

Retrieval Dates in APA 6th Web Site References

What ONCE WAS (in APA 5th)

The following online document example is taken from the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.). It shows the components of a reference for a source found on the World Wide Web.

“Author, A. A. (2000). *Title of work*. **Retrieved month day, year**, from [URL]”
(American Psychological Association, 2001, p. 233).

Note that I have underlined and bolded the component of the reference known as the ‘retrieval date,’ which is provided so that your reader will know that what you have cited in your content was in that form at the time you viewed it online.

What IS NOW required (APA 6th)

In the 6th edition of the APA style manual, on page 192, you will find the following statement:

“Do not include retrieval dates unless the source material may change over time (e.g., Wikis)” (American Psychological Association, 2010, p. 192).

WHAT TO DO????

For those of us using EndNote reference software, this may present challenges.

- Note that in the current EndNote record template for a ‘Web Page’ reference type, the fields to put the year, and the month and day, for the period of time you viewed an online source are still in the template. If you record a date in these fields, the program will generate the retrieval date in your reference. The solution is not to put data into these fields.
- Note that the manual’s instructions still require the date for “source material that may change over time” (American Psychological Association, 2010, p. 192).
- If you are viewing a report online that is in draft form, or a Wiki source, you DO include the retrieval date in your record for that source.
- If you are viewing a source that is static, and will not be modified, don’t include an accession date.
- If you are publishing a document using source records from EndNote that were previously completed with the accession date—sources that are not likely to change—you will have to open the records and remove the dates from the year and month-and-day fields.

References

- American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (5th ed.). Washington, D. C. : American Psychological Association.
- American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.