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THE APA STYLE 7th EDITION (2020): SOME NOTABLE CHANGES

Ho Chui Chui

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Article history:</i> Received December 2019 Received in revised form Accepted December 2019 Published June 2020</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords: APA style 7th edition, in-text citations, references</p> <hr/> <p>Corresponding Author: chuichui@uitm.edu.my</p>	<p><i>The latest version of the American Psychological Association publication manual has been recently introduced to replace the sixth edition which was published in 2010. Students, educators and writers are expected to fully adopt the new guidelines by the middle of 2020. This paper highlights the important changes to note particularly regarding in-text citations and references. The differences between APA 6 and APA 7 are illustrated with pertinent examples.</i></p>

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1. Introduction

The most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) has been published to replace the sixth edition which was introduced in 2010. There were significant changes especially to the references and levels of heading in the sixth edition (Ho, 2010). Similarly, in the seventh edition, updates and new guidelines have been added to meet the needs of its users such as citing social media posts, videos, podcast episodes and other electronic mediums.

The changes introduced in the APA seventh edition publication manual is expected to be fully adopted by the middle of 2020. Therefore, it is advisable for educators to familiarize themselves with the latest changes in order to be able to teach students the updated version. Authors and researchers who intend to submit their manuscripts for publication in social science journals should adhere to the new requirements set out in the newest edition.

This paper mostly focuses on the notable changes to in-text citations and references. Differences between APA 6 and APA 7 are explained with pertinent examples. It is recommended that readers refer to the style manual for the full details about the changes and explanations that accompany the changes. The APA style website (<https://apastyle.apa.org>) also provides an excellent guide to the latest changes. Readers may wish to refer to Walden University Writing Center (2020) which has several useful comparison tables highlighting the major differences between APA 6 and APA 7.

2.CHANGES TO IN-TEXT CITATIONS

The seventh edition has simplified in-text citations.

2.1 Work with 3 or more authors

For a work with 3 or more authors, the in-text citation is shortened right from the first citation. Just include the surname of the first author followed by et al. in all citations. In the 6th edition, only a work with 6 or more authors was shortened in this way.

6 th edition:	3-5 authors	<i>First citation:</i> (Ho, Wong & Ooi, 2010) OR Ho, Wong, and Ooi (2010) stated... <i>Subsequent citations:</i> (Ho et al., 2010) OR Ho et al. (2010) showed ...
	6 or more authors	<i>All citations:</i> (Ho et al., 2011)
7 th edition:	3 or more authors	<i>All citations:</i> (Ho et al. , 2010)

2.1.1 If several works with 3 or more authors shorten to the same in-text citation, list as many names as required to avoid ambiguity. For example:

(Ho, Wong, Ooi et al., 2009)
(Ho, Wong, Mak et al., 2009)

2.2 Citing a Secondary Source

When citing a source within another source (secondary source), include the year of publication of the original work, if known. In the previous edition, the date of the original work was omitted.

6 th edition	Mak's study (as cited in Ho & Wong, 2013) showed that ... OR (Mak as cited in Ho & Wong, 2013)
7 th edition	Mak's study (2008 , as cited in Ho & Wong, 2013) showed that ... OR (Mak, 2008 , as cited in Ho & Wong, 2013)

3. CHANGES TO REFERENCES

3.1 Number of Authors

3.1.1 Surnames and initials of up to 20 authors are provided in the references. Previously, if there are 2 to 7 authors, all author names are listed.

6 th edition	2 to 7 authors: Ho, C. C., Wong, S. H., & Ooi, A. K. (2010). <i>APA style made easy</i> . Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Pearson.
7 th edition	Up to 20 authors: Ho, C. C., Wong, S. H., Ooi, A. K., Mak, K. S., Tan, T. G., Cheong, K. K., Leong, K. M., & Lee, W. M. (2011). <i>APA style made easy</i> (2 nd ed.). Pearson.

3.1.2 If a work has 21 or more authors, include the first 19 names, then insert an ellipsis, but no ampersand (&) and add the last name. In the sixth edition, for works with 8 or more authors, the first 6 authors were displayed, followed by an ellipsis (...) then the last author's name was listed.

