Identifying the essential elements in an APA journal article citation

Identify the 10 essential elements of an APA citation in this screenshot of scholarly journal article description.

Note: You can either write the number for each element where you see it on the screenshot, or draw arrows from the listed element to its location on the screenshot. Whatever works best for you.

1. Author(s) name(s)
2. Year of publication
3. Title of article
4. Subtitle of article (if there is one)
5. Title of Journal
6. Volume number
7. Issue Number
8. Starting page number (if shown)
9. Ending page number (if shown)
10. DOI (if shown)

Spot the errors:

Spot the mistakes in this computer-generated citation from Summon. Is anything missing?

Note: Many databases will automatically generate APA citations, but they usually contain errors.

Corrected APA citation for scholarly journal article:


Mistakes in the computer-generated Summon citation:

1. Citation was not indented after first line
   - Tip: Use the hanging indent feature in Word under “Paragraph > Indentation > Special”

2. Should be double-spaced

3. Proper nouns in the article’s title were not capitalized
   - Usually only the first word in the article title (and first word in the subtitle, if there is one) are capitalized in APA style. However, words which are normally capitalized, such as names and other proper nouns (e.g. Aboriginal and Canadian), should also be capitalized in the article title.

4. DOI was missing
   - Even if a database (like Summon) does not provide a DOI for a journal article, you will almost always find one on the first page of the full-text PDF. You can see it in the screenshot.
   - Note: you may not find a DOI for an older journal article. In that case, you would add this to the end of your citation instead of a DOI:

   Retrieved from [insert URL for journal publisher here]
   e.g. Retrieved from http://yjj.sagepub.com/

Sample APA citation for an edited book:


Sample APA citation for government report:


For lots more info on APA style, see the KPU library guide: http://libguides.kpu.ca/apa