Northern Illinois University

APA Citation

When you use someone else's ideas, words, images, or research in your writing, you must give them credit. This is called a **citation**. Citing your sources helps your readers find the original information, shows that your research is credible, and helps you avoid plagiarism.

APA (American Psychological Association) is one of the most commonly used citation styles in college writing. In APA, citations are required in **two places**:

- **In-text citations** appear inside your paper whenever you use information from a source.
- **References** appear at the end of your paper in a list called **References**. This list includes the full publication information for every source you cited.

Part 1: Writing Your References

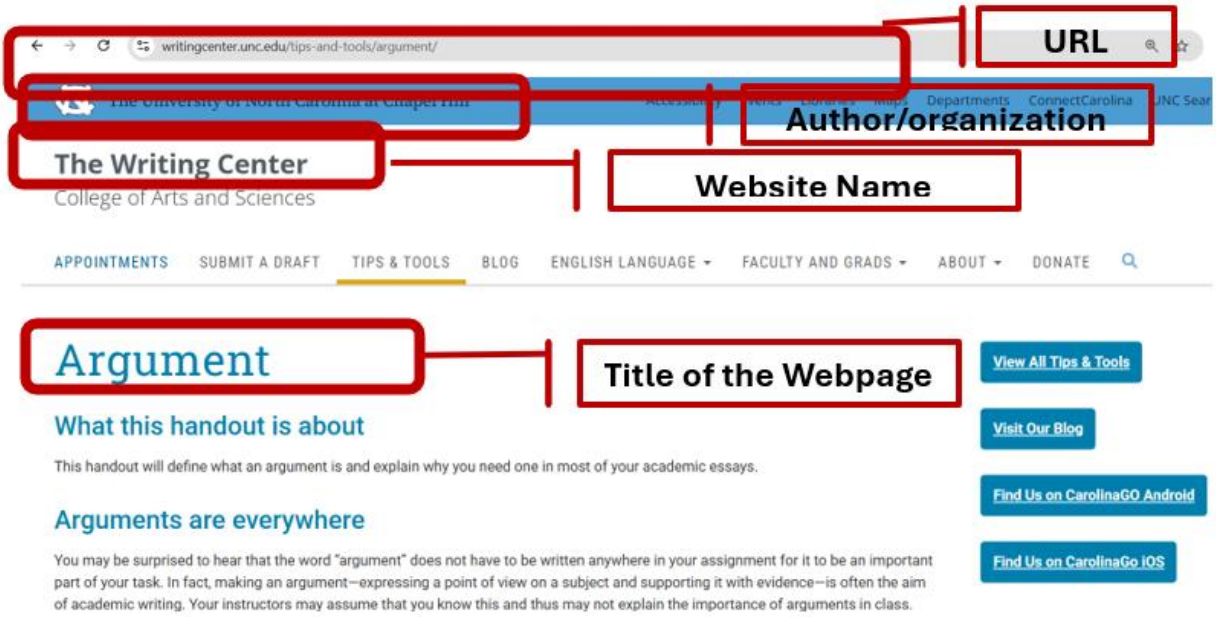
Your reference list appears at the end of your paper on a new page titled **References**. Every source you cited in your paper should appear here.

1. **Website**

Format: Author or Organization. (Year, Month Day). Title of webpage. Website Name. URL

