

# **Citing & Referencing Guide: BMJ Vancouver Style**

**Guide originally produced by the Library, Imperial  
College London, for Vancouver referencing, and edited  
with permission for BMJ variation by the Library,  
University of Southampton**

[www.imperial.ac.uk/library](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/library)  
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May 2009

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# Introduction to BMJ Vancouver style of referencing

**Please Note:** There are different versions of Vancouver referencing: this booklet is a guide to the BMJ publication variation used by the School of Medicine at the University of Southampton; if you have any doubts about your referencing you should always check with your lecturer, supervisor, course handbook and/or coursework guidelines.

When you begin your research for any piece of work, it is important that you record the details of all the information you find. You will need these details to provide accurate references, and to enable you to locate the information again at a later date, should it be necessary to do so.

## 1. What is referencing?

It is a method used to demonstrate to your readers that you have conducted a thorough and appropriate literature search, and carried out appropriate reading. Equally, referencing is an acknowledgement that you have used the ideas and written material belonging to other authors in your own work.

There are several styles that can be used to reference. This guide describes the BMJ Vancouver referencing style, which uses a numerical approach.

With all referencing styles, there are two parts to referencing: citing, and the reference list.

## 2. Why should I reference?

Accurate referencing is commensurate with good academic practice and enhances the presentation of your work: it shows that your writing is based on knowledge and informed by appropriate academic reading.

You will ensure that anyone reading your work can trace the sources you have used in the development of your work, and give you credit for your research efforts and quality.

If you do not acknowledge another writer's work or ideas, you could be accused of plagiarism.

## 3. What should I reference?

The following are examples of sources you might access and need to reference:

- Print and electronic books;
- Print and electronic journal articles;
- Webpages;
- Emails;
- DVDs, videos, films, CD-ROMs & audio tape recordings;
- Newspapers;
- Conference papers;
- Papers or data published in a repository;
- Pamphlets;

- Radio/TV/internet broadcasts (you must check that your lecturer is happy for you to use this type of material in your assignment);
- Personal communication;
- Interviews (if this is a personal interview, you must always ask permission of the interviewee before using such material); and,
- Theses and other unpublished work.

#### 4. What is citing?

When, in your work, you have used an idea from a book, journal article, etc. you must acknowledge this in your text. This is referred to as 'citing'.

#### 5. How to cite: citing references in the body of your text

Each piece of work which is cited in your text should have a unique number, assigned in the order of citation. If, in your text, you cite a piece of work more than once, the same citation number should be used.

Write the number as superscript.

##### 5.1 Citing one piece of work

Recent research<sup>1</sup> indicates that the number of duplicate papers being published is increasing.

##### 5.2 Citing more than one piece of work at the same time

If you want to cite several pieces of work in the same sentence, you will need to include the citation number for each piece of work. A hyphen should be used to link numbers which are inclusive, and a comma used where numbers are not consecutive.

The following is an example where works 6, 7, 8, 9,13 and 15 have been cited in the same place in the text.

Several studies<sup>6-9,13,15</sup> have examined the effect of congestion charging in urban areas.

##### 5.3 Citing a direct quotation

If a direct quote from a book, article etc., is used you must:

- Use single quotation marks (double quotation marks are usually used for quoting direct speech); and,
- State the page number.

It has been emphasised<sup>2 (p 1)</sup> that carers of diabetes sufferers 'require perseverance and an understanding of humanity'.

Duplication of charts, diagrams, pictures etc., should be treated as direct quotes and cited as described above.

##### 5.4 Citing the author's name in your text

You can use the author's name in your text, but you must insert the citation number as well.

As emphasised by Watkins<sup>2 (p 1)</sup> carers of diabetes sufferers 'require perseverance and an understanding of humanity'.

##### 5.5 Citing more than one author's name in your text

If there is more than one author use 'et al' after the first author.

Simons et al<sup>3 (p 4)</sup> state that the principle of effective stress is 'imperfectly known and understood by many practising engineers'.

### 5.6 Citing from works with no obvious author

If you need to cite a piece of work which does not have an obvious author, you should use what is called a 'corporate' author. For example, many online works will not have individually named authors, and in many cases the author will be an organisation or company.

