Visual Arts Research Style Sheet  
Last updated February 2022

General
Use Merriam-Webster’s 11th Collegiate Dictionary

- Abstracts (in italics) are sometimes used for articles in VAR (not for “interludes,” introductions, forewords, etc.). Should be less than 200 words. No heading is used (don’t label it “Abstract”); Abstract is followed by keywords. The Abstract should not be identical to sections of the article text. The Abstract should reflect the purpose and content of the study/research in the article. It should summarize the different sections presented in the article and their key points, and present the results/conclusions that have been drawn. Do not use text citations in the Abstract: an Abstract is a standalone document meant for a database, which would not give access to the corresponding References list.
- Acknowledgments (optional) appear in a separate section before Notes entries and References; code as text font (not Notes font)
- Affiliation of author: (university name) appears below the author’s name after the title. Author contact information (address, e-mail, etc.) is not published
- Figures: Figure 1. Caption has an initial cap and ends with a period. Callouts in text: (see Figure 1), coded between paragraphs as <insert Figure 1 about here>
- Dimensions: 8.5 × 11 in. (width × height)
- Epigraph: no quotation marks, not in italics, source line below quote, give author’s full name followed by year and page number in parentheses, corresponding to Refs. entry
- Figure caption for artwork (title of artwork is fully capitalized): Figure 1. Steven Mann, 2010, Forgotten Cities [Silver print. 27 × 50 in.]. Gallery if exhibited.
- Headings: do not call the introduction “Introduction”—i.e., do not use the heading “Introduction”; do not number or letter the headings
- Keywords are used (<KW><SC>KEYWORDS:<NM> Word, word, word, word)
- Pronouns: use the singular “they” (them, their) as a gender-neutral pronoun*

[OLD WAY: A researcher’s career depends on how often he or she is cited.]  
*NEW WAY: A researcher’s career depends on how often they are cited.

*I don't know who wrote this note, but they have good handwriting.

- Tables: Table 1. Caption (Title) Is Capitalized (no period after caption)
- Titles in text and TOC: capitalization: capitalize all words of four letters or more; capitalize both words in hyphenated compound (except in Reference titles); typeface for
title of artwork or title of an art exhibition is italics, and titles of artwork are fully
capitalized in text and in captions; the title of a video game or website name is *not* in
italics; title of a project not in italics

- **Verbs:** Past tense is preferred to report on the findings in a study
- **Website names in text:** set roman (not italics): Google, YouTube, Flickr, Facebook

**Grammar and Copyediting**

**Abbreviations**

- Use ampersand (&) in References list and parenthetical material—but not in running text
- Spell out all but the most common acronyms and abbreviations at first mention
- Spell out names of months in References date citation
- Avoid the use of contractions in text (unless to spell out a contraction sounds awkward)
- Time: Use a.m. and p.m. (6:45 p.m.; 5 a.m.)
- Units of measure: (no period following) ft, lb, min, hr, ft, cm, kg; (period following) in. 5
  cm 5 min

**Numbers and dates**

- Spell out numbers one through nine except for when there are back-to-back modifiers:
  ten 7-point scales; use numerals for numbers 10 and above
- Spell out a number that begins a sentence or title
- Use numerals for time, age, dates, money (2 weeks, age 7, $50)
- 1980s, mid-1980s, 1960s; *or* the sixties; 55 BC and AD 1900
- **Centuries:** 20th century, 21st century
- 1980-1983 (use hyphen and *do not* abbreviate as 1980-83); hyphen between numbers will
  be automatically changed to en-dash
- **percent:** 10% (use numeral and % symbol)
- (use comma) 1,368; $5,000
- (no comma) p. 1368; 1368 Main Street
- 25 million
- age 65, a 5-year-old (noun, adj.), he is 5 years old
- use numerals for measurements: time, dates, length
- pp. 380-389 (do not drop out digits)
- Spell out **ordinals** (e.g., “third”) first up to ninth, except in References edition (3rd ed.):
  grades in school: use words for grades one through nine, then numerals: first grade, 11th
  grade
- dimensions: 8½ × 11 in.
- 2:30 p.m.
- 100°F

**Punctuation**

- Use serial comma (a, b, and c)
• No periods in upper case acronyms or abbreviations (FBI, URL); exception, U.S. (adjective only), but UN
• No periods after measurement abbreviations: cm, ft, hr, lb, min, ml; but use period for in.
• No periods after URL in References
• Use single quotes inside double quotes “‘quote inside quote’”; avoid using single quotation marks as “scare quotes” or to denote a word as a word
• No comma before or after II or “Jr.” when it follows a name as a suffix (e.g., Martin Luther King Jr. is my hero.)
• After a colon, capitalize the first word beginning a complete sentence.
• Hyphens are used before a capitalized word, or to prevent mispronunciation (anti-American, non-science, co-morbidity) or misreading (anti-intellectual), or to emphasize the prefix
• NO HYPHEN used after an adverb ending inly+ participle or adjective: “mildly amusing”

