

# Referencing

## Using the Vancouver style

### Overview: What is referencing and why do it?

Referencing in academic writing enables you to give credit to individuals and/or organisations whose work you have used in your assignments. A referencing style, such as Vancouver, is a set of rules (including formatting, punctuation and abbreviations) which should be followed every time you include a reference, so that your reader can easily identify and trace your sources.

Referencing correctly will also ensure that you avoid the charge of plagiarism, which means using the work of others without acknowledging your source of information. Plagiarism is treated very seriously, and plagiarised work may be disqualified.

Essentially there are two components when referencing a piece of work:

**Citation:** The process of recognising the contribution of a specific individual or organisation as the acknowledged source that you have used within the text. This is referred to as the **in-text citation**. In the Vancouver style the in-text citation consists of a number in round brackets at the point where you have referred to someone else's work, starting with the number (1). The number is incremented each time you insert a new citation.

**Reference List:** The **Reference List** appears at the end of your piece of work and includes comprehensive bibliographic details for every in-text citation. In the Vancouver style, your reference list will be numbered in numerical order, from 1 onwards, where the numbers correspond with those assigned to your in-text citations.

The Vancouver referencing style is commonly used in medical journals. This guide gives examples of how to cite within the text and how to write references using the Vancouver style.

## In this guide

Overview: What is referencing and why do it? .....	1
How to cite within the text .....	3
Citing a single work:.....	3
Citing multiple works at the same time: .....	3
Citing using a direct quote .....	3
How to reference at the end of the text .....	4
Referencing online resources .....	4
Referencing a source with several authors .....	5
<b>Secondary referencing in the text</b> .....	5
Referencing different types of material .....	6
Books.....	6
Journal articles, e-journal articles, reports on the Internet from organisations, and the Cochrane Library.....	7
Newspapers.....	8
Government Documents .....	8
Conference proceedings and papers.....	9
Theses and dissertations .....	9
Online resources – web pages, images and multimedia.....	10
Virtual Learning Environments (e.g. Canvas) .....	11
Missing details .....	11
Further information for using the Vancouver style.....	11
Further help and support.....	11

## How to cite within the text

You should use numbers within brackets, for example (3), for in-text citations; the number in brackets links directly to the reference list at the end of the piece of work.

Only the number in brackets, for example (3), is given immediately after your citation in the text.

If you refer to the same source multiple times within your assignment you will always refer to it with the number it is assigned the first time that you cite it in your text. Therefore if you cite reference number (1) later in your text, you would cite it using the number (1) again.

### Citing a single work:

In clinical practice, up to 2.5-L of fluid has been administered on one infusion (1). A number of studies have...

Or:

Newman (3) has argued that....

### Citing multiple works at the same time:

If citing more than one information source in the same place in your text then each source needs to be given a number in the in-text citation, and must then be listed fully in your reference list. If the numbers are a consecutive range then link the first and last inclusive numbers with a hyphen, if not then separate each number with a comma.

For example, citing works 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9 would look like this:

Several studies (3-6, 9) have compared the effects of.....

### Citing using a direct quote

Citing using a direct quote is not common practice in scientific writing, so while it is not incorrect it should be avoided where possible. Instead, try to report the findings that you want to reference in your own words and cite it according to the instructions given above.

If using a direct quote in the text is unavoidable then you must use quotation marks and give the page number(s), as well as a citation number in brackets. For example:

Skretkowicz (4) has stated that 'Florence Nightingale's *Notes on Nursing* is a masterpiece in the literature of nineteenth-century social reform' (p. 9).

Short quotations (up to 2 lines) can be included in the body of the text, as in the example above. Longer quotations should be indented in a separate paragraph, and a smaller typeface may be used. For example:

Barnett (11) has said that

'The nineteenth century witnessed a radical shift in the meaning of the body's boundary. Skin – in particular its colour and cleanliness – had always played a central role in the shaping of personal identity and social position, and in the previous century caricaturists had taken great pains to capture the pocked, abraded, coarsened hides of the Enlightenment's jaded pleasure-seekers. For middle-class families in the new industrial cities, however, the skin became a political and an ethical boundary, a tool of individuation and a marker of health, wealth and dignity' (p. 48).

If you are not using all of the quotation, this can be indicated using three dots:

Barnett (11) has said that '[t]he nineteenth century witnessed a radical shift in the meaning of the body's boundary ... the skin became a political and an ethical boundary, a tool of individuation and a marker of health, wealth and dignity' (p. 48).

