

## The 7 Most Common APA Errors

Compliments of Dissertation-Expert.com

Page numbers refer to the pages where you can find the information in the "Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 6<sup>th</sup> Edition" ISBN 1433805626

1. **Headings.** (pp. 62-63). APA 6 has 5 levels of heading.

1	Bold, Centered, Major Words Capitalized	<b>I am a Heading 1</b>
2	Bold, Flush Left, Major Words Capitalized	<b>I am a Heading 2</b>
3	Bold, Indented .5 inch, First word capitalized, the heading is followed by a period	<b>I am a heading 3.</b> The rest of the paragraph starts after the period.
4	Bold, Indented .5 inch, Italicized, First word capitalized, the heading is followed by a period	<i><b>I am a heading 4.</b></i> The rest of the paragraph starts after the period.
5	Indented .5 inch, Italicized, First word capitalized, the heading is followed by a period	<i><b>I am a heading 5.</b></i> The rest of the paragraph starts after the period.

2. **Seriation.** (pp. 63-65). Three or more items in a series are preceded by a lower case letters in parentheses, separated by commas (including the item just before the "and") unless one of the items in the series has commas within it. In that case, the items are separated by semicolons (;).

Examples . . .

- The five healing modalities available are (a) reiki, (b) massage, (c) reflexology, (d) acupuncture, and (e) Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT).
- The healing modalities available are (a) reiki; (b) massage, which includes Swedish, deep tissue, and Thai; (c) reflexology; (d) acupuncture; and (e) Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT).

## The 7 Most Common APA Errors

Compliments of Dissertation-Expert.com

**3. Items in a List** (pp. 63-65). Items use numbered lists unless the numbers give an unintentional message of a hierarchy. In that case, the items can be bulleted.

Examples . . .

- Three issues came to the faculty’s attention that needed their attention:
  1. [Issue one would go here]
  2. [Issue two would go here]
  3. [Issue three would go here]
  
- The administrators pointed out several changes to the curriculum:
  - [Change listed here]
  - [Change listed here]
  - [Change listed here]
  - [Change listed here]

**4. Multiple Authors in Text Citations** (p. 177). If six or more authors, write the surname of the first author followed by “et al.” If five authors or less, all authors are listed in the first mention. Each subsequent citations of three or more authors throughout the text will show the first author surname followed by “et al.” The date of publication ALWAYS follows the author(s). In each paragraph, the date of publication is listed only once, but is listed again in any subsequent paragraphs.

Examples . . .

- The study conducted by **Jones, Harding, Ferguson, Manly, and Gordon (2016)** showed that alternative healing modalities increased levels of well-being in patients being treated for breast cancer. **Jones et al.** also found that patients’ perceived quality of life also increased.
  
- **Smith et al. (2014)** edited the book, *Research into Healing*, in which there were 22 contributors. (we’re pretending that Smith et al. is a source with six or more authors)

## The 7 Most Common APA Errors

Compliments of Dissertation-Expert.com

**5. Multiple Authors in Parenthetical Citations** (p. 177) If six or more authors, write the surname of the first author followed by “et al.” If five authors or less, all authors are listed in the first parenthetical citation. Each subsequent parenthetical citation throughout the text will show the first author surname followed by “et al.” The date of publication ALWAYS follows the author(s). In each paragraph, the date of publication is listed only once, but is listed again in any subsequent paragraphs.

Examples . . .

- A recent study showed that alternative healing modalities increased levels of well-being in patients being treated for breast cancer (Jones, Harding, Ferguson, Manly, & Gordon, 2016). Researchers also found that alternative healing modalities increased patients’ perceived quality of life (Jones et al., 2016).
- Twenty-two authors contributed to the book, *Research into Healing* (Smith et al., 2014).

**6. Citing Websites** (pp. 171-172). The correct way to cite a source that is a web page, you cite the author(s); the year of publication, if available (if not available you use “n.d.” for “no date.”); the section heading on the page; and the paragraph that contains the quote. In order to figure out the “paragraph number,” count the paragraphs of the article on the website, and list the paragraph number of the quote.

Example . . .

When considering weight loss “the question of what to eat, when viewed through the lens of diet books and magazine weight-loss tips, can look frivolous, but in reality the stakes are high” (Johnson, 2013, *Food Confusion*, para. 7).

This is the source: [https://alumni.stanford.edu/get/page/magazine/article/?article\\_id=63169](https://alumni.stanford.edu/get/page/magazine/article/?article_id=63169), if you go to this page you can count down to the seventh paragraph in the article and you will see the above quote.

## The 7 Most Common APA Errors

Compliments of Dissertation-Expert.com

**7. Referencing Volume and Issue Numbers** (p. 199). When referencing a journal, the volume number is italicized, directly followed by the issue number in parentheses (if there is an issue number provided). There is no space between the italicized volume and issue numbers.

Examples . . .

Hyman, M. A., Ornish, D., & Roizen, M. (2009). Lifestyle medicine: Treating the causes of disease. *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*, *15 (6)*, 12-14. ← Incorrect

Hyman, M. A., Ornish, D., & Roizen, M. (2009). Lifestyle medicine: Treating the causes of disease. *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*, *15(6)*, 12-14. ← Correct