6 th edition	8 or more authors: Ho, C. C., Wong, S. H., Ooi, A. K., Mak, K. S., Tan, T. G., Cheong, K. K., ... Lee, W. M. (2013). <i>APA style made easy</i> (3rd ed.). Selangor, Malaysia: Pearson.
7 th edition	21 or more authors: Naghavi, M., Abajobir, A. A., Abbafati, C., Abbas, K. M., Abd-Allah, F., Abera, S. F., Aboyans, V., Adetokunboh, O., Afshin, A., Agrawal, A., Ahmadi, A., Ahmed, M. B., Aichour, A. N., Aichour, M. T. E., Aichour, I., Aiyar, S., Alahdab, F., Al-Aly, Z., Alam, K., . . . Murray, C. J. L. (2017). Global, regional, and national age-sex specific mortality for 264 causes Of death, 1980–2016: A systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016. <i>The Lancet</i> , 390(10100), 1151-1210. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)32152-9

3.2 Books

3.2.1 For a book reference, include the copyright date which may be different from the year of publication. Previously, only the year of publication was required.

6 th edition	Ho, C. C., & Wong, S. H. (2008). <i>Mastering the APA style</i> . Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Pearson.
7 th edition	Ho, C. C., & Wong, S. H. (2006). <i>Mastering the APA style</i> . Pearson.

3.2.2 In the seventh edition, publisher location is not necessary. In the previous guideline, the city, state and country were required.

6th edition	Ho, C. C., & Wong, S. H. (2008). <i>Mastering the APA style</i> . Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Pearson.
7th edition	Ho, C. C., & Wong, S. H. (2006). <i>Mastering the APA style</i> . Pearson.

3.2.3 For a book with more than one publisher, provide all publishers in the order in which they appear, separated by a semi-colon. The sixth edition required only the first publisher.

6th edition	Ho, C. C., & Wong, S. H. (2008). <i>Mastering the APA style</i> . Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Longman.
7th edition	Ho, C. C., & Wong, S. H. (2006). <i>Mastering the APA style</i> . Longman; Pearson.

3.3 eBooks

3.3.1 When an eBook has a digital object identifier (DOI), include it after the publisher name. If there is no DOI and the eBook is from a library database, then it should be cited the exact same way as a print book.

6th edition	Crawford, L. A., & Novak, K. B. (2018). <i>Individual and society: Sociological social psychology</i> (2nd ed.). Retrieved from https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/curtin/detail.action?docID=5323290 Parker, M. E. (2016). <i>Nursing theories and nursing practice</i> (4th ed). [eBook]. Retrieved from Ebscohost.com
7th edition	Crawford, L. A., & Novak, K. B. (2018). <i>Individual and society: Sociological social psychology</i> (2nd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315269313 Parker, M. E. (2016). <i>Nursing theories and nursing practice</i> (4th ed.). F. A. Davis Company.

3.3.2 eBooks no longer require the type of eBook to be listed, for instance, Kindle, pdf, etc. In the sixth edition, the device and version were required.

6th edition	Leaffer, M. A. (2019). <i>Understanding copyright law</i> (7th ed.) [Kindle DX version]. Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com
7th edition	Leaffer, M. A. (2019). <i>Understanding copyright law</i> (7th ed.). Carolina Academic Press. https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07XH8BG61/

3.4 Journal Articles

3.4.1 References for journal articles have been streamlined. For a journal with an issue number, include it in the reference. Previously, if the journal had continuous pagination, the issue number was omitted.

6th edition	Burke, K. (2019). The challenges of facilitating arts learning in home education. <i>British Educational Research Journal</i> , 45, 961-978. doi:10.1002/berj.3546
7th edition	Burke, K. (2019). The challenges of facilitating arts learning in home education. <i>British Educational Research Journal</i> , 45(5), 961-978. https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3546

3.4.2 The digital object identifier (DOI) of an article is formatted as a hyperlink, that is, it begins with <http://> or <https://doi.org/xxxxx>. This new guideline means that the presentation of both DOI and URL has been standardized. In the previous guideline, the DOI was presented as doi:xxxxxxxxxx. Links should be live if the work is intended to be published or read online.

6th edition	Davis, D. (2020, March). The life of Riley. <i>Sociology Review</i> , 17(4), 30-32. doi.org/10.10.17430
7th edition	Davis, D. (2020, March). The life of Riley. <i>Sociology Review</i> , 17(4), 30-32. https://doi.org/10.10.17430

3.4.3 If there is no DOI, include the URL (uniform resource locator) of the article only if it is available online to all readers. Note that the words “Retrieved” or “Accessed” are only included if the page is designed to change over time such as social media page, blog, commercial website, etc. Previously, if there was no DOI, the URL of the original journal homepage was required.

