Vancouver referencing

This information has been adapted from the Vancouver referencing guide.

Referencing guides are updated regularly in line with guidance from the institution on which the style is based. In order to make sure you are using the most up to date version of this guide, check the University Library’s referencing page for the latest version.

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Introduction

Vancouver is a numerical style of referencing designed by the National Library of Medicine’s (NLM) International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). It is widely used in medicine and the clinical sciences. Further details of Vancouver referencing can be found from the NLM’s Citing Medicine Style Guide. Some elements of the standard offer a choice of approaches; ensure that you use a consistent standard in your own work. The examples given in this tutorial are based on the University Library's interpretation of the standard.

Referencing in the Vancouver style is a two-part process:

- A number in the text: this is a numerical reference in the text of your work, relating to a numbered reference in the reference list. The number should immediately follow the use of the material whether quoted or paraphrased.
- Reference list: a complete numbered list of all the cited references used in your work with full bibliographic details, to allow the reader to follow up these references and find the original text.

Creating a citation and reference list

Creating a citation

When using a theory or an idea in your work, a reference number will need to be added in parentheses, e.g. (1), (2). Alternatively, numbers can be added in superscript, e.g. ¹. Numbers are added sequentially for each new citation, and the number should be included in the punctuation of the sentence.

If you are referring to an author’s work and are using their name then you would add the number after the name, e.g. Smith (1) recommends the use of...
or Smith¹ recommends the use of...

If you use more than one source at the same time, you can cite them in the same set of parentheses and separate them with a comma, e.g. (1, 2). or ¹, ²

If using three or more sources that have consecutive citation numbers, then a dash can be used to abbreviate, e.g. (1-3, 5, 7-9), or ¹-³, ⁵, ⁷-⁹.

If you are using the same reference more than once in your work, it will keep the same number all the way through, e.g. Smith (1) will be (1) all the way through your work.

Quoting

Quoting

Quoting is when you use the exact phrase or wording of the original author. Try not to be over reliant on quotations, as this may show a lack of understanding of the subject area being studied.

The use of quotations varies considerably from discipline to discipline. If in doubt, check with your tutor or in your course handbook for further guidance.
Short Quotations

A short quotation is up to 40-50 words in length, this can be included in the body of the text:

Galley suggests that "the art of fluid administration and haemodynamic support is one of the most challenging aspects of current critical care practice." 1(p. vii) What this means is...

Long Quotations

A long quotation is a quotation which is longer than 50 words. Long quotations should be presented as follows:

- Presented as a new paragraph with a clear line above and below.
- Indented from the left margin.
- Do not use quotation marks.
- At the end of the quotation, include the citation number and the page number, e.g. 2 (p. 68) or (2, p. 68).

For example:

Young and Boulton argue that in neuropathic diabetic patients:

the absence of symptoms must never be equated with absence of risk of ulceration. Patients may also have a curious indifference to the condition of their feet, which can be likened to sensory inattention, and this can make the importance of education about foot care difficult to impress upon them. 3 (p. 68)

This can mean that...

Omitting parts of a quotation

You can also omit parts of the quotation; this is indicated by using three dots inside a square bracket [...]. It is not necessary to use this at the beginning or end of a quotation, as almost all quotes are taken from a larger context, and this will be presumed, e.g.

Durrington states that "women have fewer heart attacks than men [...] similar death rates occur in women about 10 years later than in men".3 (p. 5) This argument...

In the bibliography / reference list:


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Paraphrasing
Paraphrasing means putting someone else's ideas into your own words. It does not mean just changing a word here or there, or even a sentence or two if the phrasing of the original is still evident. The paraphrase should clearly be a restatement of the meaning of the original text in your own words.

When you are paraphrasing, or referring indirectly to a secondary source without making a direct quotation, the statements will need to be referenced, and the page numbers should be given. For example:

Patients with neuropathic diabetes may not see the need for taking extra care of their feet, and can be prone to ulceration without any symptoms preceding to warn of this risk. ¹(p. 68)

Reference list

Secondary Referencing
Secondary referencing is when one author is referring to the work of another and the primary source is not available. You should always try to follow up the original reference and read the work for yourself. However, if the primary source is not available, you can make use of the phrase 'cited in' to acknowledge that the reference is a secondary reference.

