VANCOUVER QUICK REFERENCE AND CITATION GUIDE

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Overview

The Vancouver reference style is an author-number system that is commonly used in health and medicine, as well as the physical sciences. It was formalised in 1978 at a meeting of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) held in Vancouver, Canada.

Referencing correctly according to a particular style (whether that be APA, MLA, IEEE or any other style) involves presenting the publication information required exactly in the way prescribed by the style. This means knowing which publication information is required, how and where it should appear in the reference, what punctuation is necessary and where this should be placed.

Thus, when formatting your references/in-text citations to a particular style and reviewing example references/in-text citations, pay close attention to the order of information, how each detail is displayed, and the punctuation used and where this is placed (i.e., whether publication titles should be placed within quotation marks [if so, are they single ‘ ’ or double “ ”?], italicised, have a capital letter for all the main words in the title or just the initial word, and so forth).

In-text citations: General notes

In-text citations are numbered consecutively in the order that they appear in the text, with references that are repeated later in the manuscript keeping their original numbers. Arabic numbers are used to indicate the reference, and the citation numbers can be either enclosed in parentheses (1), square brackets [1], in superscript¹ or any combination.[¹] Multiple references are cited as groups; for example, multiple references in parentheses (1,2,4–6) or in superscript.¹,²,⁴–⁶ Where a specific page of a reference is to be cited, the format is as follows: Halpern and colleagues (1, p.26) found that/ Halpern and colleagues found that¹(p.26)… The exact format is usually specified by the relevant journal or publishing company.
# In-text citations: Examples

## Standard citations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Standard method</th>
<th>If author/s are named in-text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 author</td>
<td>… this was found in one study (15).</td>
<td>Walker (15) asserts …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 authors</td>
<td>Several studies (13, 15) have examined the effect of congestion …</td>
<td>Bradley and Walker (16) calculated …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–5 authors</td>
<td>As is proposed in previous research (6–9, 13, 15) …</td>
<td>As Walsh, Bradley, Soo, Ramirez and Walker (17) proposed …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6+ authors</td>
<td>Recent research (1) indicates …</td>
<td>Soo et al (18) observed …</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Special citations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two or more works by the same author</td>
<td>Zhou (21, 42) produced …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors with the same surname</td>
<td>A Walker (5) and K Walker (10) both assert …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary sources</td>
<td>Whenever possible, you should refer to the primary source and cite that source following these guidelines. If not possible, you can format as follows: ‘According to Orsini as cited by Holding et al (7), most cats prefer sunny climates.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Citing specific parts of works

- Walker (15, pp.3–12) … as noted in (16, Sec. 4.2) and (21, Ch. 3, p.67), In (63, Fig. 1), it can be seen … as in (18, p.45) and (19, eq. [2]) The complete data can be seen in (19, Table 2) see (24, Sect. 4.5) for complete data … as shown in (16, Appendix 1), …

### Personal communications

- Emails are cited like any other work and included in the Reference List. All other personal communication should acknowledged within the text main in parentheses. For example: ‘…this information was conveyed in a letter (Aguilera, Christina. Letter to: Britney Spears. 2012 Mar 03. 4 pages.).’
Reference list: General notes

The reference list is presented as a numbered list, with references appearing in the order they were cited within the manuscript. For example:


Reference list: Examples

Periodicals

Journal article, with doi


- **Note:** Journal names are always abbreviated according to the National Library of Medicine format; see http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nlmcatalog/journals for a searchable list of journal names and their abbreviations.

- **Note:** Most biomedical journals specify that for references with more than either three or six authors, the first three or six names are given, followed by et al., rather than the complete list of authors. The journal of publisher’s website will provide this information in their Guide to Authors. For example, for a journal that requires the first three author names: Amabile TM, Hill KG, Hennessey BA, et al. The work preference inventory: Assessing intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations. J Pers Soc Psychol.1994;66:950–67.

- **Note:** If the journal has continuous page numbers throughout each volume, the issue number can be omitted: for example, Amabile TM, Hill KG, Hennessey BA, Tighe EM. The work preference inventory: Assessing intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations. J Pers Soc Psychol.1994;66:950–67.

Journal article, published electronically ahead of the print version

Journal article, with non-English title, no doi

Online journal article, without doi

Online journal article, with doi

Article in journal supplement

Article in journal where the type of article is indicated

• Note: Article types can include editorials, reviews, commentaries, letters, monographs etc.

Newspaper article with author
Purdon F. Colder babies at risk of SIDS. The Courier Mail 2010 Mar 8:9

Newspaper article without author
Abbot swipe: Morrison ‘never warned anyone’. The Age 2015, Sep 22:1

Newspaper article, retrieved online

Newsletter article, no author
Books

Book, edition other than the first


- **Note:** When preparing a reference list for a book or book chapter, many publishers ask that for references with more than either three or six authors, only the first three or six names are given, followed by et al., rather than the complete list of authors. The publisher’s guidelines for authors will indicate the format required.

Book, electronic version of a print book


Translation of a book


Chapter in book—one editor


Chapter in book—multiple editors


Chapter in multi-volume book (Vol. 6, pp. 191–233)


Entry in an online reference work


Entry in an online reference work, no author, no date


Reference book

*APA dictionary of psychology*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association; 2007. Psychopath; p.120.

- **Note:** when citing a definition in a dictionary, the term being defined must be included: see directly above for the term ‘psychopath’.
Websites


Technical and research reports


Meetings and symposia

Conference paper, unpublished


Conference paper, published in book form


Proceedings, published in book form


Dissertations and theses


Audiovisual media

DVD

Podcast


Datasets

Dataset


Blogs and blog posts

Blog


Blog post


Comment on a blog article