The Department of Health<sup>5</sup> recently estimated the number of dementia sufferers in the UK at 570 000. or

The number of dementia sufferers in the UK has been recently estimated at 570 000<sup>5</sup>.

If you are unable to find either a named or corporate author, you can use 'Anon' as the author name. **Be careful:** if you cannot find an author for online work, it is not a good idea to use this work as part of your research. It is essential that you know where a piece of work has originated, because you need to be sure of the quality and reliability of any information you use

### 5.7 Citing the author of multi-media works

CD-ROMs (including electronic books on CD-ROM): if there is not an obvious author use the title of the CD-ROM as the author.

DVD/Video: the series title should be used as the author.

### 5.8 Tips on good quotation practice

Quotations longer than two lines should be inserted as a separate, indented paragraph.

Smith<sup>4 (p 11)</sup> summarises the importance of mathematics to society and the knowledge economy, stating that:

'Mathematics provides a powerful universal language and intellectual toolkit for abstraction, generalization and synthesis. It is the language of science and technology. It enables us to probe the natural universe and to develop new technologies that have helped us control and master our environment, and change societal expectations and standards of living.'

or

A recent UK report<sup>4</sup> summarised the importance of mathematics to society and the knowledge economy, stating that:

'Mathematics provides a powerful universal language and intellectual toolkit for abstraction, generalization and synthesis. It is the language of science and technology. It enables us to probe the natural universe and to develop new technologies that have helped us control and master our environment, and change societal expectations and standards of living.'

If you want to insert a long quotation (over two lines) but do not want to include all of the text, you can remove the unnecessary text and replace with '...'. .

As summarised by Smith<sup>4 (p 11)</sup>:

'Mathematics provides a powerful universal language and intellectual toolkit for abstraction, generalization and synthesis . . . It enables us to probe the natural universe and to develop new technologies that have helped us control and master our environment, and change societal expectations and standards of living.'

You should only do this when you use a quotation taken from one paragraph.

When you use quotations within your text, sometimes you may want to insert one or two words in the quotation so that your complete sentence is grammatically correct. To indicate that you have inserted words into a quotation, these have to be enclosed in square brackets.

Smith<sup>4 (p 11)</sup> provides a number of reasons as to why mathematics is important, stating that it is

'a powerful universal language and intellectual toolkit for abstraction, generalization and synthesis . . . [and] enables us to probe the natural universe and to develop new technologies that have helped us control and master our environment, and change societal expectations and standards of living.'

*N.B.* Writing skills: at your academic level you will be expected to develop your writing skills, and this includes being able to discuss and demonstrate an understanding of other people's work and ideas **in your own words**. This is called paraphrasing. It is much better to paraphrase than to use many quotations when you write.

## 6. How to write a reference list

This is a list of all the sources that have been cited in the assignment. You should write one inclusive list showing books, journals etc., not separate lists according to source type.

- The list should be in numerical order with each number matching and referring to the one in the text;
- The list should be at the end of your work; and,
- Books, paper or electronic journal articles, etc., are written in a particular format that must be followed.

## 7. Example of a reference list

1. Arrami M, Garner H. A tale of two citations. *Nature* 2008;451(7177):397-9.
2. Watkins PJ. *ABC of Diabetes*. 5th ed. London: Blackwell Publishing; 2003.
3. Simons NE, Menzies B, Matthews M. *A Short Course in Soil and Rock Slope Engineering*. London: Thomas Telford Publishing; 2001.
4. Smith A. *Making mathematics count: the report of Professor Adrian Smith's inquiry into post-14 mathematics education*. London: The Stationery Office; 2004.
5. Department of Health. *More help for people with dementia*.  
<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/detail.asp?NewsAreaID=2&ReleaseID=371217> (accessed 20 Jun 2008).