Secondary referencing should be avoided where possible.

If you have only read the later publication, you are accepting someone else's opinion and interpretation of the author's original intention. You cannot have formed your own view or critically appraised whether the second author has adequately presented the original material. You must make it clear to your reader which author you have read whilst giving the details of the original:

Date and Cornwall, cited in Faltermeyer, stated that... ⁵

In the Reference list, you should only give the full reference for the source you read.


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Creating a reference list
A reference list of items cited is located at the end of the document, starting on a new page.

The general rules for creating a list are:

- The references are arranged in numerical order rather than alphabetical.
- Include a maximum of six authors in a reference. If the item has more than six authors, list the first six names followed by a comma and et al. For example: Smith GA, Johnson T, Turner PW, Robinson H, Francis BN, Chapman A, et al.
- List contributors as they appear in the text.
- Author/Editor surnames should be given first, followed by a space and then a maximum of two initials given without a space. Commas are used to separate author names, e.g. Smith GA, Johnson T, Turner PW.
- Anonymous works should start with a title.
- Capitalise only the first word, acronyms, proper nouns, and proper adjectives.
- Each reference should end with a full stop unless it ends with a URL or DOI.
- For journals and online references, the month should be abbreviated to three letters, e.g. Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec.
- For journals, the journal title should be abbreviated; sources for this are available from NLM's Citing Medicine Style Guide: Abbreviation rules for journal titles.

Referencing materials from non-roman script, e.g. Cyrillic, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, or Korean

General guidance

- Romanise the names of authors.
- Romanise book titles, journal article titles, journal titles, chapter titles, etc. If possible, include a translation after the romanised title.
- If a translation of a title is provided, enclose it in square brackets after the romanised title.
- When including city of publication, use the English form of the name if possible, if not possible then Romanise it.
- Romanise the name of the publisher. If possible, include a translation and enclose in square brackets after the romanised publisher, unless the translation is given in the book.
- State the original language at the end of the reference, followed by a full stop.
- Romanise the name of all government agencies. If possible, follow a non-English name with a translation and enclose in square brackets.

Notes

- If a title starts with a Greek letter, or some other symbol that cannot be reproduced with the fonts available, substitute the name for the symbol, e.g. Ω becomes Omega.
Referencing materials from character based non-Roman script, e.g. Chinese, and Japanese

General guidance

• Romanise the names of authors.
• Romanise or translate book titles, journal article titles, journal titles, chapter titles, etc.
• If you only provide a translation, this should be enclosed in square brackets.
• If possible, romanise and provide a translation book titles, journal article titles, journal titles, chapter titles, etc.
• If you provide a translation after romanisation, enclose the translation in square brackets after the romanised title.
• When including city of publication, use the English form of the name if possible, if not possible then romanise it.
• Romanise the name of the publisher. If possible, include a translation and enclose in square brackets after the romanised publisher, unless the translation is given in the book
• State the original language at the end of the reference, followed by a full stop.
• Romanise the name of all government agencies. If possible, follow a non-English name with a translation and enclose in square brackets.

Notes

• If a title starts with a Greek letter, or some other symbol that cannot be reproduced with the fonts available, substitute the name for the symbol, e.g. Ω becomes Omega.
• If the translated title has punctuation other than a full-stop at the end, include this within the square brackets, and a full stop outside of the square brackets, e.g. ?].

Referencing materials in languages other than English which use the Roman alphabet

General guidance

• Provide the title in the original language, if possible, include a translation and enclose in square brackets after the original title.
• Use the English form for names of cities and countries when possible. However, the name as found on the publication may always be used.
• You may follow the publisher’s name with a translation; add this in square brackets unless the name is given in the publication.
• State the original language at the end of the reference followed by a full-stop.
• Give names of Government Agencies as they appear in the publication. Whenever possible follow a non-English name with a translation. Place all translations in square brackets after the original name.

Notes

• If a title starts with a Greek letter, or some other symbol that cannot be reproduced with the fonts available, substitute the name for the symbol, e.g. Ω becomes Omega.

