



Referencing Effectively

What is the Purpose of Referencing?

Referencing is used in formal writing to acknowledge the ownership of ideas and information. You may encounter a range of *referencing styles*, such as Harvard, APA or Chicago, but regardless of the style you use, there are ways to reference effectively. Remember, you should reference ideas that are not your own, both within your assignment, using in-text citations or footnotes, and at the end of your assignment in the reference list or bibliography. Effective referencing helps you to avoid plagiarism.

Referencing Within Paragraphs

Each of the body paragraphs in your assignment should have a purpose - a clear point to make. This will be stated in the topic sentence, which is usually at the beginning of the paragraph. The evidence and examples which support your topic sentence need to be referenced, both within the text and at the end of the assignment.

What do References do Within a Paragraph?

References can be used for a range of purposes, including:

- Providing evidence for a point you want to make - references that clearly and simply confirm or support your claim
- Demonstrating that you disagree with an idea - references you want to argue with, critique or discredit
- Summarising a widely-held position - multiple references may be cited showing that many people agree on the idea
- Showing that there is debate surrounding an issue - using two or more references in order to compare, contrast and/or evaluate them.

Author Prominent or Information Prominent In-Text Citations

As well as using different referencing styles, you may use different techniques to discuss information. An 'author prominent' reference introduces the authors by name in the sentence.

Wiggan and Penn (2009) argue that the best time of the day to eat your largest meal is at breakfast, as your body has the opportunity to burn off the calories consumed across the entire day. In contrast, **Albretti and Huang (2008) propose** that the largest meal should be eaten in the middle of the day, at lunchtime, as some studies have shown that a large intake of food (particularly protein-rich food) early in the day can actually slow the metabolism for the following 12-15 hours.

In some instances, the information is important, and not necessarily who said it. In this case, author names might appear only in the reference and you would avoid naming them in the sentence. This is an 'information prominent' reference.

Still other **studies** (Gorman & O'Bree, 2008) **have shown** that we should abandon the very idea of a 'main' meal, and instead consume food by 'grazing' - eating smallish quantities evenly and consistently through the day.

Some lecturers may have a preference for author prominent or information prominent in-text citations. Please refer to your unit outline for details.

Alternatively, you may want to present a particular piece of information which is common knowledge, or something that is known to be true, in which case, no reference to a study or expert is necessary in the sentence.

Humans need to eat to survive.

Direct Quotes Versus Paraphrasing or Summarising

It is generally good practice to paraphrase or summarise the information from other sources. This shows that you have understood and interpreted the information and allows the information to be integrated into the flow of your writing. It is important that your voice or opinion is the dominant voice in your writing, not the voice of your sources.

However, direct quotes can also be used in your writing. You might use a direct quote:

- To emphasise a major point that you have already stated in your own words
- When the information is surprising or controversial
- When citing statistics
- When the point is particularly well expressed.

Reference Lists / Bibliographies / Footnotes / Endnotes

Reference lists and endnotes are a list of the items you have cited in your document and usually appear at the end of the document. Footnotes are a list of the items you have cited on each page and appear at the bottom of the page. A bibliography is a list of everything you have read while preparing your document whether or not you have cited it in the document.

Regardless of whether you use reference lists, endnotes or footnotes, you need to include enough information in the reference for the user to locate the original text. Each citation style will detail what information must be included in your references.

Important

Always check the preferred referencing system in your Unit Outline, Unit Moodle or with your lecturer.

For more information on referencing see the Referencing Basics handout. For information on individual styles (AGLC, APA, Chicago, Harvard, Vancouver) see the UC Referencing Guide on the Library website.

Handy links:

Summarising and Paraphrasing Handout

<http://learnonline.canberra.edu.au/mod/resource/view.php?id=768523>

Avoiding Plagiarism and the Academic Integrity Module

<http://learnonline.canberra.edu.au/course/view.php?id=11513§ion=3>

Introduction to Referencing interactive module, University of Canberra:

<http://learnonline.canberra.edu.au/mod/scorm/view.php?id=823358>

UC Referencing Guide

<http://canberra.libguides.com/referencing>