Example

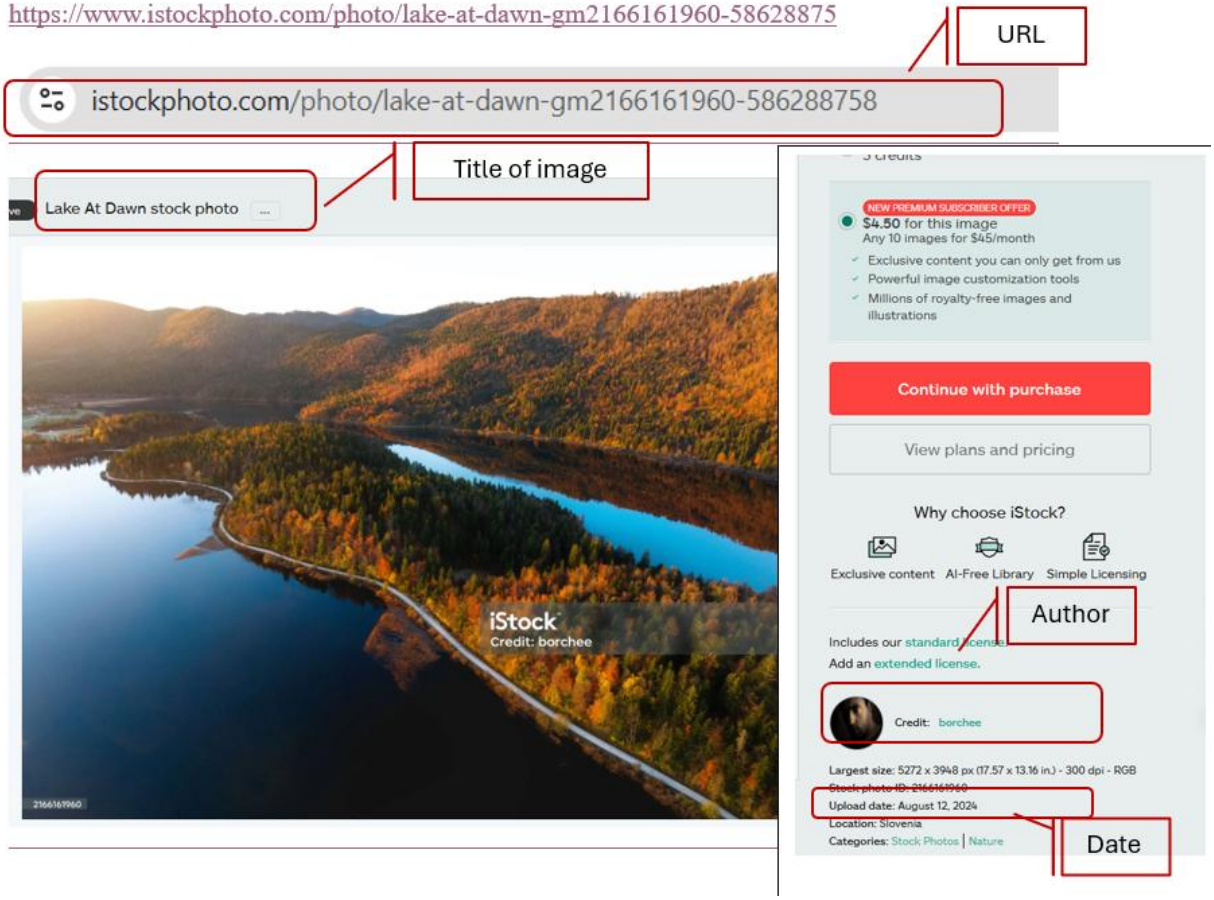
University of North Carolina Writing Center. (2024). *Argument*. UNC Writing Center. https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/argument/



2. **Image or Photograph**

Format: Author. (Year). *Title of image* [Photograph]. Website. URL

Example: Roche. (2024). Lake at dawn stock photo [Photograph]. istockphoto.