• If the translated title has punctuation other than a full-stop at the end, include this within the square brackets, and a full stop outside of the square brackets, e.g. ?].

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Referencing materials published in more than one language

For items presented in two equal languages, such as Canadian materials which may be printed in both official languages of English and French in the same publication

General guidance

• For items printed in two equal languages give all titles in the order that they appear in the text. Separate the titles with an equals (=) sign. Put the languages at the end of the reference followed by a full-stop.

Items printed in more than one language

General guidance

• If the article is written in English and another language, give the English version of the title.

• If none of the published languages are English, translate the title which appears first and place the translation in square brackets.

• List all languages of publication, separated by commas, after the pagination/DOI/URL.

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App

In the reference list

Number of reference. Developer’s name or Rightsholder. Title of App [Medium]. Version. Location: Publisher; Year of publication (if available); [Date updated (if year of publication unavailable)]; [date of citation]. Available App Store or URL


Notes

No official guidance is available from the National Library of Medicine for apps.

- If the date of publication is not available, use the date the app was updated and date cited. If using date updated and date cited they should be presented as such [updated 2017 Feb 27; cited 2018 Jun 6].
- If the date of publication and date of update are not available, use date cited.
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

Blog

Blog post

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s) of post. Title. Date of post [Date of citation]. In: Author(s) or editor(s) of blog (if available). Title of blog [Medium e.g. Internet]. Place of publication: Publisher. Date of publication. [Number of screens]. Available from: URL


Complete blog

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s) or Editor(s). Title [Medium e.g. Internet]. Place of Publication: Publisher. Date of publication [date of citation]. Available from: URL


Notes

- If the author is not apparent, try looking at the 'About' or 'Contact Us' links.
• If no author can be found, you may use the name of the editors. If no editors are given, you can start the reference with the blog title.

• If the title of the blog does not contain the word blog, enter it in the medium, e.g. [Blog on internet].

• Copy the title of the blog and blog post as closely as possible, including spelling, punctuation, grammar and capitalisation.

• Blogs do not always make clear the date the blog began, if this is the case use the date of the first post and place in square brackets.

• Dates are open ended unless the blog is no longer being updated, e.g. 2006 -, or 2006 - 2009

• If place of publication can’t be found or is not available, use the author’s city as place of publication.

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Book with a single author

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s). Title. Edition (if not first edition). Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Year of publication.


Notes

• If adding a secondary author, such as a translator, they should follow the same format as the author, e.g. Smith A, translator.

• For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Book with two or more authors

Two to six authors

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s). Title. Edition (if not first edition). Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Year of publication.


More than six authors

If a book has more than six authors, the first six authors should be listed in the Author(s) section of the reference followed by a comma and et al, for example:

Notes

- If adding a secondary author, such as a translator, they should follow the same format as the author, e.g. Smith A, translator.
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Book – Chapter

Chapter in a book

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s). Title. Edition (if not first edition). Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Year of publication. Chapter number, Chapter title; Page range.


Chapter in an edited book

In the reference list


Notes

- If adding a secondary author, such as a translator, they should follow the same format as the author, e.g. Smith A, translator.
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Book – Chapter/Section (in an electronic book)

Section in an ebook

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s). Title [Medium e.g. Internet]. Edition (if not first edition). Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Year of publication. Chapter number, Chapter title; [Date of update/Date of revision/Date of citation]; Page Range or extent. Available from: URL or doi:

Section in an edited ebook

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s) of section. Title of section. In: Editor(s). Title of book [Medium e.g. Internet]. Edition (if not first edition). Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication [Date of update/Date of revision/Date of citation]. Page range or extent. Available from: URL or doi:


Notes

- If adding a secondary author, such as a translator, they should follow the same format as the author, e.g. Smith A, translator.
- If the page range is not available, replace with extent in square brackets, e.g. [about 10 p.] or [about 10 screens].
- Only add date of update if available, e.g. ; [updated 2014 May 1; cited 2015 Jun 1].
- The format of the date for citation is Year/Month/Day. Use the three letter abbreviations for the month.
- Convert Roman numerals to numbers, e.g. MMXV will become 2015.
- Do not add a full stop to the end of the URL.
- If a DOI is available, use a DOI and reference as follows: doi:
- If a DOI is not available, use a stable URL.
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Book – Edited

In the reference list

Number of reference. Editor(s). Title. Edition (if not first edition). Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Year of publication.


