



Vancouver Style: Overview

The Vancouver style guidelines were developed as a result of a meeting of medical journal editors in Vancouver, BC. They became known as the Vancouver Group, and have since evolved into the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). Vancouver style is also referred to as the *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals*. It is the manuscript citation style used by many biomedical and scientific journals. Detailed guidelines for citing references in Vancouver Style are outlined in Citing Medicine:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/>

- **Vancouver Style 1:** in-text citations are listed consecutively, and represented as citation numbers written in superscript.
- **Vancouver Style 2:** in-text citations are listed consecutively, and represented as citation numbers in parenthesis.

This handout focuses on Vancouver Style 1, which is most often used in medical research papers. Check with your instructor for information regarding their specific referencing requirements.

Documentation

In academic writing, you must cite sources for all borrowed information, visuals, and ideas—including material you have paraphrased (put into your own words). However, you should not cite sources for generally known facts. If in doubt, cite your source.

Complete Vancouver documentation consists of two elements:

- **an in-text citation** consecutively numbered in order of occurrence in your paper. In-text references alert your reader to instances in your paper when you are presenting information borrowed from a source or are referring to published research;
- **a reference list** including complete publication information for all sources cited in the paper (every source for which you have included an in-text citation). References are not listed in alphabetical order but are presented in the order that they first appear (or are cited) in your text.

Examples of in-text citations and reference list entries, along with formatting guidelines, are included below. For additional information on citing these or other sources, consult Citing Medicine: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/>

While these examples are single-spaced, in Vancouver style, you must double space your entire paper, including inset quotations and your reference list.

In-text Citations

Guidelines for a single reference

EXAMPLE 1	EXAMPLE 2
Smith ¹ argued that the high infant mortality rate in the U.S. may be attributed in part to the high cost of medical insurance.	Economic barriers to adequate prenatal care were found to be higher for some ethnic groups in Smith's study. ¹

- Each reference cited within a text is assigned a unique consecutive number to reflect the order in which it appears in the text. These numbers are presented in superscript (see example 1).
- When a reference is used more than once in the same text, the same citation number is used.
- If a citation is placed at the end of a sentence, citation numbers appear after commas and periods, but before colons and semi-colons.

Guidelines for citing multiple references

EXAMPLE 3
Several clinical trials ^{2-4,9} have shown that there is a correlation between...

- When more than one reference is cited, inclusive citation numbers are grouped with a hyphen, while non-inclusive citation numbers are separated by commas. For example, if you wanted to reference citation numbers 2, 3, 4, and 9 this would be written as: 2-4, 9

In-text Citations for a Quoted Passage

EXAMPLE 4	EXAMPLE 5
In his research, Graham found that "there is no correlation between a person's sleeping habits and the amount of time spent watching television". ^{6 (p 23)}	In his concluding remarks, Frank ⁹ states that: "After much consideration, it was found that this method would not be successful in treating insomnia. What was first considered to be an effective plan of action has been disproved in the clinical trial...[B]y using the findings from this study, we hope to gain insight into other possible methods of treatment."

- When it is necessary to include a direct quotation, place double quotation marks around the borrowed words (see examples 4 and 5). While it is not necessary to include a specific page number for a direct quotation, if you do, the page number should be added in superscript, alongside the citation number, as in example 4.
- For quotations of more than two lines in length (about 40 words), quotations should be presented in a paragraph separate from the rest of your text. Indent the quotation, and enclose it in quotation marks (see example 5).
- Use an ellipsis (three spaced dots) to indicate that part of a quotation has been left out (see example 5).
- Additional words may be added to a quotation to enhance clarity. Additional words, or substitutions should be enclosed in square brackets [like this].

Formatting a Vancouver Reference List

General Guidelines

Full citations to all reference material should be presented in a Reference List on a new page at the end of your document. The title of the reference list may vary so check with your instructor.

Arranging entries: Provide full citations for all sources that were referenced in your text. Arrange the entries numerically in the order that they appeared in your work, disregarding alphabetization. For example, a referenced work authored by Wilson may appear first in the list, while Abbotsford might appear sixth.

Author names: List author names in the order that they appear in the reference material. Invert authors' names (putting surname first) and change middle names and first names to initials (there should be a maximum of two initials after each surname). Include all authors' names, to a maximum of six authors. Separate each author's name by a comma and a space. For references that include more than six authors, list the first 6 author names, followed by a comma and *et al.* Conclude author information with a period. Example: van Hooijdonk R, Winters T, Fischer JC, van Dongen-Lases EC, Krinsley JS, Preiser J, et al. If no author names can be found, begin the reference with the title of the document.

