

CHAPTER 4

Reading, desk research, taking notes and plagiarism

'I know I have read that somewhere!'; 'Where is it?'. 'AHHH, I'll never find it again!'. There is nothing more frustrating than not knowing where an idea came from, or the book your best quote is borrowed from. You get tempted to include it anyway, but without a proper reference you know you shouldn't, so instead you leave it out – what a disaster! It was, without doubt, the highlight of your essay. It is often during reading and notetaking that mistakes are made that can lead to these issues, or to accusations of plagiarism, a serious offence that may cause you to fail an assignment. In this chapter, we are going to help you ensure that the Academic Misconduct Board get to put their feet up, rather than chasing you. We will look at notetaking when reading, the basics of referencing systems, and some referencing tools, because as poet and writer Edgar Allan Poe (1844) reminds us:

If you wish to forget anything upon the spot, make a note that this thing is to be remembered



EDGAR ALLAN POE

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Reading scholarly articles or academic books can be challenging, sometimes it feels like the author doesn't want you to understand what they are saying. This is because these texts are usually written for academics in a specific discipline rather than for a general audience. These texts often use jargon (subject specific words) and assume prior knowledge, which you might not have at the start of your studies, but you will (we hope) by the end. Scholarly reading, though, is usually not as difficult as it first seems. You may not understand everything in an academic text, but you can learn to recognize major *road signs* to help you find your way through it.

To get started, the first thing is to note the difference between reading for pleasure and reading academically:

Reading for pleasure	Academic reading
You can choose to read what you want.	Have to read in an active purposeful manner.
It's up to you what kind of texts you choose and why you choose them.	The things you choose to read have to be seen to be 'good' quality or from trusted sources.
You don't have to think about what you are choosing if you don't want to.	You have to evaluate, question, compare and reflect on the value of the sources you are reading and think about what it is possible to say about them.
You can choose to read when and where you like.	You will often have to read for the purposes of producing particular types of knowledge, in particular ways, for particular audiences.
You could choose to read the same things day in, day out.	You will have to be able to work with a range of different sources in order to produce particular types of knowledge.

(Escott, 2017 cited by @Hemmanony, 2017)

This doesn't mean that academic reading can't be pleasurable, fun and social, it just requires you to think a bit more about the purpose of the text, who the author is, and the audience it was written for. It also involves considering the text's relevance to you, and your studies – and maybe thinking about why your professor asked you to read it... it's not to punish you, I promise! Let's take a look at each of these in turn.

When reading academic texts, first think about the **audience**. Academic texts are often written for other academics, but which ones? One clue is to look at where the article is published and to think about who reads that publication. This will tell you about some of the prior knowledge they might think you have – but it doesn't mean you should disregard the paper if you don't have that

knowledge, instead, look at **the title**. The title will tell you the main topic. Academics love long titles; some seem to be longer than your dissertation. While they would make awful novel titles, they are great for you because good academic titles tell you everything. They often come in two parts, separated by a colon. The part before the colon is the fun bit, to draw you in. The bit after the colon does the work, and tells you more about the focus of the article – Fun at the front, work at the back.

Now that we have a rough idea who the audience is, what the article might be about, and the prior knowledge it assumes we have, we know how easy or hard it will be to read. Now it is time to read it carefully keeping in mind **your own purpose**. You might feel like you are not the intended audience, but there is a reason you are working with this text, especially if the reading was assigned by your professor. If you have chosen the text yourself, think about why you chose this reading and decide if it is the text you need or if you should put it to one side and move on to something else. A key thing to learn is the difference between discarding something that is not relevant, and discarding something that just feels too hard.

The good news though – about time we had some – is that in academic reading you don't need to read a text from start to finish (Phew!). Most academic papers contain the same basic parts, and we can look for key information using those. Try looking at the **abstract** which summarizes the text and usually appears at the beginning of an article or book chapter. Not all academic texts have abstracts, but those that do tell us everything about the paper – they would be useless on a murder mystery book because they would tell us who done it, but they are great on academic papers, because they tell us the conclusion without reading everything. The **introduction** also summarizes the text and the main idea, but in much more detail. It also tells us why we should care (and you should, people have spent a lot of time on this work) about the research, how it fits with the 'bigger picture' and gives an overview of what is coming. **Sub-headings** too are useful, after reading the introduction, read all the section headings to give yourself more idea of the shape of the article and the direction it will take you. You might then want to skip straight to the **conclusion** (this isn't cheating). The conclusion can help you make sure you understood the introduction. Now you've looked at these parts, you should have a good idea of the main arguments in the text, and you can decide how much energy to give to different parts of the text as you start to *read critically*.