Notes

- If adding a secondary author, such as a translator, they should follow the same format as the author, e.g. Smith A, translator.
Follow the name of the last editor with a comma and the word 'editor(s)', followed by a full stop.

Include a maximum of six editors. If the item has more than six editors, list the first six names followed by a comma and then 'et al. editors.'

For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Book – Electronic

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s)/Editor(s). Title [Medium e.g. Internet]. Edition (if not first edition). Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication [Date of update/Date of citation]. Available from: URL or doi:


Notes

If adding a secondary author, such as a translator, they should follow the same format as the author, e.g. Smith A, translator.

Only add date of update if available, e.g. [updated 2014 May 1; cited 2015 Jun 1].

The format of the date for citation is Year/Month/Day. Use the three letter abbreviations for the month.

Convert Roman numerals to numbers, e.g. MMXV will become 2015.

If the URL is for a resource that is not publicly available, e.g. it requires a login, use the home page URL of the provider and instruction of how it is accessed.

Do not add a full stop to the end of the URL.

If a DOI is available, use a DOI and reference as follows: doi:

If a DOI is not available, use a stable URL.

For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Code

It's important to acknowledge the source of code just like you would acknowledge the source of any work that is not your own. Referencing correctly will help to distinguish your work from others, give credit to the original author and allow anyone to identify the source.

See Referencing Code for guidance. You will need to adapt the guidance to your referencing style.
Conference Papers

Conference paper in proceedings with a book title

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s) of paper. Title of paper. In: Editor(s). Title of book. Conference title; Date of conference; Place of conference. Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication. Page range.


Conference paper in proceedings without a book title

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s) of paper. Title of paper. In: Editor(s). Conference title; Date of conference; Place of conference. Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication. Page range.


Online conference paper in proceedings with a book title

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s) of paper. Title of paper. In: Editor(s). Title of book [Medium e.g. Internet]. Conference title; Date of conference; Place of conference. Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication [Date of revision; Date of citation]. Page range. Available from: URL or doi:


Online conference paper in proceedings without a book title

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s) of paper. Title of paper. In: Editor(s)[Medium e.g. Internet]. Conference title; Date of conference; Place of conference. Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication [Date of revision; Date of citation]. Page range. Available from: URL or doi:

Notes

- If adding a secondary author, such as a translator, they should follow the same format as the author, e.g. Smith A, translator.
- Some conference proceedings have a separate title for the book, whilst others are just called 'Proceedings of...'. If your proceedings have a separate title, use the example for conference proceedings with a book title.
- The number and name of the conference should take the following format:
  Proceedings of the [insert number of conference e.g. 9th] [Name of conference];
- Include a maximum of six authors. If there are more than six, list the first six names followed by a comma and et al.
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

Conference Poster

From a poster session

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s) of poster. Title of poster. Poster session presented at: Name of conference. Number of conference Title of conference; Date of conference; Place of conference.

38. Bazela C, Grant V, Tucker A. History of medicine 2.0: using creative media to enhance information literacy teaching for 1st year medical students. Poster session presented at: LILAC. 10th Annual Librarians Information Literacy Annual Conference; 2014 Apr 23-25; Sheffield, UK.

Notes

- The number and name of the conference should take the following format:
  Proceedings of the [insert number of conference e.g. 9th] [Name of conference];
- Include a maximum of six authors. If there are more than six, list the first six names followed by a comma and et al.
- Poster sessions at conferences may include items that have never been published. If the item has been published, cite the item from a publication (e.g. poster published in a journal should be referenced as a journal article), rather than an untraceable source.
For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

Conference Proceedings

Conference proceedings with a book title

In the reference list

Number of reference. Editor(s). Title of book. Conference title; Date of conference; Place of conference. Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication.


Conference proceedings without a book title

In the reference list

Number of reference. Editor(s). Conference title; Date of conference; Place of conference. Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication.