## How to reference at the end of the text

Full references will include different elements of information depending on the type of resource that has been used. Examples of the elements, order and punctuation for different types of resource are given in the next section of this guide. References should be listed at the end of your assignment in a numbered list, in **numerical order**, where the numbers correspond to those assigned to your in-text citations. Therefore if your text is something like this:

In clinical practice, up to 2.5-L of fluid has been administered on one infusion (1). In some cases penicillin has been shown to be more effective (2), however Newman (3) has argued that non-fatty acids.....

Then your reference list will look like this:

1. Schen RJ, Singer-Edelstein M. Subcutaneous infusions in the elderly. J Am Geriat Soc. 1981; 29:583-85.
2. Fleming A. Penicillin its practical approach under the general editorship of Professor Sir Alexander Fleming. 2nd ed. London: Butterworths; 1950.
3. Newman RE, Storlien LH, Bryden WL, Kirby AC, Downing JA. Dietary n-3 and n-6 fatty acids alter avian pituitary sensitivity. Nutr Neurosci. 2003; 6 (6):343-50.

Note:

- Do not put brackets round the numbers at the start of each entry in the reference list.
- Authors' forenames are normally abbreviated to initials, giving a maximum of two initials.
- Whenever possible details should be taken from the title page of a publication and not from the front cover, which may be different.

## Referencing online resources

When referencing a resource that you have accessed online there are some additional pieces of information that you need to provide in order to indicate this to the reader. The key differences are:

- You will need to insert [Internet] at the end of the title, indicating you accessed the resource online
- You will need to insert [cited Year Month Day] after the year of publication, telling the reader exactly when you accessed the resource. The month is abbreviated to its common three letter format for example March is written as Mar and September is written as Sep
- You will need to finish the reference with the statement 'Available from:' and the full URL where you accessed the resource, this tells the reader exactly where you accessed the resource

It is important to provide information on when and where you accessed an online resource because information published online can be moved and/or changed far more quickly than that in print publications. Vancouver uses the convention [cited Year Month Day] to indicate the date that you accessed the resource.

Specific examples of how to reference different types of online resource are given in the 'Referencing different types of material' section of this guide.

## Referencing a source with several authors

For a source with 2-6 authors list all the authors in the order listed on the source separated by commas.

For example, a book with three authors:

Hull J, Forton J, Thomson AH. Paediatric respiratory medicine. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2015.

If there are more than 6 authors, you may put the first six followed by a comma and 'et al.' meaning 'and others.'

For example, this journal article with 12 authors listed in full looks like this:

Burns J, Mason C, Mueller N, Ohlander J, Zock J, Drobic F, Wolfarth B, Heinrich J, Omenaas E, Stensrud T, Nowak D, Radon K. Asthma prevalence in Olympic summer athletes and the general population: An analysis of three European countries. *Respir Med.* 2015; 109 (7):813–820.

But the reference can be shortened to:

Burns J, Mason C, Mueller N, ohlander, J, ZOck, J, Drobic F, et al. Asthma prevalence in Olympic summer athletes and the general population: An analysis of three European countries. *Respir Med.* 2015; 109 (7): 813–820.

## Secondary referencing in the text

When citing the work of one author found in the work of another author you should acknowledge that you did not consult the original source by using the phrase 'cited by' in your text:

Bateman and Crant, cited by Tappen (8) noted that...

The phrase 'cited by' indicates that the reference to Bateman and Crant's study was found in the work by Tappen, and that you have not read Bateman and Crant's study. Thus, Bateman and Crant is a secondary reference. When using a secondary reference you only include the primary reference (which you have read) in your reference list, so in the example above this would be the work by Tappen.

**Note:** Secondary references should be used sparingly, and wherever possible you should only include references you have actually read. It is considered plagiarism to cite a work that you have not read.

# Referencing different types of material

## Books

### Book by a single author:

Author's Surname Initial. Title of book. Edition if later than 1<sup>st</sup>. Place of publication: Publisher Name; Year of publication.

Razaq S. Difficult cases in primary care: women's health. London: Radcliffe Publishing; 2012.

### Book by two authors:

Author's Surname Initial, Author's Surname Initial. Title of book. Edition if later than 1<sup>st</sup>. Place of publication: Publisher Name; Year of publication.

Marcdante KJ, Kliegman RM. Nelson essentials of paediatrics. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier Saunders; 2015.

### Book by a corporate author (e.g. a government department or organisation):

Name of corporate author. Title of book. Place of publication: Publisher Name; Year of publication.

Note that names of organisations are spelled out, not abbreviated

NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement. Improvement leaders' guide: general improvement skills: improvement knowledge and skills. Coventry: NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement; 2007.