The layout for each type of publication can be found on the following pages. If you are using bibliographic software, use the Vancouver style to format your references. You will need to edit the Vancouver style for number of authors/editors, initials and citation and bibliographic templates. Label changes as BMJ Vancouver which can then be used as the reference style for any new library/document

## 8. Bibliography

There may be items which you have consulted for your work, but not cited. These can be listed at the end of your assignment in a 'bibliography'. These items should be listed in alphabetical order by author and laid out in the same way as items in your reference list. If you can cite from every work you consulted, you will only need a reference list. If you wish to show to your reader (examiner) the unused research you carried out, the bibliography will show your extra effort. **You will not need to number each work listed in your bibliography.**

Always check the guidance you are given for coursework, dissertations, etc., to find out if you are expected to submit work with a reference list and a bibliography. If in doubt, ask your lecturer or supervisor.

# How to write references for your reference list and bibliography

The examples on the following pages are in two parts:

- The information you should collect about each piece of work you use; and
- How this information is presented when you write a full reference.

## 1. Books: print

**Author/Editor** (if it is an editor/editors always put (ed./eds.) after the name)

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Series title and number** (if part of a series)

**Edition** (if not the first edition)

**Place of publication** (if there is more than one place listed, use the first named)

**Publisher**

**Year of publication**

Simons NE, Menzies B, Matthews M. *A Short Course in Soil and Rock Slope Engineering*. London: Thomas Telford Publishing; 2001.

## 2. Books: electronic

**Author/Editor** (if an editor/editors always put (ed./eds.) after the name)

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Series title and number** (if part of a series)

**Edition** (if not the first edition)

**Place of publication** (if there is more than one place listed, use the first named)

**Publisher**

**Year of publication**

**URL**

**Date of access**

Simons NE, Menzies B, Matthews M. *A Short Course in Soil and Rock Slope Engineering*. London: Thomas Telford Publishing; 2001. [www.myilibrary.com?ID=93941](http://www.myilibrary.com?ID=93941) (accessed 18 Jun 2008).

## 3. Books: chapter in an edited book

**Author of the chapter**

**Title of chapter** followed by, **In:**

**Editor** (always put (ed./eds) after the name)

**Title of book** (this should be in italics)

**Series title and number** (if part of a series)

**Edition** (if not the first edition)

**Place of publication** (if there is more than one place listed, use the first named)

**Publisher**

**Year of publication**

**Page numbers** (use 'p' before the page numbers. Elide the page numbers)

Moran MJ. Engineering thermodynamics. In: Kreith F, Goswami DY (eds.) *The CRC handbook of mechanical engineering*. 2nd ed. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press; 2005. p75 - 81.

## 4. Books: translated

**Author/Editor** (if an editor/editors always put (ed./eds.) after the name)

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Trans followed by the name of the translator**

**Series title and number** (if part of a series)  
**Edition** (if not the first edition)  
**Place of publication** (if there is more than one place listed, use the first named)  
**Publisher**  
**Year of publication**

Aristotle. *Physics*. Trans Graham DW. Oxford: Clarendon; 1999.

## 5. Books: in a foreign language

**Author/Editor** (if an editor/editors always put (ed./eds.) after the name)  
**Title** (this should be in italics)  
**[Title in original language]** (this should be in italics)  
**Series title and number** (if part of a series)  
**Edition** (if not the first edition)  
**Place of publication** (if there is more than one place listed, use the first named)  
**Publisher**  
**Year of publication**

García Sánchez JJ. *Toponymical atlas of Spain*. [Atlas toponímico de España] Madrid: Arco/Libros; 2007.

## 6. Journal articles: print

**Author**  
**Title of journal article**  
**Title of journal** (this should be in italics)  
**Year of publication**  
**Volume number**  
**(Issue number)**  
**Page numbers of the article**

Chibber PK, Majumdar SK. Foreign ownership and profitability: Property rights, control, and the performance of firms in Indian industry. *Journal of Law & Economics* 1999;42(1): 209-238.

## 7. Journal articles: electronic

If an electronic journal article has a DOI (digital object identifier), you can use this instead of the URL. The DOI is a permanent identifier provided by publishers so that the article can always be found online.

**Author**  
**Title of journal article**  
**Title of journal** (this should be in italics)  
**Year of publication**  
**Volume number**  
**(Issue number)**  
**Page numbers of the article**  
**URL or DOI**  
**Date of access**

Arrami M, Garner H. A tale of two citations. *Nature* 2008;451(7177): 397-9.  
[www.nature.com/nature/journal/v451/n7177/full/451397a.html](http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v451/n7177/full/451397a.html) (accessed 20 January 2008).