Online conference proceedings with a book title

In the reference list

Number of reference. Editor(s). Title of book [Medium e.g. Internet]. Conference title; Date of conference; Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of conference. Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication [Date of revision; date of citation]. Available from:


Online conference proceedings without a book title

In the reference list

Number of reference. Editor(s) [Medium e.g. Internet]. Conference title; Date of conference; Place of conference. Secondary author (if needed, e.g. translator). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication [Date of revision; date of citation]. Available from:

Notes

- If adding a secondary author, such as a translator, they should follow the same format as the author, e.g. Smith A, translator.

- If the page range is not available, replace with extent in square brackets, e.g. [about 10 p.]. or [about 10 screens]. or [1 paragraph].

- Some conference proceedings have a separate title for the book, whilst others are just called 'Proceedings of...'. If your proceedings have a separate title, use the example for conference proceedings with a book title.

- The number and name of the conference should take the following format:
  
  Proceedings of the [insert number of conference, e.g. 9th] [Name of conference];

- Include a maximum of six authors. If there are more than six, list the first six names followed by a comma and et al.

- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

Dataset

Full Dataset

In the reference list

Number of reference. Name of Dataset [Medium]. Version. Place of Publication: Publisher; Date of Publication [Date of update/modification; Date of citation. Available from: URL


Dataset deposited in database

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s). Title [medium]. Date of publication of dataset [Date of citation]. In: Name of database/repository [medium]. Place of publication: Publisher. Date of publication. Extent of database (size). Available from: URL Notes (such as doi of related article in journal)

Notes

- Include a maximum of six authors. If there are more than six, list the first six names followed by a comma and et al.

- Include full dates if possible for datasets.

- Do not add a full stop to the end of the URL.

- Some datasets often have a related article in which the data was used, if this is the case use the notes field to provide a DOI for the article, e.g. Related article doi:

- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

Dictionary

Dictionary entry - In print

In the reference list

Number of reference. Dictionary title. Edition. Place of publication: Publisher; Year of publication. Title of dictionary entry; Page number.


Dictionary Entry - Online

In the reference list

Number of reference. Dictionary title [Medium e.g. Internet]. Place of publication: Publisher; Year of publication. Title of entry; [Date of citation]; Page range or extent. Available from: URL or doi:


Full dictionary - In print


Full dictionary - Online

Number of reference. Dictionary title [Medium e.g. Internet]. Place of publication: Publisher; Year of publication. [Date of citation]; Available from: URL or doi:

Notes

- If the page range is not available for the online version, replace with extent in square brackets, e.g. [about 10 p.], or [about 10 screens], or [1 paragraph].
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Dissertation

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author. Title [Medium]. [Place of publication]: Publisher; Date.

22. Vickers S. An oral history examination of how technology has impacted on library space using the University of Sheffield Library as a case study [master's dissertation]. [Sheffield]: University of Sheffield; 2008.


Notes

- N.B. Thesis is used in American English to denote work undertaken as part of a master's degree. In this guide, dissertation denotes work undertaken at master's level, whilst thesis denotes work undertaken for a doctorate.
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Images and Figures

This guidance is for citing and referencing images and figures that you are referring to in your work. If you have inserted an image or figure into your work please see the "Guidance for taught course students inserting images and figures into university work."

In the reference list

From an online collection/social media site, e.g. Flickr, Instagram, etc.

Number of reference. Artist/Creator Surname, Initials OR Screen name. Title of image/figure [description]. Name of site/collection; date published [Date cited]. Available from: URL


From a museum/gallery (either viewed in person or online)

**Number of reference. Artist/Creator Surname, Initials. Title of image/figure [description], date created. Name of museum/gallery, City [Date viewed if seen in person OR Date cited if seen online]. [If online] Available from: URL**


From a journal

**Number of reference. Artist/Creator Surname, Initial(s). Title of journal article. Title of Journal Year Month Volume(Issue):page range of article. Title of image/figure [description]; page number of image/figure. [If online] [Date cited]. Available from: URL or doi:**


From a book/ebook

**Number of reference. Artist/Creator Surname, Initial(s). Title of image/figure [description]. In: Author of book (if different to Artist/Creator) Surname, Initial(s). Title of book, Place of publication: Publisher; Year of publication. Page number. [If online] Available from: URL or doi:**


Notes

- In some cases you may need to use the screen name of the creator if their real name is not available, which may be the case with image sharing or social media websites.