6th edition	Hoare, K. J. (2014). Children's participation in society is likely to lead to Their improved health and wellbeing. <i>New Zealand Medical Journal</i> , 127(1405), 12-14. Retrieved from https://www.nzma.org.nz/journal
7th edition	Hoare, K. J. (2014). Children's participation in society is likely to lead to Their improved health and wellbeing. <i>New Zealand Medical Journal</i> , 127(1405), 12-14. https://www.nzma.org.nz/journal/read-the-journal/all-issues/2010-2019/2014/vol-127-no-1405/6344

3.4.4 For a journal article with an article number or e-locator, use it instead of the page numbers. This is new to the APA seventh edition.

Derry, K. (2018). Myth and monstrosity: Teaching indigenous films. *Journal of Religion & Film*, 22(3), Article 7. <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2013&context=jrf>

3.5 Conference Papers

3.5.1 In the seventh edition, for a paper or poster presented at a conference, the day(s), month and year of a conference should be provided. Previously, only the month and year were required.

3.5.2 The words “Paper presentation” are inserted after the title of the paper. In the previous guideline, the words “Paper presented at” were used.

6th edition	Chang-Richards, Y., Wilkinson, S., Seville, E., & Brunsdon, D. (2015, July). A systems approach to managing human resources in disaster recovery projects. Paper presented at the meeting of the 5th Annual International Conference on Building Resilience, Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia.
7th edition	Chang-Richards, Y., Wilkinson, S., Seville, E., & Brunsdon, D. (2015, July 15-17). A systems approach to managing human resources in disaster recovery projects [Paper presentation]. 5th Annual International Conference on Building Resilience, Newcastle, NSW, Australia.

3.6 Webpages

3.6.1 Webpage on a website

In the seventh edition, webpage titles are in italics. The site name should be listed but when the author and site name are the same, it is omitted.

6th edition	Maric, P. (2016, May 13). 2016 Tesla Model S P90D v BMW 730d comparison. Retrieved from https://www.caradvice.com.au/442948/2016-tesla-model-s-p90d-v-bmw-730d-comparison/
7th edition	Maric, P. (2016, May 13). <i>2016 Tesla Model S P90D v BMW 730d comparison</i> . CarAdvice. https://www.caradvice.com.au/442948/2016-tesla-model-s-p90d-v-bmw-730d-comparison/

3.6.2 Webpage on a news website

For articles from online news sources which do not have an associated daily or weekly newspaper, for example, ABC News, BBC News, CNN, Huffington Post, etc, use the following format: Author Surname, Initial(s). (year, Month Day). Title of webpage. Site Name. URL

Example:

Gallagher, J. (2015, November 1). Antibiotic apocalypse. BBC News.
<http://www.bbc.com/news/health-21702647>

3.7 Online Dictionary or Encyclopaedia Entry

For online reference works which are updated continuously, the retrieval date is necessary. In the sixth edition, the retrieval date was not needed.

6th edition	Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Self-report. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/self-report
7th edition	Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Self-report. In <i>Merriam-Webster.com dictionary</i> . Retrieved November 20, 2019 from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/self-report

3.8 Reports, Authored

If a report is personally authored, the name of the publishing organization is required and the words “website” as well as “Retrieved from” are not required anymore unlike in the previous guideline.

6th edition	Tessema, M. E. (2017). <i>Wildlife crime assessment in Ethiopia</i> . Retrieved from IUCN National Committee of The Netherlands website : https://www.iucn.nl/files/publicaties/wlc_doc-ethiopie_small.pdf
7th edition	Tessema, M. E. (2017). <i>Wildlife crime assessment in Ethiopia</i> . IUCN National Committee of The Netherlands. https://www.iucn.nl/files/publicaties/wlc_doc-ethiopie_small.pdf

3.9 Religious and Classical Works

Sacred texts such as the Quran, the Bible and classical literature, for example, ancient Roman texts, Shakespeare etc. are cited as books in the references. Previously, these works were only included as in-text citations.

6th edition	(King James Bible, 1769/2017) (Shakespeare, 1623/1995)
7th edition	<i>King James Bible</i> . (2017). King James Bible Online. https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/ (Original work published 1769) Shakespeare, W. (1995). <i>Much ado about nothing</i> (B. A. Mowat & P. Werstine, Eds.). Washington Square Press. (Original work published 1623)

4. CHANGES TO FORMATTING

In the seventh edition, some notable changes have been made to fonts and headings.

4.1 Fonts

There is increased flexibility regarding font specifications in the newest edition. The sixth edition required Times New Roman font in 12pt size which can be difficult to read.

