



Referencing – At a Glance

You need to use references

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

Note:

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.

How to reference:

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

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 assignments¹. 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.

¹ The Schreibberatung Sozialwissenschaften compiled a list of citation guidelines put out by the different departments of the Faculty of Social Sciences: <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/123160.html>

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 Lab \(IWL\)](#) , (for all students) to discuss your questions with a writing tutor. Please make an appointment for a writing consultation or, if possible, come during the open hours and remember to bring the guidelines you found.

Schreibberatung Sozialwissenschaften:

<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/123160.html> (deutsch)

Schreibberatung Sozialwissenschaften:

<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/123160.html> (English)

Schreibberatung des Internationalen Schreiblabors:

<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/578710.html> (deutsch)

Schreibberatung des Internationalen Schreiblabors:

<https://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/578710.html> (English)

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 on references online, for example: Video by **London Southbank University** explaining Harvard Referencing:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prETpsgBU4w>

Thorough online reference book by the **University of Sheffield** laying out the specific standards for many different kinds of sources in all common referencing styles (including unusual cases) (+ interactive plagiarism quiz):
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/idlt/referencing>

Tip:

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.

SUB Göttingen:

<https://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/lernen-lehren/wissenschaftlich-arbeiten-tools-und-techniken/literatur-verwalten/> (deutsch)

SUB Göttingen:

<https://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/en/learning-teaching/academic-work-tools-and-methods/reference-management/> (English)