Titles: Use sentence case for all titles (book titles, journal titles, article titles, magazine titles, etc.). Capitalize only the first word of article titles and any proper nouns or abbreviations. Conclude titles with a period.

Page numbers: Include the full range of page numbers that encompass the article or other document. Do not repeat page numbers unless they are followed by a letter (i.e., 117-119 becomes 117-9 but 34A-37A is fine). Conclude page information with a period.

Web addresses: When using an online reference source, include a web address where the item can be located.

Item-Specific Guidelines and Examples

JOURNAL ARTICLE

Sobande A, Arhibong E, Akinola S. Pregnancy outcome in asthmatic patients from high altitudes. *Int J Gynaecol Obstet*. 2002 May 1;77(2):117-21.

Van Hooijdonk R, Winters T, Fischer JC, van Dongen-Lases EC, Krinsley JS, Preiser J, et al. Accuracy and limitation of continuous glucose monitoring using spectroscopy in critically ill patients. *Ann Intensive Care*. 2014 March 6;4(8): [about 8p.]. doi: 10.1186.2110-5820-4-8

GUIDELINES

Journal Title	Cite the journal name as it appears in the document (for example if a journal name changed in 1995 but your article was published in 1992, use the older title). Abbreviate all significant words in the journal title, omitting conjunctions and prepositions, and capitalize all remaining words. For guidelines on abbreviating journal titles see Citing Medicine: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7282/box/A33351/?report=objectonly For abbreviations of specific journal titles search: Journals Listed in NCBI databases: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nlmcatalog/journals
Date of Publication	The date should be presented in the format: YYYY MMM DD. For example: 2004 May 5. Abbreviate names of months to three letters (i.e., Jan, Aug). Conclude the date of publication with a semi-colon (if no volume or issue is provided substitute the semi-colon for a colon).
Volume/Issue Number	Omit all abbreviations such as vol., iss., or no. Insert the volume number first using a hyphen to indicate multiple volumes if necessary (i.e., 5-6). Follow the volume number with the issue number in parenthesis, using a hyphen to indicate multiple issues if necessary (i.e., (2-3)). Conclude issue information with a colon. If no issue number is available, end volume number (s) with a colon.
Pages	Follow the guidelines for page numbers as described above in General Guidelines. When page numbers are not available add the approximate number of pages.
DOI	Where possible, include the doi number of digital articles. If doi numbers are not available you can include a URL for the location (i.e., Available from: http://www.annalsofintensivecare.com/content/4/1/8)

BOOKS (ONLINE)

Drake RL, Vogl AW, Mitchell AW, editors. Gray's anatomy for studies [Internet]. 3rd ed. Philadelphia (PA): Churchill Livingstone; c 2015 [cited 2014 May 2].

Patrias K. Citing medicine: the NLM style guide for authors, editors, and publishers [Internet]. 2nd ed. Wendling DL, technical editor. Bethesda (MD): National Library of Medicine (US); 2007-[updated 2011 Sep 15; cited 2012 May 2]. Available from: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/citingmedicine>

BOOKS/BOOK CHAPTERS (PRINT)

Pechenik JA. A short guide to writing about biology. 5th ed. New York: Pearson Longman; c2004. 280 p.

White BC. Healthcare ethics and pain management. In: Smith, DS, Pilitsis, JG, editors. The art and science of palliative care. Hong Kong: AME Publishing; 2014. p. 1-12.

GUIDELINES

Book Title	Capitalize only the first word or any proper nouns and abbreviations. Conclude the title with a semi- colon and a space.
Type of Medium	Insert [Internet] after book title to note books that are accessed online.
Place of Publication	Insert the city of publication. For smaller cities or places where the location may be unclear, add the two letter abbreviation of U.S. states, Canadian provinces, or other countries (i.e., Charleston (SC) or Charleston (WV)). If more than one city is listed, use the first listed. If no place of publication can be found, insert [place unknown]. Conclude place of publication with a colon.
Publisher	Insert the publisher name as it appears in the text, followed by a semi-colon.
Date of Publication	Include the year of publication. If no publication year exists, but a copyright date is found, add copyright date, preceding the year with the letter c (i.e., c2010). If no date can be found, add [date unknown]. Conclude date of publication with a period. For digital materials, add a space after the period and include the date of last update, followed by a semi-colon, and date cited, in square brackets (see online book example above).
Web Address	Include a web address where the book can be located.
Editor and Secondary Authors	When citing an edited book, editors' names appear after the title of the book. Use the same format for author's names as described above. After the last listed editor insert a comma, a space, and the word "editor" or "editors" (e.g., Drake RL, Vogl AW, editors). If there are no authors, the editor(s) should be listed before the title, followed by the word "editor" or "editors".
Book Chapters or Section	When citing a Chapter in an edited book (rather than the entire book), begin the reference with the name of the chapter author, followed by the chapter title (see Book Chapters example above). Follow this with a period, space, the word "In", a colon and space. Next, add the names of the editors (using the format outlined above), a period, a space, and the Title of the book in which the chapter is published. Include the place of publication, publisher and date of publication as you would when citing an entire book (see example above).
Book Chapter/Section Page Numbers	Follow the guidelines for page numbers as described in the General Guidelines but add a "p." and a space to the beginning of the page number range (i.e., p-301-7). If the information appears in two different sections, list both, separated by the word "and" (i.e., p. 201 and p. 305-7).