Reading critically

It is important to read critically. These are words you will hear time and again – but trying to get someone to explain what this means is near impossible. For

many professors, it is a skill that has been honed over hundreds of years (they are that old), and when something becomes second nature it can become hard to explain. So, what is it? Well, critical reading requires you to evaluate the arguments in the text (not much clearer), to distinguish fact from opinion, and to try and see both sides of the arguments made by the author (a little clearer). You also need to be aware of your opinions as you are reading, so you can evaluate it honestly. The main idea of critical reading is to evaluate the evidence or arguments presented; to spot any limitations in the design of the study, and to decide how much you accept the authors' arguments, opinions, or conclusions. Remember, all writers have a reason for writing, and will emphasize details that support their opinion. There are three simple things to do, *Question*, *Evaluate*, *Locate* (finally it is simple);

Question	Evaluate	Locate
what the author says <input type="checkbox"/> What assumptions does the author make? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you think these assumptions are correct? <input type="checkbox"/> Are the stages of the argument clear and logical? <input type="checkbox"/> Are the writer's conclusions reasonable in the light of the evidence presented?	what the author says <input type="checkbox"/> How do the conclusions relate to other similar research? <input type="checkbox"/> Are you persuaded by what the author says? Why/why not? <input type="checkbox"/> If someone asked your opinion of the author's viewpoint, what would you say? <input type="checkbox"/> How will you use what the author says in your argument?	the author in the discipline <input type="checkbox"/> What is the authors position on the issue? <input type="checkbox"/> How is the author's argument different or similar to those of other experts on this subject? <input type="checkbox"/> How does the author's argument and position fit with what you already know? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the author's argument belong to a particular school of thought (e.g. Marxism, Feminism)?

Adapted from Godfrey (2018).

It is important to remember that *critical* here doesn't mean to criticize, the aim of critical reading is not to just find what's wrong, but instead you need to evaluate. It is just as useful to find a really good argument you like, as it is to find one you think is weak – and you can write about both in a critical way by following the steps above – Question, Evaluate and Locate.

Surviving a super long reading list

At universities in the UK it isn't unusual for each of your modules to have reading lists of 30 or more books, articles or other texts. And in some modules, this can be even more, with 10 or more required and recommended readings each

week or class. How are you meant to cope with this? Even with the best time management, it becomes impossible to read so many texts each week. So, what to do? Here is the good news, you aren't expected to read all the things on your reading list, instead you need to be selective about what is most useful to you and your learning, in that moment. One of the reasons modules and courses have so many texts is to allow you to find your own way through the ideas. But how will you know which are the most important, and which are right for you? Well, you might find that your readings are split into required and recommended, you should always do the required, and you should aim to do at least some of the recommended. Try these methods for choosing what you will read.

It is normally best to start by reading a text which gives a general overview of the topic. This will help you to put everything else into context and will also give you some ideas about the main debates. You could also look at the references provided in that text to help you find other readings that are related. Books with words like 'introduction', 'handbook' or 'guide' in the title might be the best place to start your reading.

The next texts to consider for your reading, and generally learning, are those written more recently, or which have been written by the big shots in the field you are studying. Even recent books will generally refer back to the older theories so you will be getting up to date with ideas, and also connecting with the historical ideas that led them to reach their conclusion. You can always go back to read the original, older, texts if you need more clarification later.

Finally, there might be some much older texts on your reading list. These are normally written by the most prominent people in your field, and they offer a good cornerstone to your work, but often they will also be referenced in newer books. You will be expected to be aware of current thinking and research in your subject area, for this reason, books that were written a long time ago can be problematic if their theories have changed or been debunked, but if your tutor asked you to read it, there is probably a good reason. You should always be careful to check that what you are reading is relevant to your topic too, time isn't always on our side, so while it might be interesting to read about social media in China, if your essay is about social media in the USA, you might find that the theories and research are too different for it to be useful (at this time).

It's not all about books and journals

But you're a cool person who doesn't just read books and journal articles, you follow authors on Twitter and learn about theory from lectures on YouTube. You listen to podcasts, you write about films, and you seek industry data from



One of the effects of living with electric information is that we live habitually in a state of information overload. There's always more than you can cope with.

MARSHALL MCLUHAN

informed and exciting databases. All of these things are possible too. The principles in this chapter are the same though. You will need to evaluate the quality of the source, and make choices about which materials are relevant. You will also need some extra notes about the things you listen to, read or watch. Always note down who is speaking, who is directing, who produced it and when. Also note down when you watched it, and the URL. Also consider taking screenshots from social media as things sometime get deleted. Additionally, you may need to think about how reliable a source is. The majority of the books and journals you read will have been peer reviewed, meaning other academics have read it before publication and agreed that it is good enough, and balanced enough to be published... and while your library will have subscriptions to some of the resources below, which means we can trust them more, the same is not true for the majority of open internet content, so you will need to be a little more careful. Below are some tips for some of the additional mediums you might be using:



Requires library subscription

Statista is a huge database, that contains more than 1,000,000 statistics on more than 80,000 topics from more than 22,500 sources (wow!). This has helped to make it one of the most successful databases in the world. This one isn't only media and communications though, in fact it covers 170 different industries. This can make it a really useful resource for giving you context for your essays, providing evidence for ideas or even for sparking thoughts about what you might like to study for your dissertation. And despite their name, they don't just provide statistics, they also have data on market forecasts, white paper studies, dossiers, industry reports, digital market outlooks and consumer market outlooks. The other great thing is they also help you reference their information. You will need to check your library to find out how to login through your university. www.statista.com



