

CITING ORALLY

What Makes Citing Orally Special

In an oral presentation, your audience can't flip back and forth between in-text citations and a reference list, nor can they look for a footnote or an endnote: you need to *tell* them where the information, idea, or words come from *as you say it*. Since listening to a live presentation is a linear process (you can't skim or jump around and hear it out of chronological order), it's best to introduce the source *before* you present the information, so your audience members are ready to evaluate the information with the source (and your view of it) in mind when they hear the material from the source. Only with the Attention Grabber is this rule often broken; in the A.G., state the information first and the source citation after. The citation needs to be brief, because it's hard to digest the citation while evaluating the information, both of which are given within a few seconds' time. However, the citation needs to be credible or what you say will damage your own credibility.

Technical How-To

- Use an introductory phrase such as one of the following:
 - According to Joseph X, a professor of Yada Yada at Blah Blah University,...
 - Farooq Y, author of the well-researched 2010 study, *Early American Nutrition and Politics*, argues that...
 - Katherine Z, a journalist writing for the prestigious *New York Times*, offers this example....
 - Give your audience just enough detail to help them understand who provided the idea or information and how credible the source is. On the other hand, not giving enough information will not help and may damage your credibility. "Dr. Phil Sparks said..." (who is he? what kind of doctor is he?) "ilovepizza.com had this to say..." (ilovepizza.com?????)
 - If your source is original research (e.g. you conducted a survey, interview, experiment, or observation), just simply tell your audience what you did.

- You might choose to give your audience a brief (a couple of sentences) overview of how you did your research, much like the “methodology” part of a scientific study or the “literature review” in a scholarly article. This can work well when you combine original research and published resources, when you work with different fields (e.g. both popular press articles and scholarly articles), or when you rely heavily on one or two sources that you present up front.
- Use variety in how you identify your sources. Do not begin every source with “According to...”
- Do not recite lengthy quotes. It’s boring. Instead, paraphrase most of the information and then quote only key phrases.
- Clearly tell the audience what is quoted by marking the beginning and end of the quotes using one of the following options:
 - Pause slightly after the introductory phrase, then read the quote expressively so that the quote sounds like a second voice. Pause slightly again after the quote to indicate switching back to your own voice. This is the best method, but not easy to master quickly. The two methods below, while not preferable, are also acceptable.
 - Say “Quote” immediately before you start reading the quote, and then say “Endquote” immediately after the last words of the quote.
 - If people can see you clearly, you can use “air quotes” by holding up one or both of your hands and moving your pointer and index fingers up and down, as if you were drawing quotation marks in the air.