### Edited book (including reference material such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias, bibliographies and indexes):

Editors Surname Initial(s), editor. Title of book/dictionary/encyclopaedia etc. Edition if later than 1<sup>st</sup>. Place of publication: Publisher Name; Year of publication.

1. Lally F, Roffe C, editors. Geriatric medicine: an evidence-based approach. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2014.

2. Trumble W, Brown L, editors. Shorter Oxford English dictionary. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2004.

### Chapter in an edited book:

Author's Surname Initial. Title of chapter. In: Editors Surname Initial, editor. Title of book. Edition if later than 1<sup>st</sup>. Place of publication: Publisher Name; year of publication. p. numbers.

Kalra L. Stroke units: research in practice. In: Lally F, Roffe C, editors. Geriatric medicine: an evidence-based approach. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2014. p. 161-172.

### E-book from a website:

Author's Surname Initial. Title of book [Internet]. Edition if later than 1<sup>st</sup>. Place of publication: Publisher Name; Year of publication [cited year month day]. Available from: URL.

Tse H, Lip GY, Coats AJ, editors. Oxford desk reference: cardiology [Internet]. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2011 [cited 2015 Jun 15]. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/med/9780199568093.001.0001>.

## Journal articles, e-journal articles, reports on the Internet from organisations, and the Cochrane Library

### Article in a printed journal:

Author's Surname Initial. Title of journal article. Abbreviated journal title. Year; volume number (issue number if there is one): page numbers.

Cooper C, Sommerlad A, Lyketsos CG, Livingston G. Modifiable Predictors of Dementia in Mild Cognitive Impairment: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Am J Psychiatry*. 2015; 172 (4): 323-334.

### Article in an e-journal:

Author's Surname Initial. Title of article. Abbreviated journal title [Internet]. Year [cited year month day]; volume number (issue number if there is one): page numbers. Available from: URL, or other electronic address for the article (for example, a DOI).

Cooper C, Sommerlad A, Lyketsos CG, Livingston G. Modifiable Predictors of Dementia in Mild Cognitive Impairment: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Am J Psychiatry* [Internet]. 2015 [cited 2015 Jun 23]; 172 (4): 323-334. Available from: <http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/full/10.1176/appi.ajp.2014.14070878>.

Many providers also give an article a unique identifier called a DOI (digital object identifier) which is a permanent, persistent link to the article and preferable to use since this link will never 'break'. If you can see a DOI for the article you are referencing, provide it instead of the URL at the end of the reference

Cooper C, Sommerlad A, Lyketsos CG, Livingston G. Modifiable Predictors of Dementia in Mild Cognitive Impairment: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Am J Psychiatry* [Internet]. 2015 [cited 2015 Jun 23]; 172 (4):323-334. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ajp.2014.14070878>.

**Note:** Titles of journals should be abbreviated according to the standard format. These can be found at the National Library of Medicine's PubMed website, using the Journals database feature:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/journals>

### Reports and guidelines from organisations

Name of organisation. Title of report/guideline [Internet]. Year or publication. [Cited Year Month Day]. Available from: URL. The name of the organisation is written in full, not abbreviated.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Lung cancer: diagnosis and management [Internet]. 2019. [cited 2022 May 24]. Available from: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng122/resources/lung-cancer-diagnosis-and-management-pdf-66141655525573>.

### Systematic Review in the Cochrane Library

Author's Surname Initial. Title of review. Year Month Day of publication. In: Title of database [Internet] Place of publication: publisher year. File size (if known). Available from: URL. DOI. Record NO.: CD....

Pasquali S, Hadjinicolaou AV, Chiarion Sinleni V, Rossi CR, Mocellin S. Systemic treatments for metastatic cutaneous melanoma. 2018 Feb 6. In: *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* [Internet]. Hoboken (NJ): John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2000-2022. Available from: <https://www.cochranelibrary.com/cdsr/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD011123.pub2/full> doi:10.1002/14651858.CD011123.pub2 Record No.: CD011123.



## Newspapers

### Article in a printed newspaper:

Author's Surname Initial. Title of article. Title of Newspaper. Year Month Day; Location in newspaper.

Clarkson M. Outreach studies in the community. The Guardian. 1998 Jun 16; Sect. A:3 (col.4).

### Article in an online newspaper:

Author's Surname Initial. Title of article. Title of Newspaper [Internet]. Year Month Day [cited Year Month Day]. Available from: URL.

Boseley S. NHS cancer guide for GPs and patients could save 5,000 lives a year, says Nice. The Guardian [Internet]. 2015 Jun 23 [cited 2015 Jun 24]. Available from: <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jun/23/nhs-cancer-guide-gps-patients-could-save-5000-lives-a-year-nice>.

