In-text Citation

General Notes:
• You need a citation to credit the author for their words and/or ideas every time that you quote or paraphrase.

• Your in-text citations direct readers to your Works Cited Page for more information about the text. So, the name or title used for an in-text citation is the same name or title that begins your Works Cited Page entry.

Signal phrases:
• The first time that you cite from a source, you will usually want to introduce the source with a signal phrase that includes the author’s first and last name, and sometimes (depending on the paper) information about the author’s authority to speak on a topic or the source that you are citing.

After signal phrases:
• Include the author’s last name inside of your sentence OR in parenthesis (not both).

• Also include a page number (only in parenthesis), unless your source is from the web and does not have “stable pagination.” (Most web sources do not have stable pagination, with the exception of PDF files, scanned sources, etc.)

• No comma is needed between the author’s name and the page number in parenthesis.

Punctuation Tip:
• With a quote and a parenthetical citation at the end of a sentence, make sure that your punctuation goes from “high to low” in a diagonal line: the quotation marks are “high,” the parenthesis are in the middle, and the period at the end of the sentence is “low,” like this:

  ….all the way home” (Smith).
Examples of in-text citations

**A signal phrase:** Edwin Tunis, author of *Frontier Living*, argues that “examination of old documents reveals that more than a third of them couldn’t write their names” (17).

The author’s full name and the title of the book (included because it helps to establish his authority as a source) introduce this author and his work for the first time in a paper. Since the name is in the sentence, it isn’t needed in the parenthesis, but since this is a book I do need the page numbers.

**After the signal phrase, just use the author’s last name.**

**Author and page number in parenthesis:**
One man later recalled that as a child he “couldn’t hold a sheep, [but] he could shear one if it had its feet tied together and it was lying on the ground” (Tunis 47).
The page number is needed because this is a book. Note the brackets, which are used when a word is added to a quote. Added words usually help to fit the quote with the rest of the sentence, grammatically and in a way that makes sense.

**Corporate, organizational, and government authors are cited just like individuals.**

**Author Unknown:**
Sources appropriate for college writing almost always have an author.
If you wish to cite a work without an author, put the complete title of the work you are citing in a signal phrase, or a shortened title in parenthesis.

Reports of unlimited American land helped to create a sense of limitless opportunity in the 1860s (“American”).
“American Frontier” argues that a sense of limitless opportunity, fueled by reports of unlimited land, became part of a uniquely American psychology as early as 1835.

Why do these lines need a citation? Because they are paraphrased. The idea to connect unlimited land and limitless opportunity was the author’s, and the author of this article established the dates. Why no page number”? Because this was an online source with no pages.

**Two or more titles by the same author:**
In addition to mentioning the author in the sentence or in parentheses, mention the full title of the work in a signal phrase, or a short version in parentheses.