
34 Vancouver Referencing

Note: this page is only an introduction to the Vancouver referencing system. For an authoritative guide please refer to:

International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals. Med Educ 1999;33:66-78. This is available online at <http://www.icmje.org/> with examples at http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html.

For a comprehensive guide, please refer to the American Medical Association's publication manual:

American Medical Association manual of style: a guide for authors and editors. 9th ed. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins; 1998

It is very important that you check your department's or school's assignment guide as some details, eg punctuation, may vary from the guidelines on this page and the above sources do differ on some points. You may be penalised for not conforming to your school's requirements

What is Referencing?

Referencing is a standardised method of acknowledging sources of information and ideas that you have used in your assignment in a way that uniquely identifies their source. Direct quotations, facts and figures, as well as ideas and theories, from both published and unpublished works, must be referenced.

There are many acceptable forms of referencing. This information sheet provides a brief guide to the Vancouver referencing style. The Vancouver style of referencing is predominantly used in the medical field.

When referencing your work in the Vancouver style, it is very important that you use the right punctuation and that the order of details in the reference is also correct. In this style, the journal titles used in the references are abbreviated from an authoritative list (see below).

A reference list at the end of the assignment contains the full details of all the in-text citations.

Why Reference?

Referencing is necessary to avoid plagiarism, to verify quotations, and to enable readers to follow-up and read more fully the cited author's arguments.

Steps Involved in Referencing

1. Note down the full bibliographic details including the page number(s) from which the information is taken.

In the case of a **book**, 'bibliographical details' refers to: author/editor, year of publication, title, edition, volume number, place of publication and publisher as found on the front and back of the title page. (Not all of these details will necessarily be applicable).

In the case of a **journal article** the details required include: author of the article, year of publication, title of the article, title of the journal, volume and issue number of the journal, and page numbers.

For all **electronic information**, in addition to the above you should note the date that you accessed the information, and database name or web address (URL).

2. Insert the citation at the appropriate place within the text of the document (see examples below).

3. Provide a reference list at the end of the document (see examples below).

In-Text Citations

In the Vancouver style, a consecutive number is allocated to each reference as it is cited for the first time in the text of the assignment. This number becomes the unique identifier of that source and if the source is cited again the same number is repeated. Numbers are inserted to the right of commas and full stops, and to the left of colons and semi-colons. Multiple sources can be listed at a single reference point. The numbers are then separated by commas and consecutive numbers are joined with a hyphen. Vancouver uses superscript numbers, or standard numbers in brackets, in the text, e.g. ^{1-4,10,12} or (1-4,10,12).

The references are listed at the end of your assignment in the numerical order in which they are cited in the text.

The main advantage of the Vancouver style is that the text reads more easily, without the intrusion of in-text citations which can be difficult to keep brief. The reader can also check the references as they read through the text, without having to search through the list alphabetically for the first author of a particular reference.

How to Create a Reference List

In the Vancouver style, the reference list is arranged numerically in the order in which references are cited in the text.

When referencing your work in the Vancouver style, it is very important that you use the right punctuation and that the order of details in the reference is also correct.

Book and journal titles are not italicised or placed in quotation marks. Journal titles are abbreviated. A list of abbreviations for the titles is available online. Connect to PubMed at <http://www.ncbi.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi>, click on "Journals Database" and then enter the full journal title to view its abbreviation.

Examples of referencing:

Books	In-Text Example	Reference List Example	EndNote (which reference type?)
<i>Single author</i>	The theory was first propounded in 1993 by Comfort ¹ that ... OR Comfort ¹ claimed that '...'	1. Comfort A. A good age. London: Mitchell Beazley; 1997.	Book
<i>2 – 6 authors</i>	'... new definition of disability.' ² OR Madden and Hogan have stated that '...' ²	2. Madden R, Hogan T. The definition of disability in Australia: moving towards national consistency. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare; 1997.	Book
<i>More than 6 authors</i>	Numerous academic librarians ³	3. Rodgers P, Smith K, Williams D, Jones A, Brown W, Green B, et al. The way forward for Australian libraries. Perth: Wombat Press; 2002.	Book
<i>No author</i>	'...the most-accepted definition.' ⁴	4. Oxford dictionary for scientific writers and editors. Oxford: Clarendon; 1991. p.56	Book
<i>Multiple works by same author</i>	University research ⁵⁻⁶ has indicated that... [if not previously cited]	5. Brown P. Corals in the Capricorn group. Rockhampton: Central Queensland University; 1982. 6. Brown P. The effects of anchor on corals. Rockhampton: Central Queensland University; 1988.	Book
<i>Editor</i>	The most comprehensive work on the subject ⁹ ...	9. Kastenbaum R, editor. Encyclopedia of adult development. Phoenix: Oryx Press; 1993.	Book
<i>Different Editions</i>	The latest preferred style ... ¹⁰	10. Renton N. Compendium of good writing. 3rd ed. Milton: John Wiley & Sons; 2004. An edition number is placed after the title of the work - this is not necessary for a first edition.	Book
<i>Encyclopedia or Dictionary</i>	'is defined as ...' ⁴	4. Oxford dictionary for scientific writers and editors. Oxford: Clarendon; 1991. p.89	Book

