

# Why and how you should cite other authors' work

By E. Joy Bowles, PhD, BSc Hons



If you are a teacher, blogger, or writer, you probably use information gained from other people's writing. It is important to let your students and readers know where you got your information from, which is called "referencing" or "citing". Your references should be detailed enough to allow other people to find the original source documents you used. Referencing is courteous, and adds credibility to your work. If you quote directly from someone else's work, you must use quotation marks, and reference your source, or else it is plagiarism - passing off someone else's work as your own.

The citation is the bit that looks like **(Bowles, 2020)**, the reference contains the full details of the information source: **Bowles, E. Joy, (2020), "Dr Joy's Aromatherapy", Diem Capta Books, Australia**, and is usually located at the end of the document (or in footnotes at the bottom of the page). Often the words "citation" and "reference" are used interchangeably.

## Referencing Styles

There are many academic referencing styles in use. A referencing style refers to the way the citation and reference details are formatted, for example using full names, or just initials, using italics or bold for the title of the work, and what order the authors, dates, titles, and publisher details are listed.

A common referencing style is the American Psychological Association (APA) style. Here is a link with examples of how to cite every type of information source, including webpages, books, journals, and newspapers in the APA style. Murdoch University Library (2021) "Help and Support: APA - Referencing Guide: All Examples", <https://libguides.murdoch.edu.au/APA/all>, accessed 21 Feb 2021.

While you can add all your references for each article manually, it is better to use a reference or citation manager program. As it is likely you will want to use references more than once, a reference manager saves time. Here is an article comparing four of the better-known programs, two of which are free (Ivey & Crum, 2018). For ease of access, here is the link to the free PubMed Central version

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6013132/> but the proper APA reference to the article is below:

Ivey, C., & Crum, J. (2018). Choosing the Right Citation Management Tool: Endnote, Mendeley, RefWorks, or Zotero. *Journal of the Medical Library Association: JMLA*, 106(3), 399–403.  
<https://doi.org/10.5195/jmla.2018.468>

## Using a reference/ citation manager

When you find information you want to cite, you can either import an existing reference into the citation manager (often on the page with the academic article), or create a new reference yourself. A data-entry form in the citation manager opens for each type of information source, and you type in the required details and save it. The reference will be added to your personal library of references accessible by the citation manager, either on your computer, or in the 'cloud'.

The citation manager programs have add-ons for Word which allow you to insert the reference and citation as you type your document. When you have finished, you can choose which referencing style you would like, and the program will automatically format your citations in that style.

As a final tip, if you are citing information from a review article, it is best to go to the original article cited in the review if you want to quote data or results, as sometimes the review article does not provide sufficient information, or only partly reports on the original data. But you can also create a citation like this: **Jaen & Dalton (2014), as cited by Bowles (2020)**, and the reference in the list at the end would be **Bowles, E. Joy, (2020), "Dr Joy's Aromatherapy", Diem Capta Books, Australia, p. 26**