**Note:** If no author name is given then begin the reference with the title of the article. *Do not use Anonymous or Anon.*

## Government Documents

### Government report (online) or Command Papers (for example a white paper or a green paper):

Name of Government Department. Title of paper/report, Cm number [Internet]. Place of publication: Name of Publisher; Year of publication [cited Year Month Day]. Available from: URL.

Department of Health. Equity and excellence: Liberating the NHS, Cm7881 [Internet]. London: Stationery Office; 2010 [cited 2015 Jun 24]. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/213823/dh\\_117794.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213823/dh_117794.pdf).

**Note:** If it is a report rather than a white or green paper then there will be no Cm number to use.

### Acts of Parliament (printed):

Name of Country. Title of Act, Chapter. Place of Publication: Publisher Name; Year of Act.

Great Britain. Abortion Act 1967, Chapter 67. London: Stationery Office; 1967.

### Acts of Parliament (online):

Name of Country. Title of Act, Chapter [Internet]. Place of Publication: Publisher Name; Year of Act [cited Year Month Day]. Available from: URL.

Great Britain. Human Tissue Act 2004, Chapter 30 [Internet]. London: Stationery Office; 2004 [cited 2022 Jun 06]. Available from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/30>



## Conference proceedings and papers

**Note:** Treat the proceedings of a conference like an edited book, adding relevant information about the conference. Treat a presentation/paper from the conference proceedings like a chapter in an edited book.

### Whole Conference (printed as a publication):

Editor's Surname Initial, editor. Title of publication if there is one. Conference; date; location. Place of publication: Publisher Name; Year of publication.

Holland-Elliott K, editor. What about the workers? Proceedings of a symposium held at the Royal Society of Medicine; 2004 Mar 30; London, UK. London: Royal Society of Medicine Press; 2004.

### Whole conference (online) – this would be similar to an e-book:

Editor's Surname Initial, editor. Title of publication if there is one [Internet]. Conference; date; location. Place of publication: Publisher Name; year of publication [cited Year Month Day]. Available from: URL.

Muller S, editor. Proceedings of the 21st International Conference on Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar; 2014 Aug 27–29; Buffalo, NY [Internet]. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications; 2014 [cited 2015 Jun 24]. Available from: <http://web.stanford.edu/group/cslipublications/cslipublications/HPSG/2014/>.

**Note:** If there is no publication title put [Internet] after the conference location information instead.

### Conference paper/presentation (online):

Author's Surname Initial. Title of presentation/paper. In: Editor's Surname Initial, editor. Title of publication if there is one [Internet]. Conference; date; location. Place of publication: Publisher Name; Year of publication [cited Year Month Day]. p. page numbers. Available from: URL.

Reeder B, Le T, Thompson HJ, Demiris G. Comparing information needs of health care providers and older adults: findings from a Wellness Study. In: Lehmann CU, Ammenwerth E, Nøhr C, editors. MEDINFO 2013 [Internet]. Proceedings of the 14th World Congress on Medical and Health Informatics; 2013 Aug 20-23; Copenhagen, Denmark. Amsterdam, Holland: IOS Press; 2013 [cited 2015 Jun 24]. p. 18-22. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3233/978-1-61499-289-9-18>.

## Theses and dissertations

### Thesis, Dissertation or Project (printed):

Author's Surname Initial. Title of dissertation/thesis etc. [dissertation/thesis etc.]. Place of publication: Publisher Name (generally the University that the student attended); Year of Publication.

Yates MT. Effect of ESC/EACTS guidelines on myocardial revascularisation on heart team discussion of patients with severe coronary artery disease in the United Kingdom [thesis]. London: St Georges, University of London; 2015.

### Thesis, Dissertation or Project (online):

Author's Surname Initial. Title of dissertation/thesis etc. [dissertation/thesis etc. on the Internet]. Place of publication: Publisher Name (generally the University that the student attended); Year of Publication [cited Year Month day]. Available from: URL.

Patient L. A comparison of the requesting of investigations by nurses versus doctors during rapid assessment and treatment (RAT) in an emergency department [dissertation on the Internet].

