

# The Portable Editor

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## Citing the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in APA Style

Among mental health professionals, and indeed, any profession dealing with human behavior, the ***Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)*** is one of the most widely used references. The *DSM* is published by the “other APA,” — the American Psychiatric Association. The *DSM* includes a listing of psychiatric disorders, the criteria for each disorder, and the corresponding diagnostic codes. Although the *DSM* does not contain treatment information, the manual provides information about each disorder such as features; prevalence; patterns related to gender, age, or family history; and differential diagnosis. The *DSM* is used by service providers, third-party payers, and government agencies because it provides a common language for addressing mental and emotional dysfunction.

Since the *DSM* was first published in 1952, the manual has been revised at least five times (some don’t count special versions such as *DSM-IV for Primary Care Physicians* as separate revisions). Each revision has included substantive changes to definitions, descriptions of disorders, and manual structure. However, because many of the revisions have been controversial, various editions of the *DSM* continue to be cited and used routinely. Given this odd mix of editions in rotation, in-text citations for the *DSM* should always include the edition or revision information. According to the citation experts at the American Psychological Association (i.e., the APA you know and “love”), “it’s important to be precise when citing the *DSM*...because these changes [affect] areas as disparate as longitudinal research parameters and health insurance benefits” (Hume-Pratuch, 2011).

## Citation Examples

<b>Reference entry</b> for the most recent <i>DSM</i> edition, hardcopy:
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American Psychiatric Association. (2000). <i>Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders</i> (4th ed., text rev.). Washington, DC: Author.
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The *DSM* is also available as an online edition, with DOIs assigned for the whole work as well as separate DOIs assigned to sections and various appendices.

<b>Online edition:</b>
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American Psychiatric Association. (2000). <i>Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders</i> (4th ed., text rev.). doi:10.1176/appi.books.9780890423349
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American Psychiatric Association. (2000). Cautionary statement. In <i>Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders</i> (4th ed., text rev.). doi:10.1176/appi.books.9780890423349.11547
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## In-Text Citations

On first use in the text, you must write out the **full name of the manual** and **full name of the association**. Earlier editions of the APA Style Manual did not specify defining the *DSM* abbreviation; however, the APA style experts have indicated that abbreviations for *DSM* should be defined just as you would for any other abbreviation.

Therefore, to cite and define the abbreviation for the *DSM*, **on first use**, write out the manual name in full in the text, and include the edition information, the abbreviation, and the full name of the publisher and year of publication in parentheses. Note semicolons separate the edition information, abbreviation, and publishing information. The list below provides the parenthetical citations for the various DSM editions; each of these would be preceded by *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in the text.

(3rd ed.; *DSM-III*; American Psychiatric Association, 1980)

(3rd ed., rev.; *DSM-III-R*; American Psychiatric Association, 1987)

(4th ed.; *DSM-IV*; American Psychiatric Association, 1994)

(4th ed., text rev.; *DSM-IV-TR*; American Psychiatric Association, 2000)

**For example**, the first citation for the *DSM-IV-TR* in text would be as follows:

“According to the criteria for alcohol dependence described by the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th ed., text rev.; *DSM-IV-TR*; American Psychiatric Association, 2000), few of the study participants qualified ....”

Thankfully, subsequent references to the *DSM* are more space saving and use the **italicized** abbreviation only. Because the DSM abbreviation includes the edition info, the year information is dropped from subsequent in-text use.

- *DSM-III*
- *DSM-III-R*
- *DSM-IV*
- *DSM-IV-TR*

#### **Coming Soon! A new edition of the DSM**

A fifth edition of the *DSM* is expected to be published in 2013. To make life interesting, the use of Roman numerals has been abandoned, and this edition will be abbreviated as *DSM-5*.

#### Reference

Hume-Pratuch, J. (2011, July 8). *APA style blog: How to cite the DSM in APA style*. Retrieved from <http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2011/07/how-to-cite-the-dsm-in-apa-style.html>

**Happy Holidays!**

**Remember: Diane and Susan are here to help with your writing challenges!**

**Contact the Writing Support Team via email: [soswritingsupport@gmail.com](mailto:soswritingsupport@gmail.com)  
Drop-In Writing Help: Tuesdays, Noon-2 p.m. 548e (Diane Wyant's office)**