The Harvard referencing system

Referencing is a standard practice for acknowledging information sources in academic writing at university. Whenever you write an assignment that requires you to find and use information, you are expected to reference all the sources of information and ideas included in your writing.

This handout provides guidelines for using the Harvard referencing system. There are two components to a Harvard reference:

1) an in-text reference in the body of your assignment:
   Chan (2011) explores a range of themes and ideas ...

2) full reference details in your reference list:

This guide is divided into two parts. The first part (pp.1-10) illustrates the basic rules for Harvard referencing, provides a sample text which uses Harvard referencing, and answers some frequently asked questions. The referencing guide in the second part (pp.11-17) contains specific rules and examples for a variety of different reference types.

Part 1 Basic rules

Why do we reference?

Most academic assignments require wide reading so that previous and current thinking about a particular topic can be identified. It is important to show your reader that you have sought out expert, reliable sources to help support and develop your thinking on your topic. The referencing in your assignment should:

- demonstrate good research practice
- show the range of ideas and approaches you have found and thought about
- acknowledge where those ideas came from
- tell your reader where they can locate the sources you have used

Referencing also helps you to avoid plagiarism. If you present someone else's ideas, and/or the way they express their ideas, as if they are your own work, you are committing plagiarism. Plagiarism can be unintentional due to poor referencing, but the consequences are always serious. Accurate referencing helps you to avoid this.

In-text references

1. When to reference

Every time you include someone else's words, ideas or information in your assignment, an in-text reference must be provided. Insert an in-text reference whenever you:

- paraphrase someone else's ideas in your own words
- summarise someone else's ideas in your own words
- quote someone else’s ideas in their exact words
- copy or adapt a diagram, table or any other visual material
2. **How to reference**

An in-text reference is provided each time you refer to ideas or information from another source, and includes the following details:

- the **author's family name** (do not include given names) + the **year of publication** + **page numbers** when needed.

There are two main ways to present an in-text reference:

a) **Integral referencing**

The reference is in the body of your sentence, with the author's family name integrated into the sentence structure, and the date is given in brackets. This type of reference is often used when you want to give prominence to the author.

*Lam (2010) argues* that Hong Kong needs to further assimilate into the Pearl River Delta economy if its long term growth is to be assured.

b) **Non-integral referencing**

The reference is enclosed in the sentence in brackets. This type of reference is often used when you want to give prominence to the information.

The Hong Kong economy expanded by 2.3% in the third quarter of 2011 (*Census and Statistics Department*, 2012).

3. **Including page numbers**

Page numbers should be included when you:

- use a direct quote from a particular source
- copy tables or figures, or present specific information like data/statistics

*Cheung (2012, p.48) notes* that “universities in Hong Kong need to strengthen their academic credentials” if they are to compete in the world economy.

You can also include a page number when you take an idea from a particular page. However, it would not be appropriate academic style to include a page number in all or most of your in-text citations if you are only taking ideas from a source.

4. **Use of “et al.”**

Where there are several authors (more than **four**), only the first author should be used followed by “et al.” (which is Latin for *et alia*) meaning ‘and others’:

*Wong et al. (2005) found* that the majority …

or as a non-integral reference:

Recent research (*Wong et al., 2005*) has found that the majority of …
The following chart shows how to format in-text citations for Harvard referencing style:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of citation</th>
<th>Integral</th>
<th>Non-integral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of authors</strong></td>
<td><strong>First citation in text</strong></td>
<td><strong>Subsequent citations in text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>One author</strong></td>
<td>Chan (2010) argues ...</td>
<td>Chan (2010) argues ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two authors</strong></td>
<td>Chan and Leung (2010) suggest ...</td>
<td>Chan and Leung (2010) suggest ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Three authors</strong></td>
<td>Tsui, Leung and Collins (2010) find ...</td>
<td>Tsui, Leung and Collins (2010) find ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Four or more authors</strong></td>
<td>Wong et al. (2010) mention ...</td>
<td>Wong et al. (2010) mention ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groups (easily identified by abbreviation) as authors</strong></td>
<td>The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA, 2008) states ...</td>
<td>The HKHA (2008) states ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groups (no abbreviation) as authors</strong></td>
<td>Animals Asia (2007) defines ...</td>
<td>Animals Asia (2007) defines ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>With page number for quotation</strong></td>
<td>Chan (2010, p.15) argues ...</td>
<td>(Chan, 2010, p.15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Other expressions used in referencing

The terms *ibid.* and *op. cit.* are used to avoid repeating the same reference details in-text, i.e., the body of your text and in your reference list.