**ARTICLE IN A DAILY
NEWSPAPER
(ONLINE & PRINT)**

Allday E. Alzheimer’s research gets extremely personal; S.F. scientist helped develop vaccine – now she’s a patient. San Francisco Chronicle. 2011 Jul 30:Sect. A:1 (col.1).

Weidner J. Saturday’s walk for organ transplants celebrates life. The Waterloo Region Record [Internet]. 2012 May 2 [cited 2012 May 2]; Local:[about 2 screens]. Available from: <http://www.therecord.com/news/local/article/716575--saturday-s-walk-for-organ-transplants-celebrates-life>

GUIDELINES

Name of Author	If no author name is found, begin the reference with the name of the article. If authors are listed, apply the same format as is outlined in the General Guidelines (above).
Article Title	Apply the same format for titles as outlined in the General Guidelines (above). For web-based articles, insert [Internet] after the title.
Newspaper Title	Reproduce the title of the newspaper as it is presented. Retain all capitalization and do not abbreviate or remove any words. If the newspaper has different editions, indicate the edition in parenthesis after the title. i.e., (2nd Ed).
Date of Publication	Present the date in the format: YYYY MMM DD. For example:2004 May 5. Abbreviate names of months to three letters (i.e., Jan, Aug). Conclude the date of publication with a colon.
Date Cited	For web-based articles, include the date cited in square brackets, after the date of publication (i.e., 2004 May 5 [cited 2004 June 4]).
Section	The Section number in a newspaper is equivalent to the Volume/Issue numbers of a journal article. If Section information is available, include it after the date of publication. Abbreviate Section to Sect. and include the Section number or name (i.e., Sect. A:). Conclude the Section information with a colon and page number (i.e., Sect. A:10).If a Section number cannot be found, insert the page number immediately after the date of publication (i.e., 2003 May 15:4). When citing a newspaper article, only the first page of an article is included.
Column Number	If available, insert the column number, in parentheses, immediately after the Section information. Abbreviate column to col. and include the number of the column in which the article begins (i.e., Sect. A:10 (col 1).). Conclude with a period.
Page Count	If location or page count isn’t indicated, estimate the total length of the article (using screen pages or paragraph numbers), enclosed in square brackets.
Web Address	Include a web address where the article can be found.

**DISSERTATION
AND THESES**

Morrison G. Polymer concepts in biophysics [dissertation]. [College Park (MD)]: University of Maryland; 2008. 174 p.
Zaplatynski, A M. Factors affecting success in organic chemistry [master's thesis]. [Boca Raton (FL)]: Florida Atlantic University; 2006. 79 p.

GUIDELINES

Title	Apply the same format for titles as is outlined in the General Guidelines (above). Add a space followed, in square brackets, by “dissertation” (for doctoral dissertations) or “master’s thesis”. Conclude the title with a period.
Place of Publication	The place of publication is the city in which the institution granting the degree is located. As with books, two letter abbreviations for states, provinces, or countries should be added for smaller cities or those with ambiguous city names (i.e., Vancouver (B.C) or Vancouver (WA)).
Publisher	The publisher is the name of the institution that is granting the degree (i.e., University of Calgary). Add a semi-colon and space after the name of the publisher.
Page Numbers	Add the total number of pages in the thesis or dissertation, not including appendices or indices (unless these are included in the thesis page count). Page numbers are followed by a space, the letter <i>p</i> , and a period.

