



# Referencing – At a Glance

## Why cite?

You need to use references to

- be transparent about where you found the information you are presenting in your text and
- allow your readers to go and look up this information.

## What to watch out for?

Readers have to be able to trace back your reference to the exact source. That is also true if you use your own words for telling what you found in a source.

Always stick to one format of referencing throughout your text.

Correct references are, first and foremost, *transparent* and *consistent*.

## How to reference?

If you are unsure what format to use:

- Check if your teacher or supervisor prefers a particular format. They might have an info sheet on their homepage.
- If they don't have a preference, search your institutes' or study programme's homepage for a style sheet or guidelines on how to format assignments.
- In case your institution doesn't have one, look at the referencing styles in publications you are reading for your assignment. Find one that seems common and replicate it in your text.

## What if there are guidelines but I don't understand them?

You can visit the [Schreibberatung Sozialwissenschaften](#) (if you study at the Faculty of Social Sciences) or the [International Writing Centre, ISZ](#), (for all students) to discuss your questions with a writing tutor. Please make an appointment for a writing consultation or come during the open hours and remember to bring the guidelines you found.

## I have an unusual source that's not covered by the guidelines. What do I do?

First, try looking up your case in a more comprehensive guideline. You can try the one by the University of Sheffield linked below. Chances are, they got you covered. If not, remember transparency and consistency and try to come up with your own solution that meets those criteria. If this doesn't work out, you can contact a writing tutor, as described above.

## More information on how to reference

Many universities have published open access resources of references online, for example:

[Video by London Southbank University explaining Harvard Referencing](#)  
[Thorough online reference book by University of Sheffield](#)

### Tipp:

If you work with literature management software, it can help you generate correct references in different styles. The [SUB Göttingen](#) offers courses on how to use such tools.