- If a person or corporation cannot be identified as the artist/creator, omit the artist/creator and start the reference with the title.

- If a title cannot be identified, add a description with enough details to make a meaningful title and enclose in square brackets, e.g. [Left foot with scarring].

- Some online journal articles group multiple figures together as one downloadable image. If you are only referring to one of the figures within the image, make this clear by using the title of that particular figure in your citation/reference.

- Include a description of the image/figure, e.g. [poster], [photograph], [print], [diagram], [table], etc.

- If you are referencing an image or figure from a source other than those listed above, include the details of the source in the usual format for that item type after the details of the image.

- You don't need to include a citation and reference for any images or figures that you have created yourself. Everything in your work is assumed to be your own work unless you state otherwise, i.e. by citing someone else’s work.
For more information about creating a reference list and citing foreign language materials see Creating a citation and reference list.

Journal Article – Print

In the reference list


Notes

• Cite the version you saw, if you looked at the print version then do not cite the electronic version.
• Cite the journal name used at the time of publication.
• Do not include the header, e.g. News, Case Report, etc.
• Include a maximum of six authors. If there are more than six, list the first six names followed by a comma and et al.
• Abbreviate the journal title; sources for this are available from NLM's Citing Medicine Style Guide: Abbreviation rules for journal titles.
• If an issue number is not available, use the volume number and follow with a colon and the page numbers.
• Sometimes a special number, supplement, or part will further divide the issue of a journal. These are referenced as follows:
  o Part, e.g. 2015 Apr 23; 372(17 Pt A):1667-9.
  o Special Number, e.g. 2015 Apr 23; 372(17 Spec No):1667-9.
• For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

Journal with a DOI (Electronic)

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s). Article title. Journal title [Source e.g. Internet]. Date of publication [Date of citation]; Volume(Issue):Page numbers. doi:

Notes

- Cite the version you looked at; if you looked at the electronic version then do not cite the paper version.
- Cite the journal name used at the time of publication.
- Do not include the header, e.g. News, Case Report, etc.
- Include a maximum of six authors. If there are more than six, list the first six names followed by a comma and et al.
- Abbreviate the journal title; sources for this are available from NLM's Citing Medicine Style Guide: Abbreviation rules for journal titles.
- If an issue number is not available, use the volume number followed by a colon and the page numbers.
- Sometimes a special number, supplement, or part will further divide the issue of a journal. These are referenced as follows:
  - Supplement, e.g. 2015 May [cited 2015 May 20]; 122(5 Suppl):934-98.
  - Part, e.g. 2015 May [cited 2015 May 20]; 122(5 Pt A):934-38.
  - Special Number, e.g. 2015 May [cited 2015 May 20]; 122(5 Spec No):934-8.
- Pagination is not always available on ejournals.
- If the article is in PDF format, count the total number of pages in the PDF. Place the amount of pages in square brackets followed by p where you would put the pagination, use a full stop after the closed bracket, e.g. 122(5):[4 p.].
- If the article is in XML, HTML, or another format, you should count the screens, paragraphs, or how many pages it would print out on, e.g.
  - 122(5):[about 3 screens].
  - 122(5):[about 3 pages].
  - 122(5):[20 paragraphs].
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Journal without a DOI (Electronic)

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s). Article title. Journal title [Source e.g. Internet]. Date of publication [Date of citation]; Volume(Issue):Page numbers. Available from:

