

Internal Citation (also called Parenthetical Documentation or Parenthetical Citation)

Internal citations are just a system of crediting your sources that provide a brief, clear, and accurate description of a source as close to the quotation or paraphrase as possible. Internal citations also match each quote and paraphrase to a source in your Works Cited page. Your Works Cited provides all the information about a source needed for the reader to go out and find it—your internal citations tell which quotes and paraphrases go with which source in the Works Cited page. The internal citation typically gives the author’s last name and the page number the quote or paraphrase came from in parentheses.

Some things to keep in mind when creating internal citations:

1. Keep internal citations brief and accurate.
2. When possible, incorporate the author’s name into the quotation or paraphrase to avoid a long internal citation.
3. Place internal citations as close to the relevant material as possible without disrupting the sentence.
4. Place internal citations OUTSIDE a quotation and always BEFORE a punctuation mark, such as a period.
5. Always add your own words to a direct quote; **never** let a quote stand by itself.
 - Your words “direct quote” (Author’s last name page).
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6. Every internal citation in your paper must have a corresponding citation on your Works Cited page.
7. Place internal citations in your essay as you write; DO NOT wait until the essay is finished—it will be MUCH HARDER to look up the information later!

Some examples of internal citations:

According to her biographer Elizabeth Partridge, Dorothea Lange found the migrant workers she photographed willing and obliging (59).

Lange became disheartened by her attacks of illness and “anguish over her son Dan made things worse. Discharged from the army, he had returned to Berkeley, living on the streets, sleeping behind houses, and showering at the university gym” (Partridge 97).

Elizabeth Partridge’s description of the actions of many Japanese Americans in 1942 highlights the unfairness of Roosevelt’s internment order:

The Japanese living in America, and their children, Japanese Americans, were profoundly loyal Americans. These Nikkei (pronounced neek-kay) immediately made an effort to prove their patriotism. Many Nikkei burnt their family photographs of kimono-clad relatives, destroyed books written in Japanese, and threw out their beautiful ceremonial kimonos and Samurai swords. (81-82)

(For examples that don’t fit the typical format, see section 6.4 of *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* or go to <http://www.bellmore-merrick.k12.ny.us/handbook/parenthetical.html> for some useful examples).