References
• Section subhead is “References”
• References section follows Notes section (if both are used)
• Use sentence style capitalization for article and book titles: The tale of two cities
• No quotes around article or chapter titles
• Spell out journal titles in full, including “The”
• Use US Postal service state abbreviations (except if the publisher is a university whose name includes the name of the state, don't repeat the state in the publisher location); spell out names of countries outside the United States; except for Canadian location, include postal province abbreviation and no country name
• Use initials with a space between them (Key, J. S.)
• When the same author appears for different works more than once in the References, continue to write out his/her name and arrange entries by year of publication
• If same author has more than one source from the same year, use, for example, 2001a, 2000b, etc., arranging alphabetically by title
• Use all digits (use hyphen although it will be changed to an en-dash in typesetting) in page ranges (pp. 136-149)
• No Refs. entry needed for Bible—use text citation: 1 Cor. 13:1 (Revised Standard Version)
• (in press) use for forthcoming work
• (n.d.) no date available
• (2nd ed.)
• Put translations of titles in brackets
• More than 20 authors: list first 19, then use ellipsis before last author name:

References, sample entries:

Book: no location (no city or state) given for publisher


Translated book and reprint:
text citation for this work: (Laplace, 1814/1951)

Introduction

Chapter (and subsequent edition in first example):


Edited book:

Edited book with author:

One volume of a multi-volume work (with translator):

A volume of a set:

Article (doi is optional):
Journal:

*Special issue of a journal:*

*Magazine/Newspaper—print version:*


*Online newspaper/magazine/journal (treat title of article—set roman—and title of newspaper or journal—set italics—as you would its print version) *:


*Article with more than 20 authors (write out first 19 authors in References, then use ellipsis, followed by final author):*

Encyclopedia entry:

Web document: [“Retrieved from” is no longer used unless there a retrieval date is relevant—usually when a source is (n.d.)]

Blog post/website page [webpage title is in italics; website name set roman] *


**Government document:**


**Instagram** (content of the post up to the first 20 words)

**Twitter**
Jarmon, R. [ReninaWrites]. (2016, February 7). I am trained to see what others are invested In Forgetting. Twitter. https://twitter.com/ReninaWrites/status/696328164570767360

**Artwork** (if displayed in a major museum—otherwise use only text citation: name of artwork mentioned in text, and in parentheses, last name of artist, year, Internet link if available). Use city and state after museum name in the Reference if citing physical location:


**Art Exhibition:**

*Motion picture (use country of origin):*

*Television series episode*

*YouTube video*


*Unpublished master’s thesis (or doctoral dissertation; title is in italics): no city or state*


*Unpublished paper from Presentation, Conference, Symposium, etc. (published paper would be cited like a journal or book chapter):*

*Unpublished report: pdf file online:*

*Legal citation* [in text use italics for case name] but set without italics in Notes or Refs:
In-Text Citation

- Use *et al.* even at first mention, for three or more authors: (Jones et al., 2012, p. 56)
- List a series of author citations within one set of parentheses in *alphabetical order* (Billmayer, 2014; Freedman, 2003; Duncum, 2009)
- Okay to use “et al.” in running text
- (Jones, 2001, p. 56); (Jones, 2012, 2015); (Smith, 1997a, 1997b); (Smith & Jones, 2001)
- (Smith, 1999, Chapter 3)
- (Johnson et al., 2003, pp. 67-69)
- (Jones, 2002, p. 9): later citations to same author in same paragraph use only (p. x) and no year
- Secondary sources: (as cited in Currie et al., 2009, p. 8)
- To indicate a paragraph number [optional] for an online citation, use “para.” commonly not necessary and very cumbersome for long online articles
- Studies of reading in childhood have produced mixed results (Albright et al., 2004; Gibson, 2011; Smith & Wexwood, 2010). Authors should be listed in alphabetical order within the citation.

- Smith and Wexwood (2010) reported an increase in the number of books read, whereas Gibson (2011) reported a decrease. Albright et al. (2004) found no significant results.
- Cite personal communication in text but not References: *My grandmother’s advice was, “Never pass up a chance to eat, sit down, or use a clean restroom”* (S. Dean, personal communication, May 14, 1980).
- For a passing reference to a website in text, the URL is sufficient; no Reference list entry is needed: *Gussie Fink-Nottle has set up a discussion forum for newt fanciers* ([http://gfnnfg.livejournal.com/](http://gfnnfg.livejournal.com/)).
- Classical works unknown date—use translation date: (Aristotle, trans. 1931)
- Original pub. date included: James (1890/1983)
- Use indented text block for quotes of *40 or more words* (sometimes shorter quotes can be set off to make them stand out), and omit start and end quotation marks; citation follows period.
- Callouts in text: (see Figure 1) (Table 3)
- *Scriptural:* 2 Corinthians 11:29-30

Endnotes

- Section subhead is “Notes”
- Notes section precedes References section (if both are used)
- Capitalize titles mentioned in endnotes and enclose them in quotes if they are article or chapter titles
- **Social media when cited only in Endnotes:**
2. [RudyFrancisco], October 5, 2014, *I'm still learning to love the parts of me that no one claps for*. Twitter. https://twitter.com/RudyFrancisco/status/518670864720859136.

**Endnotes and References Both Used**

- Notes section precedes References section
- A source (usually one that has no known author or date) such as a website or webpage might be cited only in Notes.
- Capitalize titles mentioned in endnotes and enclose them in quotes if they are article or chapter titles
- *Book or article cited in Notes, referring to a References entry:*

**Book Review**

Publication information at beginning of review (no city or state):


<AA>Reviewed by Nigel Meager

<AN>University of Cambridge