

Referencing websites

1. Introduction

When you refer to another source in your work or assignments, you need to provide a reference. This activity will help you to understand the basics of referencing websites.

This activity forms a set covering referencing. If you haven't already done so, we recommend you complete the [Introduction to referencing activity](#) before starting this one.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this activity, you should:

- know what an in-text citation is
- understand how to create an in-text citation
- understand how to create a full reference.

2. Referencing styles

Referencing styles are guides that help you create your references.

They assist by showing you:

- the information to include in your reference
- how your reference should be formatted.

You do not read a referencing style from beginning to end. Instead you focus on the parts that show you how to reference the type of resource you have read. This activity will focus on how you create a reference to a website.

Which referencing style?

There are lots of different referencing styles. Are you an OU student? If yes, your module website will contain the referencing style you need to use.

For those studying at other institutions you will need to find out which referencing style you need to use. For this activity non OU students will find it easiest to concentrate on the Cite Them Right Harvard options.

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This activity will provide example references using the OU Harvard referencing style and the Cite Them Right Harvard referencing style. You only need to look at one style, choose which now.

3. In-text citations

An in-text citation is a marker that tells your reader that part of your work comes from an external source (e.g. a website). This could be a direct quote or someone else's thoughts that you have written in your own words.

In-text citations are short. They commonly contain:

- Author or authors
- Date of publication

4. Creating an in-text citation

Choose whether you want to look at the OU Harvard referencing style or the Cite Them Right Harvard style (shortened to CTR Harvard). You only need to look at one.

Click the examples that interest you, to see how you would include the in-text citation(s) into your work.

Citing a website with named author(s) (OU Harvard)

Example: one author

When referring to a website with one named author simply use the surname and date e.g.

Creating a blog can be tricky (Chow, 2014).

Example: two authors

When referring to a website with two authors include both names and link with the word and e.g.

Examples provided by Maylard and Junor (2011) support this claim.

Example three or more authors

When referring to a website with three or more authors include the first author and then the words 'et al' followed by a full stop. 'Et al' means and others e.g.

Further evidence (Stone et al., 2013) supports this claim.

All examples are valid ways to incorporate your in-text citations into your work. Full details must always be provided in your reference list.

Citing a website with no author or date (OU Harvard)

When referring to a website where you cannot find a publication or last updated date use the abbreviation 'n.d.' in place of a date.

Example no date

The National Theatre (n.d.) takes part in outreach projects to bring performances to a wide range of audiences.

When referring to a website where you cannot find a named author use the name of the organisation that has created the website

Example no named author

Online archives can both preserve and provide access to digitised content (Open University Digital Archive, 2018).

Citing a short quote within a sentence (OU Harvard)

A short quote is up to two to three lines. Short quotes are surrounded by quotation marks. These do not need to be on a new line. They need to include an in-text citation.

Example

Facts Matter is a campaign that aims to 'help the public, businesses and Government improve their resilience to fake news and misinformation' (CILIP, 2017).

Citing a long quote (OU Harvard)

Longer quotes should be displayed in a separate paragraph and indented from your main text. Your in-text citation should appear underneath the quote.

Example

There is clear concern surrounding the impact of misinformation and fake news.

Fake news and misinformation and their impact on our democracy constitute a public health crisis, and that countering them effectively depends on a large-scale intervention to improve the ways in which people engage with and share information online.

(CILIP, 2017)

Citing a website with named authors (CTR Harvard)

When referring to a website with one named author simply use the surname and date.

Example single author

Creating a blog can be tricky (Chow, 2014).

When referring to a website with two or three authors include all names.

Example two or three authors

Examples provided by Maylard and Junor (2011) support this claim.

Treuer, Rocha and Brook (2020) point out that bats play an important part in our eco system.

Example more than four authors

When referring to a website with four or more authors include the first author and then the words 'et al' in italics followed by a full stop. 'Et al' means and others e.g.

Further evidence (Stone *et al.*, 2013) supports this claim.

All examples are valid ways to incorporate your in-text citations into your work. Full details must always be provided in your reference list.

Citing a website with no named authors or date (CTR Harvard)

When referring to a website where you cannot find a publication or last updated date write 'no date' in place of a date

Example no date

The National Theatre (no date) takes part in outreach projects to bring performances to a wide range of audiences.

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When referring to a website where you cannot find a named author use the name of the organisation that has created the website e.g.

Example no named author

Online archives can both preserve and provide access to digitised content (Open University Digital Archive, 2018).

Citing a short quote within a sentence (CTR Harvard)

A short quote is up to two to three lines. Short quotes are surrounded by quotation marks. These do not need to be on a new line. They need to include an in-text citation

Example

Facts Matter is a campaign that aims to 'help the public, businesses and Government improve their resilience to fake news and misinformation' (CILIP, 2017).

Citing a long quote within a sentence (CTR Harvard)

Longer quotes should be displayed in a separate paragraph and indented from your main text. Your in-text citation appears on the same line as your quote.