*Ibid.* is Latin for *ibidem*, which means *‘in the same place’*. You can use *ibid.* when your next citation is the same as the last one.

*Op. cit.* is also Latin and stands for *opere citato*, which means *‘in the work cited’*. You can use *op. cit.* when the same reference is cited somewhere else in your text, but is not the most recent citation.

Look at the example below:

The advantages of having effective referencing skills are well-recognised in terms of students having greater control over their written work (Walker, 2009), achieving and sustaining higher grades (Choi, 2010) and in developing competence as a writer (Lau, 2009). But, students need to "... be mindful of the importance of referencing and be consistent in their use at all times ..." (Aziz, 2010, p.11). However, it can be hard for some students to distinguish between Western surnames and Western given names, and Aziz (*ibid.*, p.12) states that "... students need to read more widely to understand the differences between Western and Chinese names". The findings of some researchers (Walker, *op. cit.*) show that reading in the target language is essential for sustained academic progress.
6. Ellipsis and square brackets

Ellipsis refers to dots in the middle of a sentence. Their purpose is to let the reader know that some part of a quotation has been left out. If it is necessary to interrupt a quotation you are citing in order to clarify something, you should enclose your remarks in square brackets.

**Original:** “Students in the university should study outside class, in all credit bearing subjects, for at least 6 hours a week.”

**With text omitted and clarification:** “Students in the university [The Hong Kong Polytechnic University] should study ... for at least 6 hours a week.”

**Sample text with in-text referencing and reference list**

*Harvard in-text referencing uses author’s surname and year. Include a page number (or paragraph number for online sources) for direct quotations. The reference list is in alphabetical order.*

Until recently, development in the textile and clothing industry has focused on “technological and cost aspects” (HKRITA, 2012, para.5). According to Chen and Burns (2009, p.255), emphasis has been placed on keeping the price of the “final product low and increasing efficiency in production”. Tukker et al. (2011) further point out that designers, manufacturers and retailers have paid less attention to other dimensions of the offering, e.g., ownership and related business models, as well as consumer wishes and values. Hence, the products are designed and produced according to regularly changing trends that enable quick profit (Lee & Chen, 2009), rather than radically rethinking the ways of designing and manufacturing the offering that is based on consumer needs and sustainability as proposed by Park and Tahara (2011).

**References**


The reference list

1. What it does

The reference list provides full bibliographic details for all the sources referenced in your essay so that readers can easily locate the sources. Each different source referenced in your essay must have a matching entry in your reference list.

It is important to note that the reference list is not a bibliography. A bibliography lists everything you have read, while a reference list is deliberately limited to those sources for which you have provided in-text references. A bibliography is not needed unless specifically requested by your lecturer.

2. How it looks

The reference list is titled “References” and must be:

- arranged alphabetically by author’s family name (or title/sponsoring organisation where a source has no author).
- a single list where books, journal articles and electronic sources are listed together. Do not divide into separate lists.

The main elements required for all references are the author’s name(s), year, title and publication information. The basic reference formats are shown in the following examples. These should be followed exactly, paying special attention to details of capitalisation, punctuation, use of italics and order of information.

3. Journal article format

First author’s surname, Initials., Second author’s surname, Initials. and Third author’s surname, Initials., Year of publication. Title of article. Name of journal, Volume number(Issue number), pp. Page range of article.

4. Book format

First author’s surname, Initials., Second author’s surname, Initials. and Third author’s surname, Initials., Year of publication. Title of book. City of publication: Publisher.


5. Internet source format

Name of organisation, Year of publication. Title of article. [type of medium] Available at: <url> [Accessed date].


Frequently asked questions

1. How do I cite two or three authors?

When there are two or three authors for a reference, include all their family names in the in-text reference, in the same order that they are listed in the original source. For example:

- According to Choi, Fang and Lee (2012), students in Asia are more studious than their North American counterparts.

- Wong and Morrison (2011) strongly support the use of technology in the classroom.

