



## MAJOR CITATION AND REFERENCE STYLES FOR ACADEMIC USE

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**ABSTRACT**

An important part of academic writing is acknowledging the sources that one has consulted. This is called citing references. It is an academic good practice and it is very essential that a researcher make use of a citation style appropriate to the subject on which writing is being done. This paper discusses importance of citation and features of three major citation styles namely APA, MLA and CMOS that are predominantly used in the academic world.

**KEYWORDS** : Referencing Style; Citation Style; APA; MLA; CMOS**1. INTRODUCTION**

While writing an academic content in higher education, whenever a fact or a piece of information is included in the writing, the source of such fact or information should also be acknowledged or cited.

Details about the sources of information utilized to write the content are kept at the end of the writing called the reference list and bibliography. The reference list denotes the direct quotes or paraphrased findings of another author. The bibliography denotes the sources that were read for background information, but were not directly included in the writing. The sources are also cited within the main body of the writing by the way of citations.

Acknowledging the sources of information in academic writing is very important for various reasons such as to show depth of the study, to avoid plagiarism, to be honest etc. For this purpose, choosing a citation style becomes necessary. More generally, citing is a way of research ethics.

**2. WHAT IS A CITATION AND A CITATION STYLE?**

The Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.) defines citation as "A quotation from or reference to a book, paper, or author, especially in a scholarly work"

A "citation" indicates from which source certain content in the academic work came from. It also gives the scholarly readers the following information necessary to find that source again such as the author, the title of the scholarly material, publisher details, the date of publication etc.

A citation style dictates the information necessary for a citation and how the information is ordered, as well as punctuation and other formatting.

By using a citation style, one can prepare the reference list and bibliography in a consistent way and make it easy to read in a predefined style. Different subjects prefer to each use different styles.

**3. WHY THE USE OF A CITATION STYLE IS NECESSARY IN ACADEMIC WRITING?**

The primary necessity is to acknowledge credit to the original author without plagiarizing. In addition, citations are helpful to display in depth the amount of research that one has done in going through several sources of authentic information. It also gives strength to the research work by the way of borrowing outside authentic support to the author's ideas.

Garfield (1996) found 15 major reasons for citation:

1. Paying homage to pioneers.
2. Giving credit for related works (homage to pioneers).
3. Identifying methodology, equipments, etc.
4. Providing background readings.
5. Correcting one's own work.
6. Correcting the work of others.
7. Criticizing previous work.
8. Substantiating claims.

9. Alerting researcher to forthcoming work.
10. Providing leads to poorly disseminated, poorly indexed, or uncited work.
11. Authenticating data and classes of fact- physical constants, etc.
12. Identifying original publications in which an idea or concept was discussed.
13. Identifying the original publications describing an eponymic concept or term
14. Disclaiming work or ideas of others (negative claims).
15. Disputing priority claims of others (negative homage).

**4. WHEN A CITATION IS NEEDED?**

The general rule is to cite a source whenever an idea or a research work is included in the academic write-up. More specifically, whenever quotes are used, whenever paraphrase is made, whenever a specific reference others' work is made citation becomes a necessity.

**5. SELECTING A CITATION STYLE**

Learning a citation style like APA is important as it helps in academic and research activities such as retrieving documents for verification of data and building credibility as author(s) (Faunce, & Soames, 2001). There are many different citation styles of citing resources. Some of the most used styles are:

- American Psychological Association Style (APA)
- Modern Language Association Style (MLA)
- Oxford Style
- Harvard Style
- Chicago/Turabian Manual of style (CMOS)

Each style has its own rules for properly citing sources.

**6. MAJOR CITATION/REFERENCING STYLES THAT A SCHOLARLY WRITER SHOULD CONSIDER.**

The citation style that one should choose would largely be dependent on the discipline to which the research work belongs to. APA, MLA AND CMOS are the three most popularly used citation/referencing styles and therefore their characteristic features are explained here.

**6.1 APA (American Psychological Association) Style**

Association (APA) style is a reference style created by the the American Psychological Association, and a style guide that offers information on various aspects important to a writer how wants to submit a paper according to the APA-style.

The APA guidelines are published in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and in many guides on the internet.

The APA style is used by many journals, researchers and students within the social and behavioral sciences.

APA (American Psychological Association) is most commonly used to cite sources in social science such as Education, Psychology, etc. It is an Author-date style that is it puts the author's name inside the text of the assignment.

APA has two parts to citation; the short-form in-line citation, also

called the in-text citation which directs readers to a full entry at the end of a research work.

At the end of research work one more part titled "References" could be found which section is essentially the biography. This references listing has the full citations for each of the works that is cited.

**6.2 MLA (Modern Language Association) Style**

MLA (Modern Language Association) style is used by the Humanities, It is also an Author-date style. It establishes standards of written communication such as formatting and page layout, stylistic technicalities (e.g. abbreviations, footnotes, quotations), source citation, etc.

MLA Style is used by researchers in various humanities disciplines such as English Language and Literature, Foreign Language and Literature, Literary Criticism, Comparative Literature, Cultural Studies etc.

**6.3 CMOS (Chicago Manual of Style)**

CMOS (Chicago Manual of style) is generally used by Business and Management, History, and the Fine Arts. It is a Documentary-note style that puts the author's name in a footnote at the bottom of each page, or in an endnote at the end of the assignment.

It covers a variety of topics from manuscript preparation and publication to grammar, usage, and documentation.

It is "one of the most widely used and respected style guides in the United States". (Spencer, Dave (February 15, 2011)

Chicago-style source citations come in two varieties namely Notes and Bibliography and Author-Date. In the humanity subjects such as literature, history, and the arts, the former system is preferred. In this system, sources are cited in numbered footnotes or endnotes. The latter system that is Author-Date system is more commonly used in the scientific subjects. In this system, sources are briefly cited in the text, usually in parentheses, by author's last name and year of publication.

**7. A COMPARISON OF FEATURES OF APA, MLA AND CMOS STYLES**

	APA	MLA	CMOS
Used mostly in subjects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Business</li> <li>● Communication</li> <li>● Criminology and Criminal Justice</li> <li>● Education</li> <li>● Nursing</li> <li>● Political Science</li> <li>● Psychology</li> <li>● Social Work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● English</li> <li>● Literature</li> <li>● Art</li> <li>● Philosophy</li> <li>● Religion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Business</li> <li>● History</li> <li>● Library Science</li> <li>● Publishing fields [sometimes Journalism]</li> </ul>
Characteristics	Author-date style	Author-date style	Documentary-note styles
In-text Emphasis	Dates of Research	Authors of research	Author or date, depending on subject matter
Verb Tense	past tense or present perfect tense	present tense	present tense
Title Page	Title page required	No title page required	Title page should include full title of work with subtitle (if any)
Margins	One inch on all sides; lines should be flush-left;	One inch on all sides; do not justify right margin	All text should be flush-left; margins of at least 1 inch on all four sides of text
Line Spacing	Double-space	Double-space	Double-space
Paragraph Indentation	Indent first line of every paragraph and first line of every footnote ½inch (5 spaces) from left margin	Indent the first word of a paragraph ½inch from left margin; indent set-off quotations 1 inch from left margin	Indent the first line of each paragraph using computer TAB key

**8. CONCLUSION:**

Proper and consistent usage of a citation style is an essential skill of a researcher. Borrowed ideas, concepts and wordings that are used in the research work should be cited within the text, and listed at the end of the paper. For this, a researcher should make use of any one of the different Citation styles. In fact, citation styles are more than just in-text citation and reference list formatting. They bring a structure to the research work that is universally intelligible.

**9. REFERENCES**

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