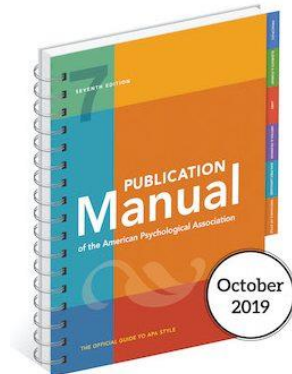# APA Manual 7th edition – the most notable changes

In October 2019, the American Psychological Association (APA) introduced the 7th edition of the APA Publication Manual, which replaces the 6th edition published in 2009. In that time a lot of things have changed. Citing online material has become more common, the use of inclusive and bias-free language is increasingly important, and the technology used by researchers and students has changed. The 7th edition addresses these changes by providing better and more extensive guidelines. This article outlines the biggest changes that you should know about.

References and in-text citations in APA Style

When it comes to citing sources, more guidelines have been added that make citing online sources easier and clearer. In total, 114 examples are provided, ranging from books and periodicals to audio-visuals and social media. For each reference category, an easy template is provided to help you understand and apply the citation guidelines. The biggest changes in the 7th edition are:

1. The publisher location is no longer included in the reference.
    o   Covey, S. R. (2013). *The 7 habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons in personal change*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
    o   Covey, S. R. (2013). *The 7 habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons in personal change*. Simon & Schuster.
2. The in-text citation for works with three or more authors is now shortened right from the first citation. You only include the first author's name and "et al.".
    o   (Taylor, Kotler, Johnson, & Parker, 2018)
    o   (Taylor et al., 2018)
3. Surnames and initials for up to 20 authors (instead of 7) should be provided in the reference list.
    o   Miller, T. C., Brown, M. J., Wilson, G. L., Evans, B. B., Kelly, R. S., Turner, S. T., … Lee, L. H. (2018).
    o   Miller, T. C., Brown, M. J., Wilson, G. L., Evans, B. B., Kelly, R. S., Turner, S. T., Lewis, F., Lee, L. H., 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., … Nelson, T. P. (2018).
4. DOIs are formatted the same as URLs. The label "DOI:" is no longer necessary.
    o   doi: 10.1080/02626667.2018.1560449
    o   https://doi.org/10.1080/02626667.2018.1560449
5. URLs are no longer preceded by "Retrieved from," unless a retrieval date is needed. The website name is included (unless it's the same as the author), and web page titles are italicized.
    o   Walker, A. (2019, November 14). Germany avoids recession but growth remains weak. Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/business-50419127
    o   Walker, A. (2019, November 14). *Germany avoids recession but growth remains weak*. BBC News. https://www.bbc.com/news/business-50419127
6. For ebooks, the format, platform, or device (e.g. Kindle) is no longer included in the reference, and the publisher is included.
    o   Brück, M. (2009). *Women in early British and Irish astronomy: Stars and satellites* [Kindle version]. https:/doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-2473-2
    o   Brück, M. (2009). *Women in early British and Irish astronomy: Stars and satellites*. Springer Nature. https:/doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-2473-2

7. Clear guidelines are provided for including contributors other than authors and editors. For example, when citing a podcast episode, the host of the episode should be included; for a TV series episode, the writer and director of that episode are cited.
8. Dozens of examples are included for online source types such as podcast episodes, social media posts, and YouTube videos. The use of emojis and hashtags is also explained.

Inclusive and bias-free language

Writing inclusively and without bias is the new standard, and APA's new publication manual contains a separate chapter on this topic.

The guidelines provided by APA help authors reduce bias around topics such as gender, age, disability, racial and ethnic identity, and sexual orientation, as well as being sensitive to labels and describing individuals at the appropriate level of specificity. Some examples include:

9. The singular "they" or "their" is endorsed as a gender-neutral pronoun.
   o A researcher's career depends on how often he or she is cited.
   o A researcher's career depends on how often they are cited.
10. Instead of using adjectives as nouns to label groups of people, descriptive phrases are preferred.
   o The poor
   o People living in poverty
11. Instead of broad categories, you should use exact age ranges that are more relevant and specific.
   o People over 65 years old
   o People in the age range of 65 to 75 years old

APA Paper format

In the 7th edition, APA decided to provide different paper format guidelines for professional and student papers. For both types a sample paper is included. Some notable changes include:

12. Increased flexibility regarding fonts: options include Calibri 11, Arial 11, Lucida Sans Unicode 10, Times New Roman 12, and Georgia 11.
13. The running head on the title page no longer includes the words "Running head:". It now contains only a page number and the (shortened) paper title.
   o Running head: THE EFFECT OF GOOGLE ON THE INTERNET
   o THE EFFECT OF GOOGLE ON THE INTERNET
14. The running head is omitted in student papers (unless your instructor tells you otherwise).
15. Heading levels 3-5 are updated to improve readability.

Mechanics of style

In terms of style, not much has changed in the 7th edition. In addition to some updated and better explained guidelines, there are two notable changes:

16. Use only one space after a period at the end of a sentence.
17. Use double quotation marks instead of italics to refer to linguistic examples.
   o APA endorses the use of the singular pronoun *they*
   o APA endorses the use of the singular pronoun "they"