- Asian students devoted on average 16 hours per week to out-of-class study compared to 10 hours for North American students (Choi, Fang & Lee, 2012).
2. How do I cite more than three authors?

If there are four or more authors, you should only use the first author's family name in the in-text reference followed by the abbreviation “et al.”. For example:

- This is supported by Wilson et al. (2011) in their educational change study.

However, all the authors’ names must be included in your reference list, in the same order that they are listed in the original source.

3. How do I cite when there is no author and/or no date?

When no person is mentioned, include the title of the source or the authoring/sponsoring organisation in place of the author.

For example:

- The centre aims to improve students' communication skills to enable them to attain excellent results in their academic and professional lives (English Language Centre, 2012).

- Oral presentations, like written assessment tasks, should contain an introduction, body, and conclusion ('Making the most of oral presentations', 2011).

When no year of publication is given, use the abbreviation “n.d.” which stands for ‘no date’ in place of a year, or give an approximate date preceded by “ca.” which stands for ‘circa’.

However, be cautious about using sources without dates.
A source with no date might not be reliable.

4. How do I cite information from one author (Author 1) which I have found in a book or journal article by another author (Author 2)?

Sometimes you will need to refer to authors whose work you encounter secondhand (i.e. mentioned in other people’s work) rather than firsthand. You should mention both authors (Author 1 and Author 2) in your in-text reference, but would only list the actual item you read (Author 2) in your reference list.

For example, if you read an idea by Choy (Author 1, published in 2008) in a source by Martins (Author 2, published in 2012) you would need to mention both authors in your in-text reference. For example:

- One scholar (Choy, 2008, cited in Martins, 2012, p.143) argues that ...
- Choy (2008, cited in Martins, 2012, p.143) believes that ...

However, in the reference list you should only list Martins (Author 2, the source you read) and not Choy (whose idea you read about in Martins).
5. How do I cite multiple sources by the same author published in the same year?

If an author has published more than one item in the same year, place a lower case letter of the alphabet next to the dates in your in-text referencing to distinguish between these separate publications. For example:

- Preston argues that a man paints with his brain, not his hands (2011a) and reiterates this elsewhere (2011b).

You must also include these lower case letters in your reference list entries as well. The order in which you attach the letters is determined by the alphabetical order of the titles of these sources.

6. What if there are two authors with the same family name?

Occasionally you will need to reference two different authors who share the same family name. To avoid ambiguity, include the author’s first initial after their family name in the in-text references. For example:

- Urban deprivation in Hong Kong has been seen to increase in the first decade of this century (Chan, E., 2010). Whether this will affect the language skills of fresh graduates in Hong Kong is still disputed (Chan, C., 2010).

7. How do I present exact quotations?

Short quotations of fewer than thirty words should be enclosed in double quotation marks (“ ... ”) and be accompanied by an in-text reference including a page number (where possible).

For example:

- Research indicates that “students in Hong Kong devote on average 5 hours a week to their English studies from the age of four” (Leung, 2010, p.31).

Longer quotations of more than thirty words should be presented without quotation marks and indented (using Tab key) at the left.

For example:

According to Obama (2006), America:

should be more modest in our belief that we can impose democracy on a country through military force. In the past, it has been movements for freedom from within tyrannical regimes that have led to flourishing democracies; movements that continue today. This does not mean abandoning our values and ideals; wherever we can, it’s in our interest to help foster democracy through the diplomatic and economic resources at our disposal. (para.45)
8. Where exactly do I put the full stop when quoting and/or citing?

Full stops must always be placed at the very end of a sentence, after the quotation and/or in-text reference. For example:

- According to Mooney (2011, p.88), “exam pressure in Hong Kong has lessened slightly in the past decade”.
- Research indicates that students in Hong Kong have had four mobile devices before their 18th birthday (Samson, 2012).

9. Can I cite two or more sources at the same time?

Yes. Use a semi-colon to separate the sources in the in-text reference, and list the items alphabetically according to their authors’ family names. For example:

- Social networking has had a major impact on young people (Chan & Erickson, 2012; Lam & Mok, 2008).

If referencing multiple sources by the same author, present the items in chronological order (oldest to most recent) and separate them with commas. For example:

- Burns (2006, 2009, 2012) argues that there should be more universities in Hong Kong.