**ENCYCLOPEDIA OR
REFERENCE WORK**

American heritage dictionary [Internet]. Boston (MA): Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; c2011. Dopamine; [cited 2012 May 2]; [1 paragraph]. Available from: <http://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=dopamine>
Encyclopædia britannica [Internet]. Chicago (IL): Encyclopædia Britannica Inc.; 2012. Open-heart surgery; [cited 2012 May 2]; [2 paragraphs]. Available from: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/429656/open-heart-surgery>

GUIDELINES

Title	Apply the same format for titles as outlined in the General Guidelines (above). For web-based encyclopedias or other reference works, insert [Internet] after the title. Include edition (if available) after the title and conclude with a period (i.e., Dictionary of modern English usage 1 st ed.).
Place of Publication	Follow guidelines for Books.
Publisher	Follow guidelines for Books.
Date of Publication	Follow guidelines for Books.
Page Numbers	Include a page location, such as an encyclopedia entry (i.e., Cancer), followed by a semi-colon, space, the letter <i>p</i> , and a period (i.e., Cancer; p.25). For electronic content, add a URL for the location (i.e., Available from: http://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=dopamine).

**TECHNICAL AND
RESEARCH REPORTS**

Chui T, Tran K, Maheux H. 2006 census: immigration in Canada: a portrait of the foreign-born population, 2006 census: findings [Internet]. Ottawa: Statistics Canada; 2007 Dec [cited 2012 May 02]. 37 p. Report No.: 97-557-XIE2006001. Available from: <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-557/pdf/97-557-XIE2006001.pdf>

GUIDELINES

Authors/ Title	Apply the same format for authors and titles as is outlined in the General Guidelines (above). If the author is an organization, list the organization's name in full (i.e., University of Calgary. Campus Mental Health Strategy).
Place of Publication	Follow guidelines for Books.
Publisher	Follow guidelines for Books.
Date of Publication	Follow guidelines for Books.
Page Numbers	Immediately after Date of Publication, include a period, space, number of pages in the report, followed by a space, the letter "p" and a period (see example above). For electronic content, add a URL for the location (i.e., Available from: http://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=dopamine).
Report Number	The report number (if available) follows the page number and is preceded by the words "Report No.:" (see example above). Complete this section of the reference with a period.
Online Reports	For electronic content, add a URL for the location (i.e., Available from: http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-557/pdf/97-557-XIE2006001.pdf)
Other Information	For more information on citing reports, refer to additional guidelines outlined in Citing Medicine: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/

Sample Vancouver Style Reference List

References

1. Sobande A, Arhibong E, Akinola S. Pregnancy outcome in asthmatic patients from high altitudes. *Int J Gynaecol Obstet*. 2002 May 1;77(2):117-21.
2. van Hooijdonk R, Winters T, Fischer JC, van Dongen-Lases EC, Krinsley JS, Preiser J, et al. Accuracy and limitation of continuous glucose monitoring using spectroscopy in critically ill patients. *Ann Intensive Care*. 2014 March 6;4(8): [about 8p.]. doi: 10.1186.2110-5820-4-8
3. Drake RL, Vogl AW, Mitchell AW, editors. *Gray's anatomy for studies* [Internet]. 3rd ed. Philadelphia (PA): Churchill Livingstone; c 2015 [cited 2014 May 2].
4. Patrias K. *Citing medicine: the NLM style guide for authors, editors, and publishers* [Internet]. 2nd ed. Wendling DL, technical editor. Bethesda (MD): National Library of Medicine (US); 2007- [updated 2015]. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7256/>
5. Pechenik JA. *A short guide to writing about biology*. 5th ed. New York: Pearson Longman; c2004. 280 p.
6. White BC. Healthcare ethics and pain management. In: Smith, DS, Pilitsis, JG, editors. *The art and science of palliative care*. Hong Kong: AME Publishing; 2014. p. 1-12.Guidelines:
7. American Psycho Allday E. Alzheimer's research gets extremely personal; S.F. scientist helped develop vaccine – now she's a patient. *San Francisco Chronicle*. 2011 Jul 30:Sect. A:1 (col.1).
8. Weidner J. Saturday's walk for organ transplants celebrates life. *The Waterloo Region Record* [Internet]. 2012 May 2 [cited 2012 May 2]; Local:[about 2 screens]. Available from: <http://www.therecord>
9. Morrison G. *Polymer concepts in biophysics* [dissertation]. [College Park (MD)]: University of Maryland; 2008. 174 p.
10. Zaplatynski, A M. *Factors affecting success in organic chemistry* [master's thesis]. [Boca Raton (FL)]: Florida Atlantic University; 2006. 79 p.
11. *American heritage dictionary* [Internet]. Boston (MA): Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; c2011. Dopamine; [cited 2012 May 2]; [1 paragraph]. Available from: <http://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=dopamine>
12. *Encyclopædia britannica* [Internet]. Chicago (IL): Encyclopædia Britannica Inc.; 2012. Open-heart surgery; [cited 2012 May 2]; [2 paragraphs]. Available from: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/429656/open-heart-surgery>