3. **YouTube Video**

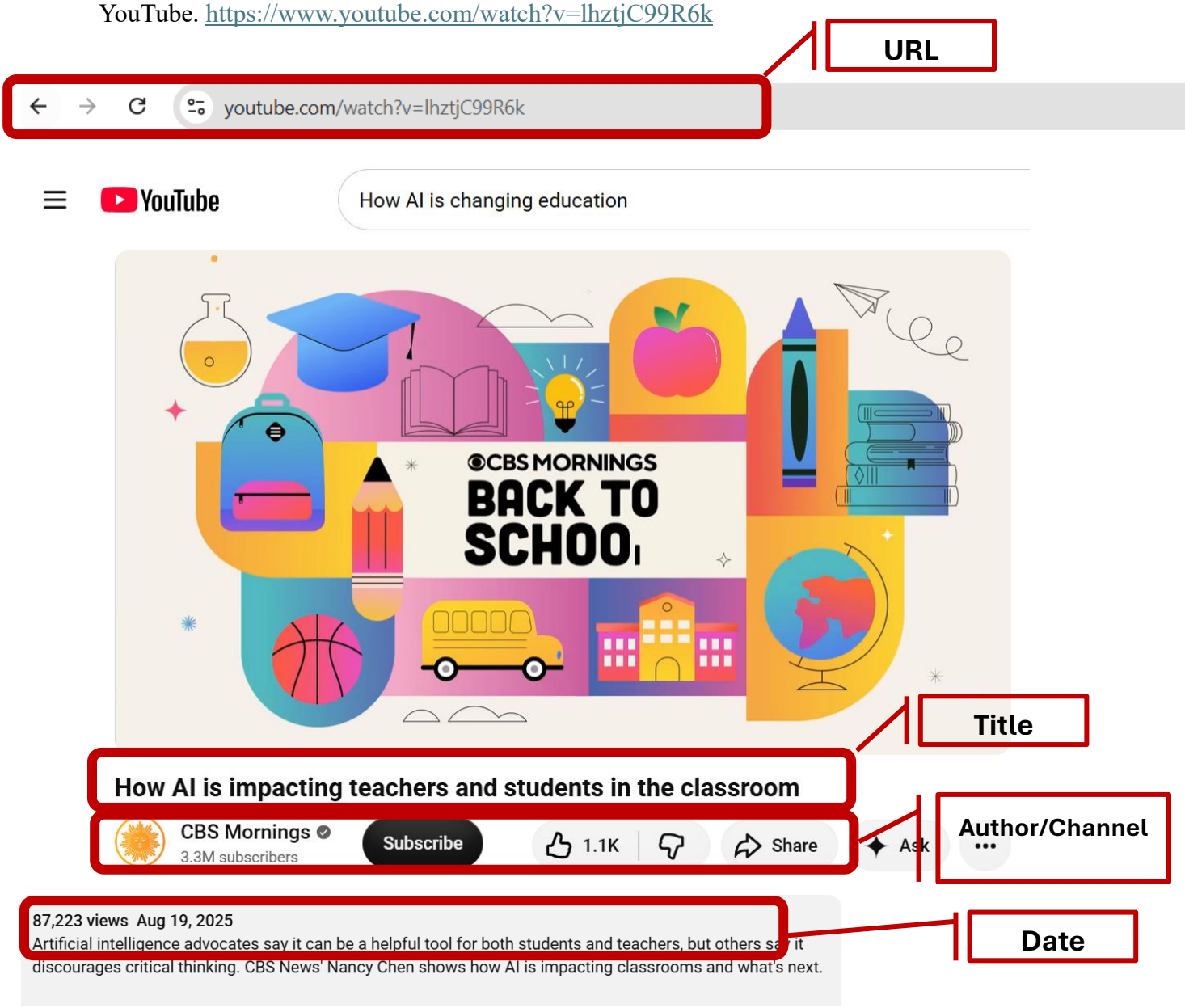
Format

Author or Channel. (Year, Month Day). *Title of video* [Video]. YouTube. URL

Example

CBS Mornings. (2025, August 19). *How AI is impacting teachers and students* [Video].

YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhztjC99R6k



4. **Newspaper Article**

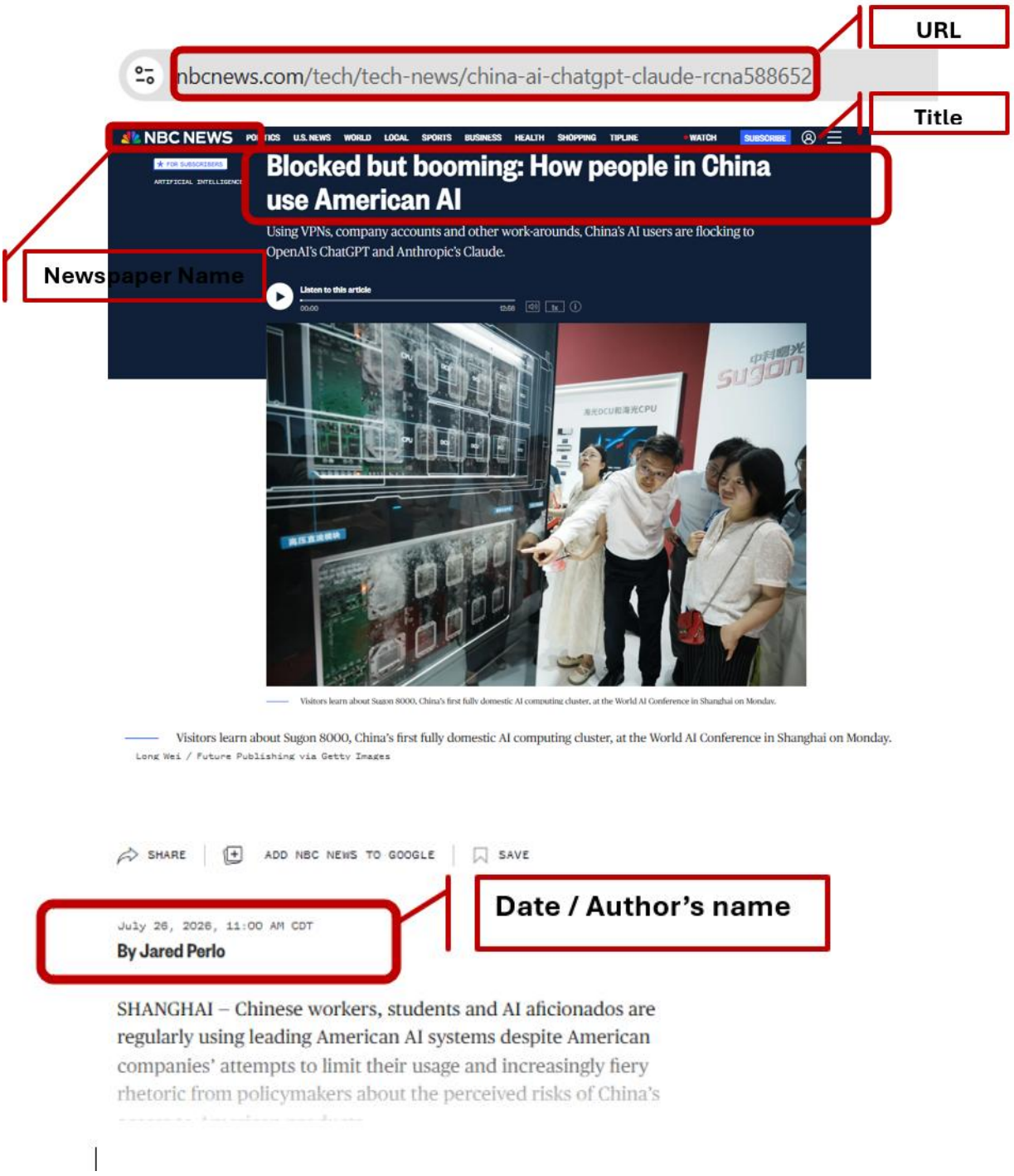
Use this format when you cite an article from a newspaper, either in print or online.

Format

Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Title of the article. *Newspaper Name*. URL (if online)

Example (Online)

Perlo, Jared. (2026, July 26). Blocked but booming: How people in China use American AI. *NBC News*.https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/china-ai-chatgpt-claude-rcna588652



Example (Print)

Nir, S. M. (2024, April 10). Universities rethink AI policies as student use grows. *The New York Times*, A1, A6.