**or**

Wang F, Maidment G, Missenden J, Tozer R. The novel use of phase change materials in refrigeration plant. Part 1: Experimental investigation. *Applied Thermal Engineering*. 2007;27(17-18): 2893-2901.  
doi:10.1016/j.applthermeng.2005.06.011. (accessed 14 July 2008).

## 8. Conference proceedings: whole

**Editor/Organisation** (if an editor/editors always put (ed./eds.) after the name)

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Place of publication**

**Publisher**

**Year of publication**

Edge BL. *Coastal engineering 2000: conference proceedings, July 16-21, 2000, Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, Sydney, Australia*. Reston, VA: ASCE; 2001.

## 9. Conference proceedings: individual paper

**Author**

**Title of conference paper** followed by, **In:**

**Editor/Organisation** (if an editor/editors always put (ed./eds.) after the name)

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Place of publication**

**Publisher**

**Year of publication**

**Page numbers**

Wittke M. Design, construction, supervision and long-term behaviour of tunnels in swelling rock. In: Van Cotthem A, Charlier R, Thimus JF, Tshibangu JP. (eds.) *Eurock2006: multiphysics coupling and long term behaviour in rock mechanics: proceedings of the International Symposium of the International Society for Rock Mechanics, EUROCK2006, 9-12 May 2006, Liège, Belgium*. London: Taylor & Francis; 2006.

## 10. Theses

(Final written work by PhD and postgraduate students, dissertations, project reports, discourses and essays by any student.)

**Author**

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Type of thesis**

**Academic institution**

**Year of publication**

Leckenby RJ. *Dynamic characterisation and fluid flow modelling of fractured reservoirs*. PhD thesis. Imperial College London; 2005.

## 11. Newspaper articles: print

**Author** (if the article has no author, use the name of the newspaper)

**Title of article**

**Title of newspaper** (this should be in italics)

**Day, month and year of publication**

**Page numbers of the article**

Macalister T. Green energy is the modern gold rush. *The Guardian*. Wednesday Jul 2 2008: 27.

## 12. Newspaper articles: online

**Author** (if the article has no author, use the name of the newspaper)

**Title of article**

**Title of Newspaper** (this should be in italics)

**Day, month and year of publication**

**Page numbers of the article - if available**

**URL**

## Date of access

Pagnamenta R. Energy adviser puts forward powerful case for hydrogen. *The Times*. May 24 2008.  
[http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry\\_sectors/natural\\_resources/article3994594.ece](http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/natural_resources/article3994594.ece) (accessed 2 Jul 2008).

## 13. White and Green papers

(Government consultation papers to inform the debate on new policy and laws.)

### Government department

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Paper number**

**Place of publication**

**Publisher**

**Year of publication**

Department of Health. *Choosing Health: making healthier choices easier*, CM6374. London: Stationery Office; 2001.

## 14. Statutory Instruments

(Documents detailing the rules written by the civil service under powers delegated from parliament.)

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**The abbreviation: SI**

**Statutory Instrument number**

**Place of publication**

**Publisher**

**Year of publication**

*The Public Contract Regulations 2006*. SI 2006/5. London: TSO; 2006.

## 15. Patents

### Author

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Patent number**

**(Patent)**

**Year of publication**

Landini L, Chielini E. *Water soluble and biodegradable self airproof tight closing bag*. CN101045489 (Patent) 2007.

## 16. Standards

**Name of Standard Body/Institution**

**Standard number**

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Place of publication**

**Publisher**

**Year of publication**

British Standards Institution. BS 5950-8:2003. *Structural use of steelwork in building: code of practice for fire resistant design*. London: BSI; 2003.

## 17. Reports

**Author/Editor** (if it is an editor/editors always put (ed./eds.) after the name)

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Organisation**

**Report number:** (this should be followed by the actual number in figures)

**Year of publication**

Leatherwood S. *Whales, dolphins, and porpoises of the western North Atlantic*. U.S. Dept. of Commerce. Report number: 63, 2001.

