How to Cite the Bible

APA Style

Parenthetical Citations:
• For your first citation, identify the version which you used.
  Example: (John 3:16 New Revised Standard Version)
• As part of a sentence:
  Example: In a sentence: In Psalm 36:1 (New Jerusalem Bible), David...
• After this, only include the scripture reference, unless you switch versions.

Reference Page:
• Well-known books such as the Bible do not need to be included on the reference page, unless a professor requires you to do so.


MLA Style

General Guidelines:
• Versions of the Bible or individual books are not underlined, italicized, or placed in quotation marks. However, underline or italicize individual published editions of the Bible.
  Example: The King James Version of the Bible was first published in 1611.
• You do not need to identify the version in subsequent references unless you switch to a different version.

Parenthetical References:
• Books of the Bible are abbreviated; see the MLA Handbook for common abbreviations.
  Example: (Phil. 3.8)
• A period, not a colon, separates chapter and verse.
• When you first refer to a particular version, include the name, a comma, and then the passage.
  Examples: (New Revised Standard Version, John 3.16)
  (New Jerusalem Bible, Ezek. 2.6-8)
• After this, only include the scripture reference, unless you switch versions.
Works Cited:

• Include the title of the Bible, the version, the publication information, and whether it is print or web, in the citation.


Information taken from MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed., 2009, sections 6.4.8, 7.7.1, and 5.6.2.

Chicago/Turabian Style*

General Guidelines:

• If you include the name of a book of the Bible in a sentence in your paper, do not italicize, underline, or abbreviate the title.

Example: Matthew is the first book of the New Testament.

Footnotes, Endnotes, or Parenthetical Citations:

• You do not need to include the Bible in your bibliography.

• When citing a passage of scripture, include the abbreviated name of the book, the chapter number, and the verse number—never a page number. Chapter and verse are separated by a colon.

Example: 1 Cor. 13:4, 15:12-19.

• Chicago Style includes two lists of abbreviations for books of the Bible: a traditional abbreviation list and a shorter abbreviation list. (Abbreviation lists found in manual: p. 511-13.) You may use either list, but be consistent throughout your paper.

• Include the name of the version, and spell out the name in the first reference. If you use abbreviations, such as NRSV, include no punctuation. (Abbreviations list found in manual: pp. 513-14.)

Example of parenthetical reference: 1 Cor. 6-10 (New Revised Standard Version).
Example of footnote or endnote: 1. Ps. 139:13-16 (NRSV)

• After this, only include the reference, unless you switch versions.

* Turabian is the students' version of The Chicago Manual of Style.


Adapted from materials developed by the Henry Buhl Library, Grove City College (http://hbl.gcc.edu/citingBIBLE.htm)