6th edition	12-pt. Times New Roman
7th edition	<p>Recommended fonts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sans serif fonts</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 11-pt. Calibri o 11-pt. Arial o 10-pt. Lucinda Sans Unicode • <i>Serif fonts</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 12-pt. Times New Roman o 11-pt. Georgia o 10-pt. Computer Modern • Use 8-14 pt. sans serif fonts in figures

4.2 Headings

Changes have been made to heading levels 3 to 5 to make them easier to read. This updated heading format also makes it easier for users who use the heading-styles feature of their word-processing program. All headings are now title case. Level 3 is now flushed left and italicised. Levels 4 and 5 are still indented.

6th edition

Level	Format
1	Centred, Bold, Title Case Headings Text begins as a new paragraph.
2	Flush left, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
3	<i>Indented, bold, sentence case heading, ending with a period.</i> Text begins immediately after the period.
4	<i>Indented, bold italic, sentence case heading, ending with a period.</i> Text begins immediately after the period.
5	<i>Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading, ending with a period.</i> Text begins immediately after the period.

7th edition

Level	Format
1	Centred, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
2	Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
3	<i>Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading</i> Text begins as a new paragraph.
4	Indented, Bold, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period. Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.
5	<i>Indented, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period.</i> Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

5.CHANGES TO TABLES AND FIGURES

In the new guidelines, tables and figures have standardized formatting. The style for numbers, titles and notes are now consistent for both tables and figures.

5.1 Tables

Table number is bold; table title is title case and set in italics. In the previous edition, table number is plain type, table title is title case and set in italics. The

examples below have been adapted from the Massey University website on formatting tables and figures in APA (<https://owll.massey.ac.nz/referencing/formatting-tables-in-apa.php>).

Sample table in the sixth edition format:

Table 1

Sample Responses to the 2018 Health and Wellbeing Survey

Variable	Question	Sample responses
Happiness	What brings you happiness?	"My children are my greatest joy." ^a
Sadness	What makes you sad?	"I am still sad about my dad dying." ^a
Anxiety	What makes you anxious?	"I lose sleep at night thinking about the future of the planet." ^a

^a Participant A. ^b Participant B.

Sample table in the **seventh** edition format:

Table 1
Sample Responses to the 2018 Health and Wellbeing Survey

Variable	Question	Sample responses
Happiness	What brings you happiness?	"My children are my greatest joy." ^a
Sadness	What makes you sad?	"I am still sad about my dad dying." ^b
Anxiety	What makes you anxious?	"I lose sleep at night thinking about the future of the planet." ^a

^a Participant A. ^b Participant B.

5.2 Figures

Figure number and caption are on separate lines and are placed above the figure. It is recommended to use 8-14 pt. sans serif fonts in figures. The sixth edition required that the figure number and caption are on the same line and are placed below the figure. The following examples have been retrieved from the Auckland University of Technology website on referencing and APA style (<https://aut.ac.nz.libguides.com/?b=g&d=a>).

Sample figure in the **sixth** edition format:



Figure 1. Factors influencing the formation of tourists' needs. Reprinted from "Factors that Obstruct Tourism Development in Bangladesh", by N. Jahan and S. Rahman, 2016, CLEAR International Journal of Research in Commerce & Management, 7 (9), p.53. Copyright 2016 by Chinniah Lakshmiammal Educational Academy & Research (CLEAR) Foundation.

Sample figure in the **seventh** edition format:

Figure 1
Factors Influencing the Formation of Tourists' Needs



Note. This figure was produced by Ipatov in 2012, and it summarised five groups of factors that influence the formation of tourist needs (as reprinted in Jahan & Rahman, 2016). From "Factors that Obstruct Tourism Development in Bangladesh", by N. Jahan and S. Rahman, 2016, CLEAR International Journal of Research in Commerce & Management, 7 (9), p.53. Copyright 2016 by Chinniah Lakshmiammal Educational Academy & Research (CLEAR) Foundation.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper has covered only several of the major changes in the seventh edition of the APA publication manual: in-text citations, references, formatting as well as tables and figures. The new and updated guidelines make using the APA style easier and clearer for users. For more details on other changes including mechanics of writing, bias-free language and legal references, it is highly recommended that readers refer to the latest edition of the publication manual and the official APA website. As authors, we must be knowledgeable about documenting our sources accurately to avoid the charge of plagiarism and to enable our readers to retrieve the information if they so wish. As writing instructors, it is our responsibility to teach our students the correct way to acknowledge their sources because (academic) honesty is the best policy.

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