Reference formatting styles

Authors

• Listed as author surname followed by author initials (no interceding punctuation or spaces)
  • List up to six authors
  • For lists of more than six authors, reduce to the first three authors followed by et al.
  • Suffixes such as Junior (Jr), Senior (Sr), 3rd should come after the name—There is no superscript on numbers such as 1st, 2nd, 3rd

Example  Story S Jr, Grassby J 3rd, Ti F Snr

• End author list with a full stop

Article title

• Sentence case, Roman font
  • The following things should be changed in references:—Italics should be added (Drosophila to Drosophila; in vitro to in vitro)
    – En rules should be added where appropriate
    – Spelling should be corrected
    – Superscript/subscript should be added

• If a title is separated by a colon, the letter following the colon should be lower case
• End title with a full stop

Journal title

• Sentence case, italic font
• Abbreviated
  • General rules for abbreviating journal titles:—Abbreviated words are followed by a full stop
    – Contractions (e.g., Natl and Jpn) are not followed by a full stop
    – Unshortened/unabbreviated words are not followed by a full stop

Note: If you are unsure of the correct abbreviation for a journal title, search for the name in the NLM catalogue of PubMed (the ISO abbreviation is the correct one)
Example
- *Natl Acad. Sci.*
- *J. Protein Syn.*

- **One-word titles** – Do not shorten journal titles that are only one-word long

Example
- *Lancet*
- *Nature*

- **Common abbreviations** – Any word ending in ‘ology’ is shortened to ‘ol.’ unless it is the only word

Example
- Cardiology to *Cardiol.*
- Oncology to *Oncol.*

  – Journal is shortened to J.

Example
- *Br. Med. J.*
- *J. Neuroscience*

  – Clinical is shortened to Clin.

Example  *J. Clin. Oncol.*

**Volume, issue, page numbers & years**

- If no issue number is given, that part of the reference should be formatted as:– Volume, 1stPg–LastPg (year).

- If an issue number is given, that part of the reference should be formatted as:—
  Volume(issue), 1stPg–LastPg (year).


**Page range**

- Separate page ranges with an en rule
- Always give both first and last page numbers in full

Example  NO: 362–78
  YES: 362–378

**Letters in the page range**

- Often occurs for supplements
- Use upper-case letters for ‘S’ and lower-case letters for ‘e’
- Always place letters before the numbers
- Repeat letters in full for first and last pages


**Supplements**

- Referred to after the volume number in brackets
- Abbreviated to Suppl.
- Suppl. always placed before supplement number
- Nonbreaking space between ‘Suppl.’ and number

• If an issue and supplement number is given, include issue and Suppl. in same brackets with a space (no punctuation) between


Abstracts in journal article references

• For these references, the word ‘Abstract’ should be included and the number should appear after this


Manuscripts in press

• Include as much information as possible (must have year)
• Follow reference with ‘(In Press)’


Epub ahead of print

• Include as much information as possible, including doi
• doi is lower case with no space after the colon and before the number
• Follow reference with ‘(Epub ahead of print)’

Books

Authors

- Listed as author surname followed by author initials (no intervening punctuation)
- List up to six authors
- For lists of more than six authors, reduce to the first three authors followed by *et al.*
- End author list with a full stop

Chapter/section title

- Sentence case, Roman font
- Followed by full stop

Book title

- Preceded by ‘In:’
- Title case (first letters of words in upper case) and italic font
- If a particular edition is referenced:— Put in brackets
  - Number of edition written numerically with no superscript
  - Followed by ‘Edition’
  - Is also italic

Example

In: *Neural Networks (4th Edition)*.

Editors

- Listed as for authors
- Followed by (Ed.). for a single editor or (Eds). for multiple editors

Example

One editor:

- Smith A (Ed.).

Two editors:

- Smith A, Nichols B (Eds).

Publisher

- Write out publisher name followed by the town/state and country that they are based in
- Do not include towns for US publishers just list the state— List state as the two-letter abbreviation
Page range

- If included, put after publisher address and before year
- Comma should be used after country and before page range
- There is no punctuation after the page range
- Use an en rule between page range

Symposia/meetings/conferences

- Speaker/Authors. Title of presentation. Presented at: *Title of Meeting/Symposium.* Town, State, Country, date year.

OR

- Speaker/Authors. Title of presentation. *Proceedings of Title of Meeting/Symposium.* Town, State, Country, date year. – No brackets around year in this type of reference

  - Date given in full– If within a month: 1–3 March 2006
    – If spans 2 months: 28 February–3 March 2006

Example


Abstracts in symposia/meeting/conferences

- Abstract plus abstract number are placed after the year in brackets

Example

Posters

- Poster plus poster number are placed after the year in brackets


Prescribing information

- Trade name®, prescribing information. Company, Town/State, Country (year).


Newspaper articles

- Author followed by full stop
- Article title
  - Newspaper title—*Italic*—Title case—Followed by a comma
- Date, Month (year).


Package inserts


Example: Lipitor®, package insert. Pfizer Ltd, NY, USA.
Court cases

- Prosecutor and defendant in italics followed by a comma
- Year in brackets at end followed by full stop

Example


Websites

Title of website

- If it is the homepage of a company, organisation or product: – Put the name of the company, organisation or product
  – Do not include the word ‘website’
  – Always have a full stop at the end of the title

- If it is a particular article: – Reference as much information as possible about the article (title, authors, date etc.)

URL

- Do not include ‘http’ – Unless address does not include ‘www’

Date of access

- Only include if the author has included with their original manuscript
- Reference as: (Accessed Day Month Year)
• No full stop at the end
• If there are multiple websites and the author has only provided access dates for some, do not delete the ones provided. Ask the author for access dates for the others. If they can’t provide the additional ones then leave in the ones provided even if it means it is inconsistent

Example of a website for an organisation


Note: All sections are on separate lines (this should be a soft return)

Example of a website for a particular article


Some examples of the common types of reference formats we receive that need fixing

• Journal abbreviations not correctly formatted (full stops not in correct place) and page ranges not in full


• Colon after et al., when should finish on a full stop; Journal abbreviations not correctly formatted (full stops missing after abbreviated words); should be an en-rule between page numbers, not a hyphen

• Et al. should be in italics; Comma before et al. when should just be a space after last author initial; Journal abbreviations not correctly formatted (full stops missing after abbreviated words); space missing between journal abbreviation and volume; should be a comma and space after journal volume, not a colon; page range not in full; should be an en-rule between page numbers, not a hyphen


• Journal abbreviations not correctly formatted (full stops not in correct place); in vivo in article title should be in italics; page ranges not in full; 7 authors should be abbreviated to 3 et al.