

# Psycholinguistics modules and papers

## APA referencing style (7th edition)

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There are several different referencing styles you are likely to encounter in academia. For example:

- **APA** is used in the fields of *psycholinguistics* and *psychology*.
- **Harvard** is typically used in other areas of *language* and *applied linguistics*.
- **MHRA** is used for *drama*, *literature*, *medieval*, and *creative writing*.

If you are a University of Nottingham student, **Harvard** and **MHRA** are covered in the *Assessments Handbook* (available on the *Community Hub* moodle pages).

This guide provides an intro and general guidance for the **APA referencing style** (currently the APA 7th edition).

Only the essentials are covered here. For further details and guidance, there are plenty of online resources - a couple are linked at the end of this guide.

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## When to use APA style

APA referencing style is used in *psycholinguistics*, *psychology*, and related fields.

In terms of University of Nottingham **modules**, use this style for:

- any psycholinguistic topic on ***Studying Language*** (ENGL1002)
- all assessments on ***Language Development*** (ENGL2016)
- all assessments on ***Language and the Mind*** (ENGL3051)
- all assessments on ***Psychology of Language*** (ENGL4036)
- any psycholinguistic topic for a ***Dissertation***
- all portfolio pieces for ***Calls, Speech, Writing, and Sign Language*** (AE215)
- all portfolio pieces for ***Words and Multiword Units*** (AE234)
- any psycholinguistic topic for an Applied English ***Hexapod*** (AE006)

For **academic papers**, APA style is used by journals in *psycholinguistics*, *psychology*, and many other fields, such as *communication*. Check a journal's submission guidance to see which style they require. Conference papers typically have a required style too - again, check the guidance for the particular conference you are submitting to.

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## In-text citations

In-text citations take the format of **AUTHOR SURNAME, YEAR**.

✓ (Hori, 2001)

Do not include the name of the work that you are citing. You also should not mention the role or profession of the author.

✓ Sakura (2014) claims that...

✗ The renowned author and psycholinguist Futaba Sakura claims that...

✗ In her 2014 article "Exploring cognition in digital environments", Sakura claims that...

If the author's name forms part of the sentence, then the year goes in brackets immediately after; if the author's name is not part of the sentence, then the name and year both go in brackets.

✓ Hori (2001) claims that the blue slime is extremely iconic.

✓ Research has shown that the blue slime is easily recognised (Hori, 2001).

If you refer to multiple works at the same time, separate them by a semicolon. List them in alphabetical order by author.

✓ Recent eye-tracking studies (Hori, 2001; Toriyama, 1998) suggest that...

When a paper has multiple authors, list the surnames separated by commas, and use '&' before the final name. Use 'and' outside of brackets; use '&' inside of brackets.

✓ (Hori & Sugiyama, 1986)

✓ Hori and Sugiyama (1986) examined whether...

If there are three or more authors, list the first author plus 'et al.' for all citations. (In previous APA editions, you would list all authors in the first citation then use et al. for subsequent citations; now *all* citations for works with three or more authors use et al.)

✓ (Oak et al., 1996)

The only exception to the above is if using et al. would cause undue ambiguity. In this case, you should list enough authors to disambiguate the two citations, followed by et al. Note that et al. is plural, so is used as a substitute for more than one name. If et al. would replace only one author, write the author's name instead.

✓ ...supported both by studies involving eye-tracking (Oak, Elm, Birch, et al., 1996) and studies using brain-imaging (Oak, Elm, Juniper, et al., 1996).

If you use a direct quote, you need to include the page number. Use p. to refer to a single page. Use pp. to refer to multiple pages.

✓ (Goodman, 2022, p. 103)

✓ (Goodman, 2022, pp. 103-119)

Sometimes you can use an indirect citation, where you make reference to a work that was cited within another work. Here, name the original work, followed by the work it was cited in. In the References section, only list the sources you actually read. You should keep this type of indirect citation to a minimum and read the original work whenever possible.

✓ Neuenmuller (1962, as cited in Stout, 2019) described the atelier as...



...significant research on alchemy (Neuenmuller, 1962, as cited in Stout, 2019).

If you use software as part of your research, such as for running an experiment or analysing your data, you should also cite this. When citing software, check the official site or documentation for that software to see how they prefer to be credited. Sometimes this will be a reference to an article, a team, or a webpage.



...used R for data analysis (R Core Team, 2023).

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## References section

This section appears at the end of your essay or paper (after the main text itself, and before any appendices you might have). The section is called **References**. It is not a Bibliography.

This section should only include sources that were actually cited. If you read something but didn't cite it, then don't include it here.

A References section is an alphabetic list of all sources cited in the main text. It is alphabetic based on the surname of the first author. Names are listed as SURNAME followed by INITIALS. Any software you have cited should also be included in the References.

If you cited multiple articles by the same author, list the entries in chronological order (oldest to newest).

For sources with more than 20 authors, list the first 19, then use (...) followed by the final author's name.

Wherever possible, provide the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) for each source. These are presented as hyperlinks to online sources. Do not write "DOI" before the link.

