

The Anatomy of a Reference

Every part has a purpose.

A complete reference helps your reader find the source you used.



Example: Journal article (author-date style)

Ahmed, L. (2024). The impact of sleep on student wellbeing. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 29 (4), 567–582. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13591053221234567>

Author	Year	Article Title	Journal Title	Volume and Issue	Page Range	DOI or URL	Formatting and punctuation
The person(s) who wrote the work. List surname first, then initials.	The year the work was published. Helps show how current the source is.	The title of the article. Sentence case: only the first word and proper nouns are capitalised.	The name of the journal the article was published in. Title case: major words are capitalised.	The volume number, with the issue number in brackets. Not all journals have issue numbers.	The page numbers the article appears on. Use an en dash (–) between pages.	A digital object identifier (DOI) or web address. Provides a direct link to the source.	Full stops, commas, brackets and italics all have a job. They make the reference clear and consistent.

KEY TIPS

- Where possible, read and cite the original source rather than relying on a secondary citation.
- Check every detail: small errors make it hard to find.
- Follow one referencing style consistently.
- Use a DOI where available. Otherwise, include a URL and access date when required by your referencing style.

REFERENCES WILL VARY

Other sources include different pieces of information. For example:

	Book	Author. (Year). <i>Title of book</i> . Place. Publisher.
	Book chapter	Author. (Year). <i>Title of chapter</i> . In Editor (Ed.), <i>Title of book</i> (pp. xx–xx). Place. Publisher.
	Website	Author/Organisation. (Year). <i>Title of page</i> . Website Name. URL
	Report	Author/Organisation. (Year). <i>Title of report</i> . Place. Publisher.

A good reference is:

✓ Accurate

✓ Consistent

✓ Complete

✓ Easy to find

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