<i>Article or chapter in a book</i>	As discussed by Blaxter ¹¹ ...	11. Blaxter M. Social class and health inequalities. In: Carter C, Peel J, editors. Equalities and inequalities in health. London: Academic Press; 1976. p.369-80	Book Section
<i>Article or chapter in a book – no author</i>	Achieving a life of its own ¹² ...	12. Solving the Y2K problem. In: Bowd D, editor. Technology today and tomorrow. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold; 1997. p.27-40	Book Section
<i>E-book</i>	Pettinger's work on the topic ¹³ ...	13. Pettinger R. Global organizations [monograph online]. Oxford: Capstone Publishing; 2002 [cited 2004 Sep 28]. Available from: Curtin University Library and Information Service E-books.	Electronic Source (put monograph online in the <i>Type of Medium</i> field, 2004 Sep 28 in <i>Access Date</i> , Curtin University Library and Information Service in <i>URL</i>)
Print Journals	In-Text Example	Reference List Example	
<i>Article</i>	As mentioned by Wharton, ¹⁴ ...	14. Wharton N. Health and safety in outdoor activity centres. J Adventure Ed Outdoor Lead 1996;12(4):8-9.	Journal Article
<i>Article – no author</i>	It's a growing problem in the U.K. ¹⁵ ...	15. Anorexia nervosa. Br Med J 1969;2(1):529-30.	Journal Article
<i>Newspaper article – with or without author</i>	'... not responsible'. ¹⁶	16. Towers K. Doctor not at fault: coroner. The Australian. 2000 Jan 18;3.	Newspaper Article (put 2000 in the <i>Year</i> field, Jan 24 in <i>Issue Date</i> , 3 in <i>Pages</i>)
<i>Newspaper article – no author</i>	'...not responsible.' ¹⁷	17. Doctor cleared by coroner. Sydney Morning Herald. 2000 Jan 24;12	Newspaper Article
<i>Press release</i>	As stated by the company ¹⁸ ...	18. Watersmith C. BHP enters new era [press release]. Melbourne: BHP Limited; 2000 Mar 1.	Report (put press release in the <i>Type</i> field, 2000 in <i>Year</i> , Mar 1 in <i>Date</i>)
Electronic Journals	In-Text Example	Reference List Example	
<i>Full text from an electronic database</i>	The economic policy issues raised by the Internet are discussed in detail by Madden ¹⁹ ...	19. Madden G. Internet economics and policy: an Australian perspective. Economic Record [serial online]. 2002 [cited 2002 Oct 16]; 78(242):343-58. Available from: ABI/Inform.	Journal Article (put serial online in the <i>Type of Article</i> field, 2002 Oct 16 in <i>Date</i> , ABI/Inform in <i>URL</i>)
<i>Full text from an</i>	The internet has had a huge impact on	20. Internet economics and policy: an Australian	Journal Article