Example

There is clear concern surrounding the impact of misinformation and fake news.

Fake news and misinformation and their impact on our democracy constitute a public health crisis, and that countering them effectively depends on a large-scale intervention to improve the ways in which people engage with and share information online. (CILIP, 2017)

5. Elements of a full reference

In-text citations are brief, often they only contain an author name and publication date. For every in-text citation you have included within your work, there should be a detailed reference in your reference list. These references contain enough detail to allow anyone reading your work to find the items you have referenced.

What to include in a reference

The key pieces of information you need to include for a website are:

- the name of the author, institution or organisation
- the year the website was last updated
- the full title of the website
- the online details
- the date you last accessed the website

6. Creating a full reference OU Harvard

Different referencing styles request that you include the same information when referencing a website. How the references are formatted varies slightly between referencing styles.

If you are interested in creating a full reference using the OU Harvard referencing style this step by step guide will take you through the order and format required for a full reference.

For the same guidance using the Cite Them Right Harvard referencing style move to [section 7](#) of this document.

Step 1: Author

Start with the author's surname and initials:

Chow, S.

Step 2: Year of publication

Add the year the website was last updated, if there is no last updated date use when the website was published, in brackets:

Chow, S. (2020)

Step 3: Full title of website

Add the full title of the website, in italics:

Chow, S. (2020) *The Blog Starter*

Step 4: Online

Add Online in square brackets, followed by a full stop:

Chow, S. (2020) *The Blog Starter* [Online].

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Step 5: URL

Add the words 'Available at', followed by the URL:

Chow, S. (2020) The Blog Starter [Online]. Available at <https://www.theblogstarter.com/>

Step 6: Date you last accessed the website

Add the date you last viewed the website in brackets, followed by a full stop.

Chow, S. (2020) The Blog Starter [Online]. Available at <https://www.theblogstarter.com/> (Accessed 18 May 2020).

7. Creating a full reference Cite Them Right Harvard

If you are interested in creating a full reference using the Cite Them Right Harvard referencing style this step by step guide will take you through the order and format required for a full reference. Otherwise move to section [8. Quiz](#).

Step 1: Author

Start with the author's surname and initials:

Chow, S.

Step 2: Year of publication

Add the year the website was last updated, if there is no last updated date use when the website was published, in brackets:

Chow, S. (2020)

Step 3: Full title of website

Add the full title of the website, in italics. Follow with a full stop:

Chow, S. (2020) *The Blog Starter*.

Step 4: URL

Add the words 'Available at', followed by a colon then the link:

Chow, S. (2020) *The Blog Starter*. Available at: <https://www.theblogstarter.com/>

Step 5: Date you last accessed the website

Add the date you last viewed the website in brackets, followed by a full stop.

Chow, S. (2020) *The Blog Starter*. Available at: <https://www.theblogstarter.com/> (Accessed: 18 May 2020).

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8. Quiz

How much do you know about referencing websites? Why not have a go at our quiz to find out?

Question 1 of 3

True or false, you need to read all the information in a referencing style.

1. True
2. False

Question 1 Feedback for Option 1

Are you sure you must read all of a referencing style in its entirety?

Your answer is incorrect

Question 1 Feedback for Option 2

To reference a resource find the referencing style you have been asked to use, find the section for the type of resource you wish to reference and follow that. You do not need to read a referencing style in its entirety.

Your answer is correct!

Question 2 of 3

Choose the correct option. An in-text citation may include:

1. (Author, URL, Date)
2. (Author, Title, Date)
3. (Author, Date)

Question 2 Feedback for Option 1

An in-text citation is pointer to your reader that you have used an external source. An in-text citation is very brief it does not include the URL of the work you are referencing.

Your answer is incorrect

Question 2 Feedback for Option 2

An in-text citation is pointer to your reader that you have used an external source. An in-text citation is very brief it does not include the title of the work you are referencing. Please try again.

Your answer is incorrect

Question 2 Feedback for Option 3

An in-text citation includes an author and a date of publication.

Your answer is correct!

Question 3 of 3

A full reference to a complete website may include the following: (tick all that apply)

1. URL
2. Author
3. Date the website was last updated
4. Sponsors and affiliates of the website
5. Title of webpage
6. Date that you last accessed the website.

Question 3 Feedback

A full reference to a complete website may include the following:

- URL
- Author
- Date the website was last updated
- Title of webpage
- Date that you last accessed the website

Options 1,2,3,5 and 6 are correct.

9. Summary

We have covered:

- What to include in an in-text citation
- What to include in a full reference
- How referencing styles can help you

There are many different referencing styles. Your module or course will provide you with details of which one you should be using, along with the relevant guidelines for

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that style. If you are unsure, you will find the information in your study or assessment guide. And remember referencing styles are there to help you.

Next Steps

This activity has focused on referencing websites. Being Digital also covers:

[Referencing books](#)

[Referencing ejournals](#)