Whenever you write a paper or any piece of writing, you rely to some extent on other people's ideas. **You must always acknowledge when you have used others' ideas**, whether you quote from another's work directly, or paraphrase someone's wording, or simply take someone's ideas and advice into consideration. As the Student Handbook indicates on pages 13 and 14, you must acknowledge even help you receive from other students who provide "tutorial assistance." To do otherwise constitutes plagiarism and requires your instructor to send your name to the Sub-Committee on Academic Dishonesty of the Committee on Academic Standing for judgment.

To avoid these problems, **always cite your sources**. For instance, indicate in a footnote to the title of your paper (either at the end of your paper or at the bottom of the title page) what advice you have received from individuals. You might write: "I would like to thank Jane Smith for her advice on Blau's argument and Mathilda Liberman in the Writing Lab for her advice on grammar, organization, and style." Look at any recent article in the American Sociological Review for examples of such acknowledgments.

Other help you receive probably comes from published sources, for which standard referencing styles have been developed. We suggest that you use the current style found in most sociological journals, since you are writing a paper in a sociology course. Like other disciplines, sociology has developed its own citation conventions, which you should use when writing as a member of this disciplinary community. We provide below an example of this style, with annotations to help explain what each citation involves. For more examples, you should look at the reference style sheet found in the first issue of every volume of the American Sociological Review.

In general, **quote as little as possible**. One key term is better than a phrase and a short phrase is better than an entire sentence. Long quotations simply show that you cannot synthesize. If you do need to use a short quote, use the format indicated in the style sheet. If you use a quote longer than three typed lines (something you rarely need to do, especially in a short paper), then use single-spacing, with no quotation marks, and indent the whole quote five spaces on the left side of the page (to indicate that you are quoting). The author's name, the year of publication, and page numbers (all in parentheses) will follow the quote **after the final period** (which marks the end of the quote).

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**Sample Paragraphs with Properly Cited Sources**

(Bolding in the example below is for demonstration only. Do not use any bolding in your own text.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All references in the text to work by others must be identified by the last name of the author, year of publication, and (usually) page number. A colon (no spaces) separates the year and page number.</th>
<th><strong>Randall Collins</strong> makes a strong and counterintuitive claim that &quot;society itself is ultimately based not upon reasoning or rational agreement but upon a nonrational foundation&quot; (1992:4). He begins by discussing two reasons why rationality is not a sufficient basis for social life. First, Collins argues that even fully rational actors can create irrational outcomes when they focus too much on following rules or procedures efficiently but slavishly, rather than trying to achieve the intended goals of those rules (1992:4-5). Second, he argues that rational actors will choose to cheat others, at least in the short term, thus making lasting social relations based solely on rational contracts unlikely (Collins 1992:14).</th>
<th>When a direct quotation is embedded in the text, the final quotation marks go before, and the period goes after, the year and page number in parentheses. If the author's name is not in the sentence, insert name, year of publication, a colon, and the page number, all enclosed in parentheses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When citing a source (i.e., for the Durkheim quote) found in a collection of readings or an edited volume of articles, cite the <strong>author's name, not the editor's name</strong>, and date and page number of the collection.</td>
<td>Collins concludes that social relations depend on what Emile Durkheim, the great French sociologist (see Jones 1997 for biographical information), called &quot;the precontractual basis of social solidarity&quot; (1985:161) or an underlying feeling of trust. Such trust is necessary because social relations require that people have faith that other people will uphold their agreements. Collins argues that such faith or trust is achieved most notably through &quot;social rituals&quot; (1992:29), in which people collect together and focus their attention on a single</td>
<td>When citing an entire work, rather than quoting directly, omit page numbers. But <strong>always</strong> include the publication date in a citation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“symbolic object,” thereby generating solidarity in the group and trust in each other (1992:42-43).

Always cite the source whenever you use someone’s ideas, whether you quote directly, paraphrase, or simply refer to someone’s ideas.

While Collins’s main examples involve religious rituals (1992:30-59), his argument may apply even to seemingly mundane interactions. For instance, gossip, “evaluative talk about a person who is not present” (Eder and Enke 1991:494), may constitute a social ritual in which people focus their attention on a symbolic object (the missing person), thus increasing the solidarity of the group as well as generating trust, even if the person being gossiped about is a member of the group. Why trust is generated in this case requires further explanation.

Place citations so that your own ideas are clearly distinguished from those of the author(s) you cite.

In a final section titled “REFERENCES,” list all items cited in the text alpha-betically by author (and, for multiple items by same author, by year of publication).

Underline book titles if italics are unavailable.

Indent entries in the reference list; such “hanging indentations” help readers find specific sources.

The bolded generic versions of these examples have all the information which you must include (in the proper order) in a given kind of reference.

### REFERENCES


Author. Year. *Book Title*. Place Published: Publisher.


Author. [Year Originally Published] Year. "Title of Article." Page Numbers in *Title of Collection*, edited by Editor. Place Published: Publisher.


Author. Date of Document (or Date Located). "Title of Document." URL: URL where found

Reference lists should include only sources you actually cite in the text. Putting a book or article into the reference list tells the reader that you personally consulted that source for this piece of writing.

Proper citation style for sources found on the Web is still being debated. As with other sources, the goal is to provide enough information so that others can locate the source. Readers may be confused if the Web address has a final period, so you should omit it for these citations.