Sooner or later, college writers will run into assignment instructions like the example above, and many will approach the task with dread. What’s a “documentation style”? Why do sources need to be cited, and how should they look? What are the rules, and why are they so picky? It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by these extra requirements.

Fortunately, however, the process of integrating outside sources into your writing doesn’t have to be a mystery. Understanding just a few basic concepts can help you keep the citation process in perspective and make you feel a lot more confident about researching and writing. Let’s look at some common questions students have.

Why cite anything in the first place? What’s the point?
The answer might seem a little surprising. When you’re doing any kind of research writing, the underlying idea is that other people will be interested in what you’ve found and what you have to say. Your research becomes part of a larger conversation, as people think about a certain issue and try to develop solutions. In order for writers to participate in such a conversation, they have to be able to back up what they say with credible information. So when you include sources in your essay, it’s a way of showing readers that you can be taken seriously.

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Okay, that makes sense. But what’s a documentation style? A documentation style is just a method of citing information. The two most common styles are MLA (Modern Language Association) and APA (American Psychological Association). Depending on the field you’re writing in, you may be asked to cite material in one of these two styles. For example, most English classes will ask students to use MLA. Education and sociology classes, meanwhile, most often use APA. Other fields such as biology and engineering have their own specialized styles as well.

What’s the difference between MLA and APA? Not much, actually. Both styles ask you to cite your sources in two places: in the essay itself when you mention the source (sometimes called an “in-text” citation), and on a separate page at the end (an “end-of-text” citation).

But there are differences? Yes. For an in-text citation, MLA asks you to include the author’s last name and the page number. APA asks instead for the author’s last name and the year. These are sometimes called “parenthetical” citations, because they appear in parentheses in the essay. And when you list the sources on the separate page at the end of your essay, MLA and APA have different formats and titles. MLA calls the list “Works Cited,” while APA uses the title “References.”

What’s the point of citing the source in the essay and then again in a list at the end? Think of in-text citations as “links” to more information about the source. If your readers are interested in a source that you mention in your essay, they can find out more information.
Dear Grammar Goddess:

I don’t understand why we say, “Everybody is happy” instead of “Everybody are happy.” After all, “everybody” always refers to more than one person, so why do we use the singular verb construction?

-- Mystified in Mesa

Dear MM:

Chalk it up to yet another idiomatic (no, not idiotic… idiomatic!) twist of the English language. You are correct – “everyone” does refer to more than one person, but we still treat the pronouns “everyone” and “everybody” as singular. Just like a herd of buffalo is treated as a singular subject, “everyone” refers to a herd of humans!

(source: http://www.drgrammar.org/faqs/)
Top Ten Tips for Handling Finals

1. Don’t leave things to the last minute. Murphy’s Law: if a problem will occur, it will occur in the 11th hour.

2. Keep calm. Pressure, tension and stress are normal for the end of the semester. You are not the only student (or instructor, for that matter!) feeling them. Pace yourself. You may need to reduce social activity these last few weeks to complete take-home exams, papers, or projects to the best of your ability. You’ve come this far, so don’t give in to distractions now!

3. Plan something fun to do right after finals, something to look forward to, and then just accept that in the meantime, you have to work, work, work!

4. Chocolate!

5. Don’t procrastinate! Study in short yet multiple bursts of time.

6. Get some sleep. Missing just 2 hours of sleep 2 nights in a row can cause sleep deprivation, leading to that foggy, spaced-out feeling.

7. Eat well. Make sure you eat regular meals to keep your energy up. Also, avoid alcohol and limit caffeine intake.

8. To help prepare for that big test, try to have an attitude of confidence as you go into the text. Try to leave all anger and worry at home and focus on the test. Visualization is a good strategy before the testing date. Imaging doing well on the test is a very effective way to boost self-esteem and confidence before the test.

9. When beginning the test, be sure to look over the entire test and answer the easier questions first. Also weight the questions. Do the ones that are worth more points first to help boost your grade. If you’re writing an essay, try to make an outline first.

10. Set up a study schedule before finals week so that you do not have to cram everything in at the end.

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Punctuation Protection

Do you look after your apostrophes the way they deserve? If you don’t, be aware of the Apostrophe Protection Society! Yes, it really does exist. Its mission: “preserving the correct use of this currently much abused punctuation mark in all forms of text written in the English language.” Do you protect your apostrophes by using them correctly?

The rules for using apostrophes correctly, according to the Apostrophe Protection Society website, are very simple:

1. They are used to indicate a missing letter or letters. **I can’t** instead of **I cannot**.  
   It’s headed our way instead of **It is** headed our way.  
   **Don’t** eat the bananas instead of **Do not** eat the bananas.

2. They are used to indicate possession.  
   The dog’s bone  
   The teacher’s book  
   The teachers’ books (if there is more than one teacher)

Please note that the possessive form of it does NOT need an apostrophe:  
   The bone is in **its** mouth.  
   **Its** roof needs repair.

3. Apostrophes are almost NEVER used to indicate plurals! Common examples of apostrophe abuse are the following:  
   **Banana’s for sale** should read Bananas for sale.  
   **1000’s of bargains here!** should read 1000s of bargains here!  
   **Menu’s printed to order** should read Menus printed to order.  
   **New CD’s just in**! should read New CDs just in!

Apostrophes are used to form plurals of letters that appear in lowercase; here the rule appears to be more typographical than grammatical: “three ps” versus “three p’s,” or “mind your p’s and q’s.”

For horrific examples of apostrophe abuse, visit the Apostrophe Protection Society website at [http://www.apostrophe.fsnet.co.uk/](http://www.apostrophe.fsnet.co.uk/). For more help learning how to use apostrophes correctly, visit the Purdue OWL site at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_apost.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_apost.html).
In his 1922 classic poem, *The Waste Land*, T.S. Eliot called April the cruelest month. But we think April just might be the best month of all!

Why is that? Because it’s time for the Arizona Library Association’s One Book Arizona! We are particularly excited about the 2005 choices!

This year’s ONEBOOKAZ is focusing on two books that give readers a unique glimpse into a mysterious piece of Arizona history. In November 1928, when America was abuzz with new inventions and grand adventures, a pair of newlyweds set out to run the rapids of the Grand Canyon in a homemade boat. One month later, they vanished without a trace.

Or did they?

ONEBOOKAZ began three years ago as a way to promote reading by creating an opportunity for everyone in Arizona to read the same book at the same time. Check out your local library for a copy of this year’s selections: *Grand Ambition* (fiction) by Lisa Michaels and *Sunk Without Sound* (nonfiction) by Brad Dimock. The website www.onebookaz.org includes information about the authors and books as well as a calendar of events related to ONEBOOKAZ.

Now that your papers are finished and your final exams graded, it’s time to relax with a great book! Don’t forget to read to your children — the 2005 ONEBOOKAZ for Kids selection is *Frindle* by Andrew Clements. *Frindle* tells the story of Nick Allen, a fifth grader who gets himself in epic trouble when he decides to create a new word for “pen.”

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**Writing Center Finals Week Hours**
(May 9-13, 2005)

- Monday - Wednesday: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
- Thursday: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- Friday: Closed

**Writing Center Summer Hours**

- Monday-Thursday: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
- Friday: Closed

(We are also open 5:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m. during the 8-week evening session)