<i>electronic database – no author</i>	the Australian economy ²⁰ ...	perspective. Economic Record [serial online]. 2002 [cited 2002 Oct 16]; 78:343-58. Available from: ABI/Inform.	(put serial online in the <i>Type of Article</i> field, 2002 Oct 16 in <i>Date</i> , ABI/Inform in <i>URL</i>)
<i>Full text newspaper, newswire or magazine from an electronic database – no author</i>	Promoted as a 'frontier state' ²¹ , Western Australia is seen by overseas tourists as ...	21. WA packed with overseas appeal. The West Australian [serial online]. 2003 [cited 2004 Nov 13] Nov 12:47. Available from: Factiva.	Newspaper Article (put serial online in the <i>Type of Article</i> field, 2004 Nov 13 in <i>Notes</i> , Factiva in <i>URL</i>)
<i>Full text from the internet</i>	Recreational venues of a seasonal nature can still be profitable ²² ...	22. Sopensky E. Ice rink becomes hot business. Austin Business Journal [serial on the Internet]. 2002 [cited 2002 Oct 16];10(4). Available from: http://www.bizjournals.com/austin/stories/2002/10/14/smallb1.html .	Journal Article (put serial on the Internet in the <i>Type of Article</i> field, 2002 Oct 16 in <i>Date</i> , http://www.bizjournals.com/austin/stories/2002/10/14/smallb1.html in <i>URL</i>)
<i>Article from Curtin E-Reserve</i>	'...tips on speaking to groups of health care professionals.' ²³	23. Davidhizar R, Dowd, SB. The art of giving an effective presentation. Health Care Supervisor [serial online]. 1997 [cited 2002 Oct 16];15(3):25-31. Available from: Curtin University Library and Information Service E-Reserve.	Journal Article (put serial online in the <i>Type of Article</i> field, 2002 Oct 16 in <i>Date</i> , Curtin University Library and Information Service E-Reserve in <i>URL</i>)
<i>Article from a CD-ROM (BPO)</i>	Marketing is money well spent, even in hard times, according to La Rosa. ²⁴	24. La Rosa SM. Marketing slays the downsizing dragon. Information Today [serial on CD-ROM] 1992 [cited 2002 Oct 16];9(3):58-9. Available from: UMI Business Periodicals Ondisc.	Journal Article (put serial on CD-ROM in the <i>Type of Article</i> field, 2002 Oct 16 in <i>Date</i> , UMI Business Periodicals Ondisc in <i>URL</i>)
World Wide Web	In-Text Example	Reference List Example	
<i>Document on WWW</i>	A good example of how students can learn online about referencing at their own pace can found at Curtin University. ²⁵	25. Department of Health. Creutzfeldt Jakob disease: guidance for healthcare workers [web page on the Internet]. 2003 [cited 2003 Nov 9]. Available from http://www.doh.gov.uk/pdfs/cjdguidance.pdf	Electronic Source (put web page on the Internet in the <i>Type of Medium</i> field, 2003, Nov 9 in <i>Access Date</i>)
<i>Document on WWW – no article title</i>	... Curtin University Library launched an improved version of their homepage. ²⁶	26. Curtin University of Technology [homepage on the Internet]. 2004 [cited 2004 Dec 21]. Available from: http://www.curtin.edu.au	Electronic Source (put homepage on the Internet in the <i>Type of Medium</i> field, 2004, Dec 21 in <i>Access Date</i>)
<i>Document on WWW – No</i>	Both Leafy Seadragons and Weedy Seadragons are protected species. ²⁷	27. Leafy seadragons and weedy seadragons [web page on the Internet]. 2001 [cited 2004 Dec 10]. Available from:	Electronic Source (put web page on the Internet in the