10. Can I paste the URL of a webpage into my essay as an in-text citation?

No. Follow the author-date in-text referencing conventions for all sources. If you are unsure how to reference a website because there is no author or date information, follow the guidelines provided for referencing sources without authors or dates.

11. How do I cite e-mail messages?

E-mail messages from individuals should be cited as personal communications. Because they do not provide recoverable data, personal communications are not included in the reference list. Cite personal communications in text only. Give the initials as well as the surname of the communicator, and provide as exact a date as possible. For example:

- E. Cartman (personal communication, June 28, 2015) reveals that ...
- ... (Marsh, S., personal communication, May 5, 2015).
12. How do I cite images such as photographs from websites?

All images including graphs, charts, maps, drawings and photographs are referred to as figures. You need to label the image as a figure and place a caption directly below the image, which includes the title and author of the image, and its year of publication. For example:

- Figure 1: Flamingos standing and feeding in a pool near salt beds, Netherlands Antilles (Volkmar K. Wentzel, 2015)

The in-text citation would be like this:

- Figure 1 shows that ....

Your reference would be as follows:

## Part 2 Referencing guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of source</th>
<th>In-text references</th>
<th>Reference list</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Books</strong></td>
<td>Surname of author, year of publication</td>
<td>Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. Title. City of publication: Publisher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Books with different editions</strong></td>
<td>Surname of author, year of publication</td>
<td>Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. Title. Edition number. City of publication: Publisher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Books with no date</strong></td>
<td>Surname of author (n.d.)</td>
<td>Surname of author, Initials., n.d. <em>Title</em>. City of publication: Publisher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ebooks and pdfs</strong></td>
<td>Surname of author, year of publication</td>
<td>Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. Title. [type of medium] City of publication (if known): Publisher. <strong>Available at</strong>: &lt;URL&gt; [Accessed date].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Journal articles (with author)

Surname of author, year of publication, (page number for direct quotations)

**Examples:**
- Poon et al. (2003) argue that students should refer to sources properly ...
- Lam (2005, p.19) stresses that “students need to be mindful of the importance of referencing” ...

Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. Title of article. *Name of journal*, Volume number(Issue number), pp.Page range of article.


### Journal articles (no author)

‘Title of article’, year of publication

**Example:**
- Many organisations already use this method (‘Organisational change in the 21st century’, 2012).

Title of article. Year of publication. *Name of journal*, Volume number(Issue number), pp.Page range of article.


### URLs and DOIs

Surname of author, year of publication

**Example:**
- Anderson-Clark, Green and Henley (2008) believe that students should ...

If the article has a DOI, use it in your reference. If there is no DOI, include the journal homepage URL in your reference.


