

# MOORE ABOUT.. REFERENCING



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# REFERENCING

## Introduction to referencing



For every academic assignment or piece of professional writing you produce you will be asked to include references to material you have consulted or used. This will include a variety of materials from academic articles and images found online through to datasets and even work you have previously authored and published. This guide will introduce the basics of referencing but as all departments follow their own conventions you should always check local sources when referencing materials.

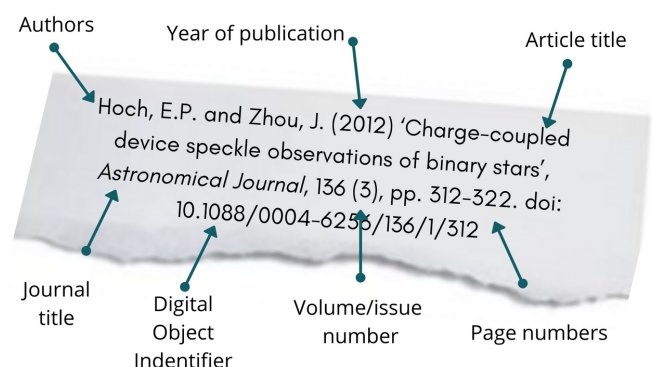
## Why do you need to reference?

Perhaps the most important reason for referencing is that it helps to avoid accidental plagiarism. By giving an acknowledgement to statements and ideas you have taken from elsewhere this clearly shows what is your own work. Referencing also helps to demonstrate the depth of your reading, showcasing to the reader that you are able to select sources and use them in your own work as well as where you obtained information. Effective referencing lets you signpost readers to the work you have found useful which helps them to further widen exploration of the literature. In this way it is a vital part of good academic practice that helps to showcase both your effort and the work of others.



## Anatomy of a reference

The references below show an example of a book and an online journal article referenced using the Harvard reference convention and include many typical elements.



# REFERENCING

## What do you need to reference?



You should reference any material you use in your own work which was created by someone else. This includes a wide range of materials such as journal articles, books, images, data sets and conference papers. Unpublished materials should also be referenced including letters, emails or personal interviews. Although strong academic writing should include wider sources, if you must refer directly to lecture notes and handouts from tutors you should also reference these.

Broadly speaking you should aim to reference work in the following situations:

- when reporting facts and figures in order to support your arguments.
- to acknowledge previous work on the development of a theory.
- when quoting the exact words used in a source.
- when paraphrasing the work of someone else.

(List from Williams and Davis, *Referencing and Understanding Plagiarism*, MacMillan, 2017).

Remember that you may also need to reference previous work you have authored to demonstrate that you are not just recycling writing. This includes work you have published which will also be subject to copyright restrictions.

## What do you not need to reference?

There are some circumstances where you will not need to include a reference:

- when using facts which are common knowledge. This varies by discipline.
- when making your own comments or conclusions.
- in field notes or experiment results.
- when recording your own experiences, for example in a reflective journal.



If in doubt about whether you should reference something, check with your tutor or librarian.

# REFERENCING

## Reference management software

Whilst you can compile your references manually, you might find that you save a great deal of time by using an online reference manager. There are many different tools available such as [Zotero](#), [Mendeley](#) and [EndNote](#) and they all work in broadly similar ways. They offer a way to gather, store and organise references, PDFs and notes via a platform which can be accessed from anywhere.



Once you have your references you can insert them into your text or create a bibliography automatically using your desired style. Most also have browser extensions which allow you to collect references at the touch of a button, making the process even easier. It's always worth double checking references that are automatically collected as they may be missing important information.

It's important to remember that reference managers should be used as part of the research process rather than just an add on at the end. Getting into the habit of recording your references as you go can really help to save time and more importantly stress as you come to compile your work at the end of a project.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

With the right tools, referencing doesn't have to be complicated. Try some of the resources below to get you started. Click on the name of the resource to explore.

- [Cite Them Right](#).

This interactive resource guides you through referencing almost any type of resource. Log in with your Raven account to access the full tool.

- [CamGuides: Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism](#).

This resource from Cambridge University Libraries covers the essentials of academic referencing.

- [Wolfson College Academic Skills: Managing References](#).

Useful summary and further links from our colleagues at Wolfson College.



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