

Referencing in the Vancouver (Numeric) Style

For all academic assignments it is vital that you acknowledge the sources of information you have used for your research. This will help you protect yourself against charges of plagiarism and also demonstrate that you understand the importance of professional academic work.

You must acknowledge your sources whenever you paraphrase or summarise another person's ideas or points, or when you quote another person's work, or use tables, graphs, images, etc. which you have found from another source, be it from a printed document or from the web. This guide explains how this is done in the Vancouver Style.

Introducing the Vancouver style

Whenever you refer to another's words or ideas in your work, insert a number in your text. Then list the sources you have cited in numerical order in a references list at the end of your work.

Example

Text

Although concern has been raised about the screening technique, (1-3) the evidence shows that neonatal screening by experienced staff is effective. (4, 5) Nevertheless, recent reports casting doubt on the efficacy of screening for developmental dysplasia of the hip (6, 7) led the MRC Council to call for a formal evaluation of the UK neonatal screening programme. (8)

References

1. Williamson J. Difficulties of early diagnosis and treatment of congenital dislocation of the hip in N.I. J Bone Joint Surg Br. 1972;54:13-7.
2. David TJ, Parris MR, Poyner MU, Hawnaur JM, Simm SA, Rigg EA. Reasons for late detection of hip dislocation in childhood. Lancet. 1983;322:147-9.
3. Jones D. An assessment of the value of examination of the hip in the newborn. J Bone Joint Surg Br. 1977;59:318-22.
4. Macnicol MF. Results of a 25-year screening program for neonatal hip instability. J Bone Joint Surg Br. 1990;72:1057-60.
5. Klisic P, Pajic, D. Progress in the preventative approach to developmental dysplasia of the hip. J Paediatr Orthop. 1993;2(Pt B):108-11.
6. Jones D. Neonatal detection of developmental dysplasia of the hip. J Bone Joint Surg Br. 1998;80:943-5.
7. McKee L. Screening babies for hip dislocation is not effective. BMJ. 1998;346:1265.
8. Godward S, Dezateux C. Surgery for congenital dislocation of the hip in the UK as a measure of outcome of screening. Lancet. 1998;351:1149-52.

Citing your sources in the text

When you refer to another's words or ideas in your work, you must cite the source by inserting a number in your text.

- Numbers should normally be placed after punctuation marks such as full stops or commas and before colons and semi-colons. They should be written in round brackets:

It has been argued that the main considerations are the scope of the project, the cost and the duration of the work. (1)

- When citing two or more sources at once, write a number for each separated by a comma e.g. (1, 2) or (6, 12)
- When citing more than two sources which are numbered consecutively, use a hyphen instead of a comma e.g. (3-5)
- If you need to cite a particular work more than once, you should use the same reference number for each citation.

Directly quoting from your sources

You should aim to paraphrase information provided by an author in your own words rather than quote large amounts of their work verbatim as this helps to demonstrate to the reader your understanding of the information. It can be necessary to quote directly from the text when you:

- Cannot present the information more succinctly or in any other way.
- Need to present a particular portion of an author's text in your work to analyse it.

Enclose quotations in double quotation marks followed by the citation number:

Key causes of economic deprivation include low income or unemployment which are often the result of "poor qualification levels and lack of basic skills". (2)

References list

Provide a full description of each source you have cited in the text in a references list at the end of your work:

- **Write the list in numerical order** by citation number.
- **Write the first author's last name first and then his/her initials.** If there six or fewer authors, include all their names and initials. If there are more than six authors use the abbreviation **et al.** meaning 'and others') after the sixth author's name.
- **Journal titles can be abbreviated** in accordance with the conventions for your subject area. Official abbreviations for medical journal titles can be found in Pubmed's Journals Database (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez>).

- **Capitalise the first letter** of each author's last name and each initial. Also capitalise the first letter of the publication title, the first letters of all main words in the title of a journal and all first letters of a place name and publisher.
- **Abbreviate all mentions of calendar months** to the first three letters e.g. Jun, Aug, Sep.

References

1. Abel R. The eye care revolution: prevent and reverse common vision problems. New York: Kensington Books; 2004.

2. Akkad A, Jackson C, Kenyon S, Dixon-Woods M, Taub N, Habiba M. Patients' perceptions of written consent: questionnaire study. *BMJ*. 2006;333:528-9.

3. Ballinger A, Clark M. Nutrition, appetite control and disease. In: Payne-James J, Grimble G, Silk D, editors. *Artificial nutrition support in clinical practice*. 2nd ed. London: Greenwich Medical; 2001. p. 225-39.

4. Khan S. Displacement and prestress control in skeletal structures [PhD thesis]. Cardiff: Cardiff University; 2005.

5. Fledelius HC. Myopia and significant visual impairment: global aspects. In: Lin LL-K, Shih YF, Hung PT, editors. *Myopia Updates II: Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Myopia*; 1998 Nov 17-20; Taipei. Tokyo: Springer; 2000. p. 31-7.

6. Merchant AT, Mahshid D, Behnke-Cook D, Anand SS. Diet, physical activity, and adiposity in children in poor and rich neighbourhoods: a cross-sectional comparison. *Nutr J*. 2007;6 [accessed 10 Jul 2008]. Available from: <http://www.nutritionj.com/content/pdf/1475-2891-6-1.pdf>.

7. Particle Data Group. The particle adventure: the fundamentals of matter and force. California: Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; 2002 [accessed 10 Jul 2008]. Available from: <http://durpdg.dur.ac.uk/lbl/particleadventure/index.html>.

Book.

Journal article. I include the volume number and page range. Also include month and issue numbers if every issue starts at page 1 e.g. **2002 Jul 25;347(4):284-7.**

Book chapter. Begin with the author and title of the chapter. I include the page range preceded by **p**.

PhD thesis. For a Master's-level work, you'd write [MSc/MA Dissertation].

Conference paper. I include the date and location of the conference.

Electronic journal article. I include the date of publication, internet address and the date you accessed the article. Exclude page numbers if they are not available.

Web page. I include the date of publication, internet address and the date you accessed the article.

Publication dates and editions

To find out when a book was published look at the back of the title page. This page will contain details of the publisher and the publication date. If there is more than one date, use the latest publication date, not the latest reprint date. This is often located next to the © symbol.

The back of the title page will also tell you the edition of the book. If the book you are acknowledging is not the first edition, state this in the full reference in your footnote and bibliography e.g.:

Everett A. Materials. 5th ed. Harlow: Longman; 1994.

Further help and advice on avoiding plagiarism

Guidance on referencing a wide range of sources in the Vancouver style can be found in the United States National Library of Medicine's "Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Sample References" available at http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/uniform_requirements.html

For guidance on plagiarism, visit the Academic Integrity web site at www.cf.ac.uk/regis/sfs/academic/ . A short online tutorial on Avoiding Plagiarism is available at <http://ilrb.cf.ac.uk/plagiarism/tutorial/> .

INF069 / August 2008 / RM - Also available in alternative formats.