All lines after the first line of each entry are indented from the left margin. This is a 'hanging indent'.



### References

Goodman, S. (2005). Knowing who to call is an important skill. *International Journal of Criminal Law*, 21, 112-202.  
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- Goodman, S. (2022). Relocation logistics: A behavioural examination. *Quarterly Journal of People and Geography*, 101, 35.  
<https://doi.org/totally.made.up.url/34567-3>
- Hori, Y., Toriyama, A., and Sugiyama, K. (1986). The history of the blue slime and other iconic monsters. *Journal of Totally Made Up Stuff*, 12(2), 1337.  
<https://doi.org/also.made.up/9876>
- Miller, T. C., Brown, M. J., Wilson, G. L., Evans, B. B., Kelly, R. S., Turner, S. T., Lewis, F., Nelson, T. P., Cox, G., Harris, H. L., Martin, P., Gonzalez, W. L., Hughes, W., Carter, D., Campbell, C., Baker, A. B., Flores, T., Gray, W. E., Green, G., ... Lee, L. H. (2018). Motivations for including too many people on your paper. *Journal of Excessive Inclusion*, 52(1), 12-39.  
<https://doi.org/so.many.authors/84639-98.128>
- Oak, S., Elm, P., Birch, P., & Rowan, P. (1996). A comparison of indigenous species of the Kanto, Johto, Hoenn, and Sinnoh regions. *Quarterly Journal of Monster Studies*, 150(1), 43-206.  
<https://doi.org/another.fake.url/n64.128>
- R Core Team (2023). R: A language and environment for statistical computing. *R Foundation for Statistical Computing*, Vienna, Austria.  
<https://www.R-project.org/>

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## General formatting

*The formatting below is for general APA style. You should still check whether the journal or module has further requirements for style and format.*

Your essay or paper should be double-spaced throughout, with standard paper size (A4) and standard margins on all sides (2.5 cm).

Font style should be appropriate and easily readable. You can use a sans-serif font such as Calibri, Arial, or Open Sans, or a serif font such as Times New Roman.

Font size should be 11-point or 12-point. Some fonts are naturally smaller (like Calibri), so take this into consideration when choosing the font size.



This is *Open Sans* size 12, while this is *Calibri* size 12.

Within each section of your essay or paper, indent each paragraph after the first. Do not indent the first paragraph of each section.

Example words or phrases should be indicated with "quotation marks".



A response of "yes" was indicated by pressing the "Z" button on the keyboard...

Tables and Figures are numbered separately. So, your essay or paper might include Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3, as well as Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Tables and Figures should have a clear, concise, descriptive title - something that clearly explains the content of the table or figure. The title is italicised and appears immediately below the table or figure number.



Figure 3  
*Summary of participant proficiency scores in English and Mandarin.*

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## Number formatting

For numbers 0 to 9, spell them out using words.



Participants could select up to five of the images...

For numbers 10 and above, use the numeral, unless they appear at the start of a sentence.



Participants were presented with 13 images...

✓ Twelve filler items were also included...

If numbers relate to a unit (distance, duration, etc.), then use a numeral.

✓ A viewing distance of 70 cm was maintained...

✓ Each session lasted around 3 minutes...

Plural numbers do not have an apostrophe.

✓ Several studies in the 1980s...

When presenting statistics, don't use more decimal places than necessary. Generally, use one decimal place for means and standard deviations; use two decimal places for inferential stats; use two or three decimal places for  $p$ -values.

✓ Participant ages ranged from 21 to 35 (mean = 24.3; SD = 3.1).

✓ The difference between these conditions was significant ( $p = .012$ ).

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## Language and usage

Use first-person pronouns when referring to yourself or yourself and your co-authors.

✓ I considered the impact of...

✓ We interpret this as showing...

The people who take part in your research should be referred to as “participants”, not as “subjects”.

Singular “they” has been in use for centuries. Use this when the gender identity of the person is not known, or is not relevant. When gender identity is known and relevant, you should still use “they” if this is the person’s preferred pronoun.

✓ One participant noted that they were confused by the task...

✓ The original author created these stimuli themselves...

Use language that avoids bias. Focus on the person or group first, rather than a trait.

✓ A student with dyslexia was...

✗ A dyslexic was...

✓ People without formal education are more likely to...

✗ The uneducated are more likely to...

When relevant to your research, clearly define *race* and *ethnicity*, and treat these as distinct from *culture*.

Remember that racial groups, ethnic groups, and many other categories are *not universal* - terms are used differently around the world. If your research focuses on participants from specific racial or ethnic groups, make sure you clarify the national and cultural context.

Importantly, use labels and categories that resonate with your participants.

Where possible, avoid aggregating across different identities. If you do aggregate across identities, justify why you have done so, and describe how you did it (the criteria you used, which identities were grouped together, etc.).

Carefully select and implement your theoretical framing to ensure racial, ethnic, cultural, and other stereotypes are not perpetuated.

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## More info

Much more info is available online, such as the specific requirements for citing a webpage, a book chapter, and other sources.

The [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) has lots of useful resources.

Otherwise, see [the APA's official webpage](#) for much more detail.