Notes

- Use a stable URL which will always work, rather than a session URL which stops working when you log off, and are often very long.
- Cite the version you looked at; if you looked at the electronic version then do not cite the paper version.
- Cite the journal name used at the time of publication.
- Do not include the header, e.g. News, Case Report, etc.
- Include a maximum of six authors. If there are more than six, list the first six names followed by a comma and et al.
- Abbreviate the journal title; sources for this are available from NLM's Citing Medicine Style Guide: Abbreviation rules for journal titles.
- If an issue number is not available, use the volume number followed by a colon and the page numbers.
- Sometimes a special number, supplement, or part will further divide the issue of a journal. These are referenced as follows:
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  - Part, e.g. 2015 May [cited 2015 May 20]; 122(5 Pt A):934-38.
  - Special Number, e.g. 2015 May [cited 2015 May 20]; 122(5 Spec No):934-8.
- If the volume and issue number are unavailable, follow the date of publication with the page number, e.g. 2018: 20-4
- Pagination is not always available on ejournals.
  - If the article is in PDF format, count the total number of pages in the PDF. Place the amount of pages in square brackets followed by p where you would put the pagination, use a full stop after the closed bracket, e.g. 122(5):[4 p.].
  - If the article is in XML, HTML, or another format, you should count the screens, paragraphs, or how many pages it would print out on, e.g.
    - 122(5):[about 3 screens].
    - 122(5):[about 3 pages].
    - 122(5):[20 paragraphs].
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Journal Article – Preprint (Ahead of publication)

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author(s). Title of article. Title of journal [source e.g. Internet]. Forthcoming Date of publication. [Date of citation]. Available from: URL or doi:

Notes

- Cite the version you looked at; if you looked at the electronic version then do not cite the paper version.
- Cite the journal name used at the time of publication.
- If a DOI is available, use a DOI and reference as follows: doi:
- Do not include the header, e.g. News, Case Report, etc.
- Include a maximum of six authors. If there are more than six, list the first six names followed by a comma and et al.
- Abbreviate the journal title; sources for this are available from NLM’s Citing Medicine Style Guide: Abbreviation rules for journal titles.
- If an issue number is not available, use the volume number followed by colon and the page numbers.
- Sometimes a special number, supplement, or part will further divide the issue of a journal. These are referenced as follows:
  - Supplement, e.g. 2015 May [cited 2015 May 20]; 122(5 Suppl):934-98.
  - Part, e.g. 2015 May [cited 2015 May 20]; 122(5 Pt A):934-38.
  - Special Number, e.g. 2015 May [cited 2015 May 20]; 122(5 Spec No):934-8.
- If the volume and issue number are unavailable, follow the date of publication with the page number, e.g. 2018: 20-4
- Pagination is not always available on ejournals.
  - If the article is in PDF format, count the total number of pages in the PDF. Place the amount of pages in square brackets followed by p where you would put the pagination, use a full stop after the closed bracket, e.g. 122(5):[4 p.].
  - If the article is in XML, HTML, or another format, you should count the screens, paragraphs, or how many pages it would print out on, e.g.
    - 122(5):[about 3 screens].
    - 122(5):[about 3 pages].
    - 122(5):[20 paragraphs].
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Lecture notes, lecture recordings, handouts and other unpublished teaching materials

Citing informal or unpublished materials, such as handouts, lecture recordings and lecture notes is not generally recommended. Instead you should look to cite a primary source (such as a textbook or journal article) which describes or summarises the idea you are referring to. You may wish to ask your lecturer for recommended reading.

Magazines

To reference an article from a magazine see Journal Article.

Most magazines do have an issue and volume number, but it is normally hidden away so as not to interfere with the content. You can check the front, back, and spine of the magazine for this information. You may also need to check the publication information, which is normally printed in the first or last few pages of a magazine. This information is normally in very small text.

Newspaper Article

Print newspaper article

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author. Article title. Newspaper title. Date of publication. Section letter, number or name (if available). Page number(s)(column number).


Online newspaper article

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author. Article title. Newspaper title [Medium e.g. Internet]. Date of publication [Date of update; Date of citation]. Section letter, number or name (if available). Location/page number if available. Available from:


Notes

- Some online articles are modified after initial publication; add the date of update before the date of citation (as above).
- If the page range is not available, replace with extent in square brackets, e.g. [about 10 p.]. or [about 10 screens]. or [1 paragraph].
• If you are referencing a local newspaper and the title does not indicate the city or town it is published in, add the city/town in round brackets either after the title or in the title, e.g. The (Sheffield) Star.

