

Determining Publication Date

APA Helps

How to determine the date of publication

Basic APA Citation layout is “Author and Date.” For example a reference work by Smith, published in 1987, will have a citation to Smith 1987. There’s a linkage between the reference authorship and year of publication, and the citation authorship and year of publication.

The remainder of this video is going to talk about locating the date of publication. If we look at a scholarly journal, typically you’re going to find the volume, issue, and publication date information on the front cover, sometimes it is also on the spine. With a magazine, such as Forbes, you’ll have the year and month and day of publication on the front cover but you won’t have issue or volume number information on the front cover. With a printed book, you don’t have date or volume or issue number information typically on the front cover - instead it’s on the back of the title page. Typically you’ll have at least one date, use the most recent date. In this case, 2003. Older dates usually indicate an earlier edition, which may have different page numbering than the edition you used.

Some materials such as pamphlets, brochures, handouts, may not have a clear date but they might have a version or code number that is derived from the date. For example, this APA 6E Guide was published January 12, 2013 even though it’s labeled as a version.

Articles from the OCLS databases: Electronic articles and books provided by OCLS include information (such as the publication date) that you need for your reference and citation. You can see from this article description, you have the authorship and the year of publication.

Electronic documents can be difficult to interpret. If a single publication year can be found, use it. If an early date is given and a later “revised” date is provided, use the revised date. If no publication date can be found, use n.d. to indicate “no date.” That would go in parenthesis just as any other date would

If a website has a copyright date extending over a range of years, but you cannot tell the date the page was updated, then use n.d. for “no date.” Because the page that you’re looking at may be from 2009 or it might be from 2013, you cannot tell when there’s a range given with just a dash in between some years.

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