## 18. Maps

**Author** (usually the organisation responsible for publishing the map)

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Scale**

**Place of publication** (if there is more than one place listed, use the first named)

**Publisher**

**Year of publication**

British Geological Survey. *South London, 270*. 1: 50 000. London: BGS; 1998.

## 19. Web pages and websites

**Author/Editor**

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**URL**

**date of access**

European Space Agency. *ESA: Missions, Earth Observation: ENVISAT*. <http://envisat.esa.int/> (accessed 3 July 2008).

## 20. Podcasts

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Podcast**

**URL**

**date of access**

*Nature Podcast*. Podcast. <http://www.nature.com/nature/podcast/index.html> (accessed 17 Jul 2008).

## 21. Blogs

**Author**

**Title of blog post**

**Title** (this should be in italics)

**Weblog**

**URL**

**date of access**

Tyler R. *The Mechanical interface of the Tardis*. Weblog. <http://www.darlikcity.org/publication3.html> (accessed 19 Apr 2006).

## 22. Emails

### Sender

(Sender's email address)

Title of message (this should be in italics)

Email to: Recipient's name

(Recipient's email address)

Date of email

HornblowerH. (h.hornblower@HMS.Renown.uk) *Treaty of Luneville*. Email to: Pellew C.  
(c.pellew@HMS.Justinian.uk) 16 Sep 2005.

## 23. Multi-media formats

With the following types of work, you would usually use the title of the TV programme or video recording, or title of the film (whether on DVD or video) as the author. If the title is used as the author, this should be written in italics: see the DVD example below. You should also include the type of format in the reference, such as Video: VHS, DVD, Audio cassette, CD-ROM and so on.

### Video recordings: from the TV

World in Action. *All work and no play*. [Video:VHS] London: ITV; 21 Jan 2002.

### Video recordings: commercial

Fragile Earth, 5. *South American Wetland-Pantanal*. [Video:VHS] Henley: Watchword Video; 1998.

### DVDs

*Life on Campus*. [DVD] London: Imperial College London; 2006.

### Audio cassettes

British Diabetic Association. *Guidelines on Nutrition*. [Audio cassette] London: BDA; 2005.

### CD-ROMs

Author/Editor (use the corporate author if no individual author or editor is named)

CD-ROM title (this should be in italics)

[CD-ROM]

Place of publication

Publisher

Year of publication

Encyclopaedia Britannica. *Britannica 2003*. [CD-ROM] Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica; 2003

## 24. Films

Title of film (this should be in italics)

[Film]

Directed by: Director's name

Place of production

Name of production company

Year of production

*Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. [Film] Directed by: Chris Columbus. USA: Warner Brothers; 2002.

## 25. Interviews: broadcast

**Name of person interviewed**

**Interviewed by: Name of interviewer**

**Title of interview (if any)**

**Title of programme (this should be in italics)**

**Production information**

**Date and time of broadcast**

Kirk T. Interviewed by: Picard J. *News Night Live*. Channel 6. 24 Jun 2001, 10pm.

## 26. Interviews: personal

**Name of person interviewed**

**Interviewed by:**

**Name of interviewer**

**Date of interview**

Potter P. Interviewed by: Snape S. 24 Jun 2005.

## 27. Personal communication

**Name of practitioner**

**Occupation**

**Personal communication**

**Date when the information was provided**

Law J. Engineering consultant. Personal communication. 26 Mar 2004.

## 28. Presentations/lectures

**Name of presenter/lecturer**

**Title of presentation/lecture**

**Presented at the conference/meeting title (this should be in italics)**

**Conference/meeting location**

**Year of presentation/lecture**

Yoda M. Code of Ethics for the Jedi: are they outdated? *Presented at the Annual Jedi Conference*. Coruscant, 2005.

## 29. Presentations/lectures: online version

**Name of presenter/lecturer**

**Title of presentation/lecture**

**Presented at the conference/meeting title (this should be in italics)**

**Conference/meeting location**

**Year of presentation/lecture**

**URL**

**date of access**

Solo H. Light speed and prevailing problems. *Presented at the School of Aeronautics*. London. 2003.  
<http://starwars.org.uk> (accessed 20 May 2005).