### Electronic journals

Surname of author, year of publication

**Example:**
- ... and this has been formulated by Halonen et al. (2010) who ...

Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. Title of article. *Name of journal*, [e-journal] Volume number(Issue number). Available at: <url> [Accessed date].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internet sources (electronic only sources)</th>
<th>Name of organisation, year of publication, (paragraph number for direct quotations)</th>
<th>Name of organisation, Year of publication. <em>Title of article.</em> [type of medium] Available at: <code>&lt;url&gt;</code> [Accessed date].</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government/Company reports</th>
<th>Name of department/company, year of publication</th>
<th>Name of department/company, Year of publication. <em>Title of article</em> (Number of document - if given). City of publication: Publisher.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DVDs or films</th>
<th>For a film or DVD, use the title and year of release.</th>
<th>For a film the suggested elements should include:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example:</td>
<td>The ups and downs of a Hong Kong family through the eyes of ... (Echoes of the rainbow, 2010).</td>
<td><em>Title of film.</em> Year of release. [type of medium] <strong>Directed by</strong> Initials. Surname of director. Country of origin: Film studio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... as was shown by numerous films in the 1980s (Great films from the 80s, 2005).</td>
<td><em>Echoes of the rainbow.</em> 2010. [film] Directed by A. Law. Hong Kong: Mei Ah Entertainment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(non-integral citation recommended)</td>
<td><em>Full title of DVD or video.</em> Year of release. [type of medium] Country of origin: Film studio or maker. (Other relevant details).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YouTube videos</th>
<th>It is suggested that a non-integral reference should be used for YouTube sources.</th>
<th>Screen name of contributor, Year. <em>Video title, Series title.</em> (if relevant) [type of medium] Available at: <code>&lt;URL&gt;</code> [Accessed date].</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper articles (with author)</td>
<td>Surname of author, year of publication</td>
<td>Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. Title of article. <em>Name of newspaper</em>, Day Month, p. Page number(s).</td>
</tr>
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<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper articles (no author)</th>
<th>Name of newspaper, year of publication</th>
<th><em>Name of newspaper</em>, Year of publication. Title of article. Day Month, p. Page number(s).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online newspaper articles</th>
<th>Surname of author, year of publication</th>
<th>Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. Title of article. <em>Name of newspaper</em>, [type of medium] Day Month. Available at: &lt;URL&gt; [Accessed date].</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Magazine articles</th>
<th>Surname of author, year of publication</th>
<th>Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. Title of article. <em>Name of magazine</em>, Volume number(Issue number), p. Page number(s).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online magazine articles</th>
<th>Surname of author, year of publication</th>
<th>Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. Title of article. <em>Name of magazine</em>, [type of medium] Day Month. Available at: &lt;URL&gt; [Accessed date].</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translated work</td>
<td>Surname of author, year of publication, (page number for direct quotations)</td>
<td>When quoting from a foreign language work in the main body of the text, the quote should be provided in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong></td>
<td>Freud (1914) stated that ...</td>
<td>Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. <em>Title</em>. Initials. Surname of translator. City of publication: Publisher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese sources</th>
<th>Surname of author, year of publication, (page number for direct quotations)</th>
<th>Do a romanisation of the author’s name and title of book/article. If readers cannot read Chinese, add a translation of the book/article’s title in square brackets. If there is no official translation, list the item at the end of the reference list alphabetically.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples:</strong></td>
<td>Xiao (2008) shows that ...</td>
<td>Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. <em>Title</em> [Translation of book/article’s title]. City of Publication: Publisher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign sources</th>
<th>Surname of author, year of publication</th>
<th>When quoting from a foreign language work in the main body of the text, the quote should be provided in English.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong></td>
<td>Kundera (1984) derides ...</td>
<td>Surname of author, Initials., Year of publication. <em>Title</em> [Translation of book/article’s title]. City of Publication: Publisher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture notes</th>
<th>Surname of author, year</th>
<th>You are advised not to cite university lecture notes: to do so is often deemed unacceptable. You ought to locate, read and cite the sources and references provided in the Reading List or References in the lecture notes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong></td>
<td>Jenkins (2010) implies that ...</td>
<td>However, the following guidelines may assist you should you need to cite lecture notes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Surname of lecturer/author, Initials., Year. Title of lecture notes, <em>Module/Subject code Module/Subject title</em>. Name of institution, <strong>unpublished</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Online dissertations and theses | Surname of author, year of publication  
Example:  
Available at: <URL> [Accessed date].  
|---|---|---|
| Laws | When citing the Basic Law, use name of the law, article number and year of publication.  
Example:  
The Basic Law Art 27 (1997) affirms that ... | *Basic Law Art Article number*, *The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China*, Year of publication.  

*Name of ordinance, Cap Chapter number s Section number*, *Laws of Hong Kong*, Year of edition.  
| Conference papers available online | Surname of author, year of publication  
Example:  
| Online forum, discussion group, or blog post | Surname of author, year of publication  
Example:  
| Speeches available online | Surname of presenter, year of broadcast  
**Example:** President Obama (2009) announced that ... | Surname of presenter, Initials., Year of broadcast. *Title of speech*, [type of medium] Day Month.  
**Available at:** <URL> [Accessed date].  
|---|---|---|
| Images from websites (See p.10 for details) | All images are referred to as figures.  
**Example:** Figure 1 shows that ... | Surname of author/artist, Initials., Year of publication. *Title of image*. [type of medium]  
**Available at:** <URL> [Accessed date].  
| References with missing details | If there is no obvious publication date, aim to establish the earliest likely date, for example,  
2010? = probable year  
c. 2010 = approximately 2010  
201- = decade certain but not year  
201? = probable decade  
If you cannot identify the name of an author, city or publisher, use the following terms:  
Anon. = author is anonymous or unidentifiable  
s.l. = no city of publication (Latin: *sine loco*)  
s.n. = no named publisher (Latin: *sine nomine*) |