the significance of the quote.⁷ For example:

The lack of precision in Kanye West’s (2016) lyrics is not necessarily a problem when it comes to understanding the message of his song “Famous,” as the lyrics can be interpreted even though they are not grammatically correct. As Jila Ghomeshi (2010) writes in *Grammar Matters: The Social Significance of How We Use Language*, “precision ... can only be assessed in terms of how accurately a message has been conveyed, not in the terms of the form the message has taken” (p. 62). This quotation explains that precision in grammar is not necessary to communicate: **when the message can be understood in its conveyance to the listener, it is precise.**

Step Six: State the Quote’s Relevance to Your Argument

This is the most important step because it ties your quotation back into the rest of the paper.⁷ You can do this by drawing a connection between the quote and your argument.⁷ For example:

The lack of precision in Kanye West's (2016) lyrics is not necessarily a problem when it comes to understanding the message of his song "Famous," as the lyrics can be interpreted even though they are not grammatically correct. As Jila Ghomeshi (2010) writes in *Grammar Matters: The Social Significance of How We Use Language*, "precision ... can only be assessed in terms of how accurately a message has been conveyed, not in the terms of the form the message has taken" (p. 62). This quotation explains that precision in grammar is not necessary to communicate: when the message can be understood in its conveyance to the listener, it is precise. **Ultimately, the grammatical incorrectness of West's lyrics does not need to be considered if listeners can still figure out their meaning.**

You should never end a paragraph with a quote without explaining its significance to your argument.⁷

Additional Information

For demonstration purposes, the examples here in this document are all in 11-point font and single spaced, however, please note that APA 7th formatting requires **12-point font** and **double spacing**.

For **direct quotations**, you must include the following components:

1. Author's last name
2. Year of work's publication or "n.d." if no date is indicated
3. Page or paragraph number ("p." for page, "pp." for page spans, "para." for paragraph, and "paras." for paragraphs)⁹

Some sources, such as web pages, do not have page numbers; this is when you would count the paragraphs and use "para." before the number.⁹ Depending on how you write your sentence, you may choose to mention the author's name or leave it in the brackets. If the name is in the sentence, you must include the year in brackets after it.

If there is no author, you would write the title of the article/work in place of the author's name and use only the first few words if the article title is long¹²; i.e. for an article titled "Missing dog found on the roof of an abandoned building," one may write "Missing Dog Found".

Examples:

It is expressed twenty three times that "apples are the superior fruit" (Adams, 2021, pp. 57-89).

Adams (2021) stated that "apples are the superior fruit" (p. 88).

Two children playing in an abandoned building reported “[they] heard the sound of a dog barking above [them]” and went to investigate (Missing Dog Found, 2004).

For **paraphrases**, you must include the following components:

1. Author’s last name
2. Year of work’s publication or “n.d.” if no date is indicated
3. *Optional*: Page number (APA encourages including page ranges for a paraphrase/summary if it will help the reader find the information in a longer work⁹)

Examples:

There are some who believe that out of all the fruit, the apple is the best (Adams, 2021, pp. 57-89).

Adams (2021) is one of many who believe that out of all the fruit, the apple is the best.

Its nutritional content is one of the reasons why the apple is the best fruit (Adams, 2021).

Resources/Links:

If you have a physical copy of this document, enter the URL into your device’s search bar to access the resource or search the listed name of the resource (e.g. enter “shorturl.at/yGIX0” in your search bar to access the “How to Paraphrase” handout)

- [How to Paraphrase](https://shorturl.at/yGIX0) handout (shorturl.at/yGIX0, also available in physical form at WLS)
- Learning Support’s [Online Resources](#)
- Comprehensive guides:
 - Curtin University’s APA 7th Guide (printable):
<https://libguides.library.curtin.edu.au/uniskills/referencing/apa7>
 - Owl Purdue APA Style:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html
 - [In-Text Citations: The Basics](#)
 - [In-Text Citations: Author/Authors](#)
 - Ryerson University’s APA 7th Basic Style Guide:
 - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MbRhewT8nNBRY6CCqh0HJBuW1yGMQWvESdCAZG1235k/edit>
 - American Psychological Association:
 - [In-Text Citations](#)
 - [Paper Format](#)
 - [Mechanics of Style](#)

Sources:

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<https://apastyle.apa.org/learn/faqs/web-page-no-author>