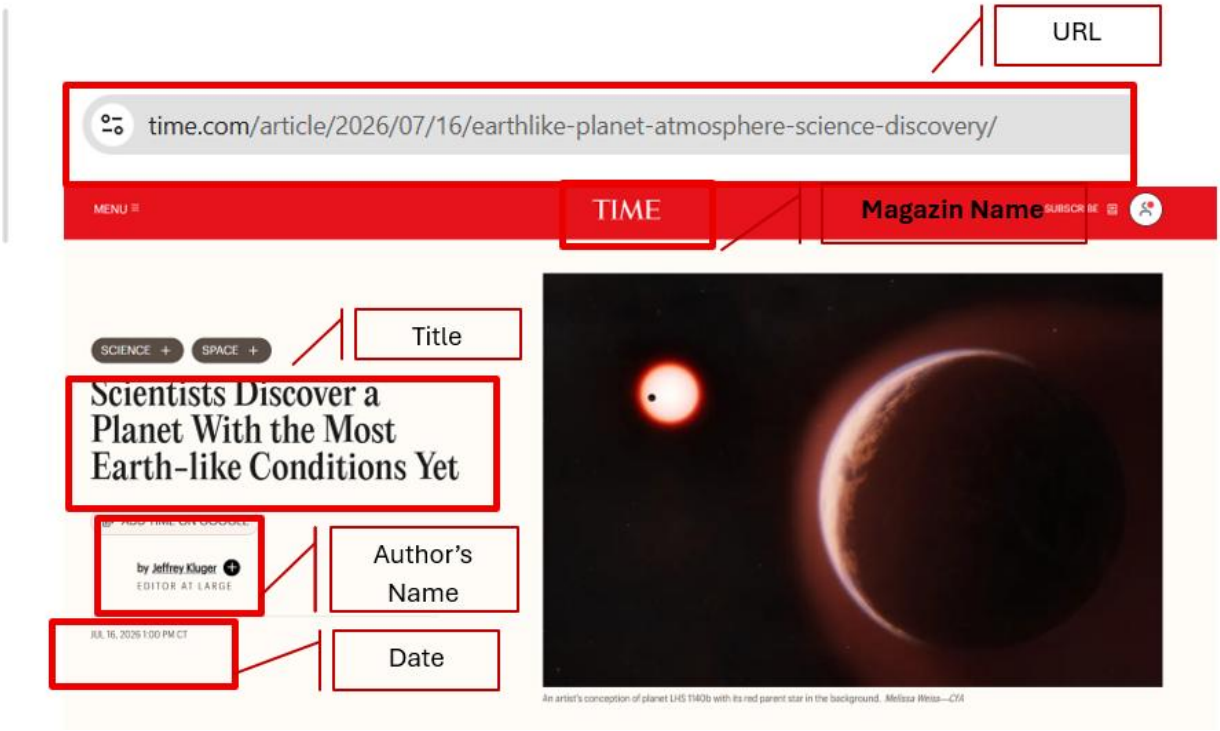
5. **Magazine Article**

Use this format for articles published in magazines, either online or in print.

Format

Kluger, Jeffrey. (2026, July 16). Scientists Discover a Planet With the Most Earth-like Conditions Yet. *Times*. https://time.com/article/2026/07/16/earthlike-planet-atmosphere-science-discovery/(if online)

Example (Online)



Example (Print)

Johnson, S. (2023, October 2). How artificial intelligence is changing education. *Time*, 202(10), 34–39.

6. **Citing ChatGPT**

OpenAI. (Year). *ChatGPT* (Month Day version) [Large language model]. https://chatgpt.com/

OpenAI. (2026) ChatGPT (May 6 version) [Large language model].https://chatgpt.com/

Part 2: Writing In-Text Citations

Every time you use information from another source, include an **in-text citation**. The citation tells your reader where the information came from and connects to the full reference at the end of your paper.

There are two common ways to write an in-text citation:

1. Parenthetical Citation

Place the author's last name and publication year inside parentheses.

Example: Students become stronger writers when they receive meaningful feedback (Johnson, 2023).

2. Narrative Citation

Mention the author's name in your sentence and place the year in parentheses.

Example

Johnson (2023) argues that meaningful feedback helps students become stronger writers.

3. Direct Quotations

If you copy the author's exact words, include the page number.

Example: "Writing improves through revision" (Johnson, 2023, p. 18).

Or

Johnson (2023) stated, "Writing improves through revision" (p. 18).

3.1.Two Authors

Include both authors every time.

Example: (Graff & Birkenstein, 2021)

or

Graff and Birkenstein (2021) explain...

3.2.Three or More Authors

Use the first author's name followed by **et al.**

Example: (Smith et al., 2022)

or

Smith et al. (2022) found...

3.3.Organization as Author

Use the organization's name.

Example: (U.S. Department of Education, 2024)

or

The U.S. Department of Education (2024) recommends...

3.4.No Author

Use a shortened version of the title.

Example: ("Argument," 2024)

3.5.No Date

Use **n.d.** (no date).

Example: (University Writing Center, n.d.)

3.6.Citing ChatGPT

When you use information generated by ChatGPT, include the organization as the author.

Example: (OpenAI, 2025)

or

OpenAI (2025) generated several possible research questions.