<i>author</i>		http://www.windspeed.net.au/~jenny/seadragons/ .	<i>Type of Medium</i> field, 2004, Dec 10 in <i>Access Date</i>)
<i>Document on WWW – No date</i>	A link between these conditions has been noted by McCook. ²⁸	28. McCook A. Pre-diabetic condition linked to memory loss [web page on the Internet]. No date [cited 2003 Feb 7]. Available from: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news_11531.html	Electronic Source (put web page on the Internet in the <i>Type of Medium</i> field, No date in <i>Year</i> , 2003, Feb 7 in <i>Access Date</i>)
Government Publications	In-Text Example	Reference List Example	
<i>Acts of Parliament</i>	The <i>Environmental Protection Act</i> 1986 ²⁹ ...	29. Environmental Protection Act of 1986, WA [statute on the Internet]. 2002 [cited 2004 Dec 21]. Available from: State Law Publisher .	Electronic Source (put Environmental Protection Act of 1986 in the <i>Title</i> field, statute on the Internet in <i>Type of Medium</i> , 2004 Dec 21 in <i>Access Date</i> , State Law Publisher in <i>URL</i>)
<i>Cases</i>	State-federal relations in this issue were tested in court as far back as 1915 ³⁰ ...	30. The State of New South Wales v. The Commonwealth (1915) 20 CLR 5	Case (put The State of New South Wales v. The Commonwealth in the <i>Case Name</i> field, 1915 in <i>Year</i> , 20 CLR 5 in <i>Abbreviated Case Name</i>)
<i>Australian Bureau of Statistics Bulletin</i>	... change from the figures published in 1999 by the ABS. ³¹	31. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Disability, ageing and carers: summary of findings. Canberra: ABS; 1999. ABS publication 4430.0.	Book (put ABS publication 4430.0 in the <i>Accession Number</i> field)
<i>Australian Bureau of Statistics from AusStats</i>	... change from the figures published in 1999 by the ABS. ³²	32. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Disability, ageing and carers: summary of findings [serial online]. 1999 [cited 2004 Oct 14]; ABS publication 4430.0. Available from: AusStats.	Electronic Source (put serial online in the <i>Type of Medium</i> field, 2004 Oct 14 in <i>Access Date</i> , ABS publication 4430.0 in <i>Accession Number</i> , AusStats in <i>URL</i>)
<i>Census Information</i>	... information from the 2001 census now becoming dated. ³³	33. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Census of population and housing: 2001 Census Basic Community Profiles and Snapshots: Postal Areas: postal area 6050: B01 selected characteristics. First release processing [data table online]. 2001 [cited 2002 Nov 20]. Available from: AusStats.	Electronic Source (put Census of population and housing: 2001 Census Basic Community Profiles and Snapshots: Postal Areas: postal area 6050: B01 selected characteristics. First release processing in the <i>Title</i> field, data table online in <i>Type of Medium</i> , AusStats in <i>URL</i>)
<i>Government Reports</i>	... a new approach to resource assessment on the macro level. ³⁴	34. Resource Assessment Commission. Forest and timber enquiry. Volume 1. Draft report. Canberra: Australian	Report (put Forest and timber enquiry.

		Government Publishing Service; 1991.	Volume 1 in the <i>Title</i> field)
Other Sources	In-Text Example	Reference List Example	
<i>Personal communication, e-mail, discussion lists (no web archive)</i>	It was confirmed by S. Savieri (personal communication, April 24, 1999) that an outbreak occurred in London at this time.	Not included in reference list as they cannot be traced by the reader.	
<i>Films and videorecordings</i>	... as seen in the Lonergan film, <i>You Can Count on Me</i> . ³⁵	35. Scorsese M, producer; Lonergan K, director. You can count on me [motion picture]. United States: Paramount Pictures; 2000.	Film or Broadcast (put motion picture in the <i>Medium</i> field, Paramount Pictures in <i>Distributor</i>)
<i>Television and radio programmes</i>	...then AMA chief, in a television interview. ³⁶	36. The medical profession in the 1990's [television broadcast]. The MacNeil/Lehrer news hour. New York, Washington D.C.: Public Broadcasting Service; 1993 Oct 11.	Film or Broadcast (put television broadcast in the <i>Medium</i> field, The MacNeil/Lehrer news hour in <i>Series</i> , New York, Washington D.C. in <i>Country</i> , Public Broadcasting Service in <i>Distributor</i>)
<i>ERIC document (microfiche)</i>	...examined the advantages and disadvantages of country education. ³⁷	37. Davis RK, Lombardi TP. The quality of life of rural high school special education graduates. In: Rural goals 2000: Building programs that work [microfiche]. ERIC document No.: ED394765.	Generic (put Rural goals 2000: Building programs that work in the <i>Secondary Title</i> field, microfiche in <i>Type of Work</i> , ERIC document No.: ED394765 in <i>Publisher</i>)
<i>E-mail discussion list – web archive</i>	... as discussed by Little. ⁸	38. Little L. Two new policy briefs. ECPOLICY [discussion list on the Internet]. 2002 Apr 16 [cited 2002 Nov 13]. Available from: http://www.askeric.org/Virtual_Listserv_Archives/ECPOLICY/2002/Apr_2002/Msg0003.html	Journal Article (put ECPOLICY in the <i>Journal</i> field, discussion list on the Internet in <i>Type of Article</i> , 2002 Apr 16 in <i>Year</i> , 2002 Nov 13 in <i>Date</i>)

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