London: St George's, University of London; 2014 [cited 2014 Jun 24]. Available from: [https://elearning.sgul.ac.uk/exampapers/Postgraduate/MRes\\_Clinical\\_Practice/2014/L\\_Patient.pdf](https://elearning.sgul.ac.uk/exampapers/Postgraduate/MRes_Clinical_Practice/2014/L_Patient.pdf)

## Online resources – web pages, images and multimedia

In the context of online resources it is useful to remember:

- The author can be a person or the organisation that produced the resource.
- The term “publisher” means an organisation responsible for the website.
- If you are unable to find out either the place of publication or the publisher, then leave them out.
- The date of publication means the date on the document, if it can be found. If not, you need to use the date that the pages were last updated. This may appear at the bottom of the page.
- The cited date is the date that you looked at the resource.
- You must give the full web address (URL or DOI), it is never acceptable to omit this.

### Web pages/web document:

Author's Surname Initial. Title of web page/web document [Internet]. Place of publication: Publisher Name; Year of Publication [cited Year Month Day]. Available from: URL.

Cancer Research UK. Lung cancer statistics [Internet]. London: Cancer Research UK; 2015 [cited 2015 Jun 24]. Available from: <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/statistics-by-cancer-type/lung-cancer>.

### Images and multimedia:

For images or multimedia sources found online you will need to give some format information such as: image/photograph/video/podcast, followed by the phrase 'on the Internet' in square brackets after the title of the source that you are using.

Creator's Surname Initial. Title [image/illustration/photograph/video/podcast on the Internet]. Place of Publication: Publisher; Year [cited Year Month Day]. Available from: URL

For example, an image from a specialist website:

Moscote-Salazar LR. A traumatic frontal epidural haematoma [CT scan image on the Internet]. London, UK: Trauma.org ; 2012 [cited 2015 Jun 25]. Available from: <http://www.trauma.org/index.php/main/image/1396/>.

Or, a video on YouTube:

St George's University of London Library. How to use subject headings in databases [video on the Internet]. London: St George's University of London; 2021 [cited 2022 Jun 06]. Available from: <https://youtube.com/watch?v=orRBgVSh5vE>.

**Note:** Graphs and tables do not count as images, you therefore reference them in the appropriate format for the type of resource where the graph or table was published. So for example, if the table is in a journal article then you would reference it as a journal article.

*As everything on the Web is copyright unless stated otherwise, it is best to only include images that are in the public domain, where this is explicitly stated on the website or against the image.*

## Virtual Learning Environments (e.g. Canvas)

You will need to be clear about what it is you are citing e.g. lecturer's notes, a powerpoint presentation, an image digitized for use in VLEs or an item from a discussion board.

### Canvas – Tutor's notes/lecture/other format:

Author/Tutor's Surname Initial. Title of lecture/item [format]. Name of academic module, Institution; year month day [cited year month day]. Available from: URL of virtual learning environment.

Burke P. Choosing your topic and writing your research question [powerpoint]. Evidence Based Practice for Paramedics, St George's, University of London; 2020 Feb 03 [cited 2021 Mar 01]. Available from: <http://canvas.sgul.ac.uk/>.

## Missing details

Sometimes either the **date** or **place** of publication may not be printed/displayed anywhere on the resource you wish to refer to. If the **date** is missing, you can use [date unknown]. If the **place** of publication is missing, use [place unknown]. Always put these in **square brackets**. If you do not know the name of the author then start your reference with the title of the resource instead, do not use Anon or Anonymous.

### Note:

- If you cannot identify either an individual or a corporate author, you should consider very carefully whether it is an appropriate source to be using to support your work.
- It is never acceptable to omit a URL/DOI in references to online resources.

## Further information for using the Vancouver style

[Cite them Right](#) has a section on how to reference using the Vancouver Style. Log in with your SGUL credentials to see the full content. Select 'choose your referencing style' from the homepage, then scroll down the screen to find Vancouver.

Find it on the library shelves at PN171 PEA.

Pears, R. and Shields, S. (2022) *Cite them right: the essential referencing guide*. 12th edn. London: Bloomsbury.

The Vancouver Style is part of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals, which are available at <http://www.icmje.org>

The ICMJE no longer publishes a list of reference formats, but instead recommends that authors follow the National Library of Medicine (NLM) guidelines. For samples of reference citation formats, authors should consult NLM's Citing Medicine here:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/>

### Note:

- If you are writing for publication you should check the instructions to authors for the journal that you are submitting to.
- Some journals use their own variation of the Vancouver style, or use a different referencing style.

## Further help and support

E-mail



Email your Liaison Librarian: [liaison@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:liaison@sgul.ac.uk)

Our new on-call librarian service replaces the Research Enquiries Desk and is designed to offer a more flexible approach to in-person help. There is no need to book, simply visit the Library Helpdesk between 10am and 2pm (Monday to Friday) and ask to speak to the on-call librarian.