• For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

Reports

In print

In the reference list

Number of Reference. Author(s). Title of report. Edition (If not first). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication. Report No.:


Online

Number of Reference. Author(s). Title of report [Medium]. Edition (If not first). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication. Report No.: [Date of Update/Revision (if needed)]. [Date of citation]. Available from: URL or doi:


Notes

• Include a maximum of six authors. If there are more than six, list the first six names followed by a comma and et al.

• Enter the title of the report as it appears, following the guidance regarding translation and transliteration as necessary.

• It is common for reports to have an organisation as author, if this is the case, use the organisation name as author.

• For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

Standards

In the reference list

Number of Reference. Author(s). Title of report. Edition (If not first). Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication. Report No.: 

Last reviewed: October 2023
Review date: Summer 2024


Notes

- Add a country designation if an organisation has authored a report and does not have the country in the name.
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Thesis

Thesis - In print

In the reference list

Number of reference. Author. Title [Medium]. [Place of publication]: Publisher; Date. Notes (e.g. volumes).


Thesis - Online

Number of reference. Author. Title [medium and where available]. Place of publication: Publisher; Date of publication [Date of citation]. Notes (e.g. volumes). Available from: (e.g. URL)


Notes

- N.B. Thesis is used in American English to denote work undertaken as part of a master’s degree. In this guide, dissertation denotes work undertaken at master’s level, whilst thesis denotes work undertaken for a doctorate.
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Video – Physical format

In the reference list

42. Howe A. Talking to patients: and helping them to talk to you [DVD]. Sheffield: University of Sheffield; 2014. 1 videodisc: 30 min., sound, colour, 4 3/4 in.

Notes

- The role of secondary author, in the case of audio visual materials, will be the director or producer.
- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

Video – Website

In the reference list


Notes

- For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

Website

Whole website

In the reference list

Part of a website

In the reference list

Number of reference. Title of homepage [Medium e.g. Internet]. Place of Publication: Publisher; Date of Publication. Title of part of website; Date of publication if different to homepage [Date of Update/Revision; Date of citation]; [Number of screens/pages]: Available from:


Notes

• If you are unable to find the author of the webpage, start the reference with the name of the homepage.

• Sometimes an organisation can be the author of the webpage; if the organisation begins with 'The' do not include this in the organisation name.

• Use the same spellings, punctuation, grammar, and capitalisation as the homepage.

• If you are unable to find the place of publication on the homepage, you can do the following:
  o If you know where the organisation is based, you may assume the place of publication in square brackets.
  o If you are unable to reasonably assume place of publication and cannot find place of publication, use [place unknown]

• If you are having problems locating the publisher, look at the copyright statement, or the 'contact us' link.

• If you cannot identify the publisher you can use 'publisher unknown' in square brackets, e.g. [place unknown: publisher unknown];

• Date of publication can be difficult to find, firstly look in the 'about the site' section. If you are still unable to find this you can use the copyright date, e.g. c2006.

• If no date of publication or copyright can be found, use the date of update/revision or citation, e.g. [Updated 2015 Aug 12; cited 2015 Aug 12];

• If the page range is not available, replace with extent in square brackets, e.g. [about 10 p.]. or [about 10 screens]. or [10 paragraphs].

• For more information about in-text citation, and creating a reference list see Creating a citation and reference list.

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Summary

You have reached the end of this resource.

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Book onto a workshop or take an online tutorial: 
Research Skills and Critical Thinking workshops and online tutorials.

Visit our FAQs: Library FAQs

Get in touch: library@sheffield.ac.uk

Full URLs

Vancouver referencing guide: 
https://librarydevelopment.group.shef.ac.uk/referencing/vancouver.html

University Library’s referencing page: 
https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/study/research-skills/referencing


NLM’s Citing Medicine Style Guide: Abbreviation rules for journal titles: 

Referencing Code: 
https://librarydevelopment.group.shef.ac.uk/Assets/pdfs/referencing/referencing-code.pdf

Guidance for taught course students inserting images and figures into university work: 
https://xerte.shef.ac.uk/play.php?template_id=836

Research Skills and Critical Thinking workshops and online tutorials: 
https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/study/research-skills/index

Library FAQs: https://libraryhelp.shef.ac.uk/

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