Requires library
subscription

Factiva is another huge database, this one is owned by Dow Jones and Company and brings together access to more than 32,000 sources (such as newspapers, journals, magazines, television and radio transcripts, photos, etc.) from nearly every country worldwide in 28 languages, including more than 600 continuously updated newswires. This makes it a really fantastic resource for finding out what is happening right now! Again, this database is useful for background information, but can also provide information for analysis for research projects. As with Statista you will need to check with your library about how to login to get access for free: www.dowjones.com/products/factiva



Requires library
subscription

Box of Broadcasts (BoB) is a cheeky way to avoid your Netflix subscription... well almost. BoB (as it is known) is a database of UK television programmes. It gives you the chance to watch, record and store programmes or extracts from them, into your own online play list, which unlike other places, it lets you keep so long as you need. It also contains transcripts of many programmes and some further information about channels and shows. There are over 2 million broadcasts available, so if you are working on anything related to broadcast it is a real must have resource. Ask your library about how to access: learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand

Requires library
subscription

Mintel is a market research firm, that provides databases, analysis, and forecasts to subscribing clients and to students in participating university libraries (that's you!). Mintel undertake a range of activities, but perhaps most useful for you and your studies and the online reports containing consumer research and analysis, market drivers and market forecasts. They also have a 'trends' section that examines emerging marketing, social and cultural trends, which again can provide inspiration for research projects, or up to date background information as part of the context your essays and studies. Furthermore, Mintel also publishes opinions from Mintel analysts, which can be very informative, if a little subjective. Ask your library for more: www.mintel.com



Requires library
subscription

Mediatel is a data and analysis tool that brings together industry data, mostly to help companies plan and make decisions. It is also really useful for media and communications students as it provides information about the circulation of newspapers and magazines, as well as information on the readership of these publications. It also gives us listening and watching figures for radio and TV, as well as information on advertising costs, the demographics of viewers. This information is again great for background and context, as well as for sparking potential research ideas for your dissertation when the time comes. Speak to the library about how to access: mediatel.co.uk



Office for
National Statistics

Free and open

The **Office for National Statistics** is a database of statistics about the UK. Other countries also have similar databases, which you may need if your work isn't UK based. But it is a great example of a database that can be used to provide context to your work. The data held by ONS is produced in a way that makes it easy to compare with other societies and economies. ONS data is produced through a combination of a decennial population census, samples and surveys and analysis of data generated by businesses and organisations such as the National Health Service and the register of births, marriages and deaths. Much of the data here is free and downloadable without a subscription – but it is also a trustworthy source of data.



Free and open

YouTube is full of amazing (and some not so amazing) videos and these can be a great help in your studies. From introductions to a subject area or full lectures on a topic, they can really help to round out your learning, and some of your professors may even include them on reading lists. To get the most out of YouTube as a source, set up a Favourites section for the videos you are using, to help you keep a record. Pretty much anyone and anything can end up on YouTube, so it is always worth thinking about who might have made the video and why. I sometimes search for the channel on other platforms to see if anything has been written about them or how they are funded. Remember, there is loads of good stuff out there, but some people are working to an agenda.



Free and open

Twitter can be a great tool for research. Yes, it can help you get a feel for how a certain population is talking about a subject, and this can be useful in your empirical research (See chapter 12), but in relation to your everyday studies you will find that lots of the people on your reading lists are on Twitter. Follow them! They will often be tweeting other things related to your topic and studies, and you may even get to see their newest work before your professor.



podcast

Some free, some
paid for

Like YouTube, **podcasts** can be a great way to get extra information about the topic you are studying. Again, though you need to think carefully about who made it, why they made it and if they might have a bias and agenda they want to prove.

AVOID

The internet is a wonderful thing, and it is full of useful and amazing resources. But with this abundance comes issues, and it is important that we are careful about what we use from online. You must make sure you are using reliable sources from reputable people. Think about, who is the author, who paid for the work and what is their agenda. Works you access through your library are checked and vetted by staff and should be reliable. For other sources, you should take care, or use them critically.

Notetaking

Notetaking can be a very personal act, for which there are no right and wrong ways to do it. Some people start by using highlighters to mark key words and phrases or they write the main points with coloured pens or underline them with more coloured pens. Some people draw pictures or diagrams. Some draw arrows, lines, brackets, to help join ideas together. Some people copy and paste chunks of text into a working document. These are all suitable methods, the key is to find the right one for you.

Whatever the method you use, it is important not to just copy the text from a book, or to just highlight things. The idea is to make notes in your own words, while keeping your essay title in mind as you are reading, and only write down things that you will need. Of course, you might find information that might be useful for another essay, if you do, make a note of it, but put it to one side for another time.

It is essential you keep notes about what you read, and which notes are about which text, that will help you avoid the horrid situation at the start of this chapter. So, for every set of notes make sure you note down the following points;

- Title, author, place and year of publication, publisher; add URL for internet sources
- The numbers of the pages you have read

Then ask yourself and make notes about the following:

- What are the paper's main research aims/questions?
- What is its scope of analysis (e.g. country, timeframe, media sector)?
- What is the paper's main claim for value/originality? (i.e. why is the research important and worth doing)
- What research methods were employed?
- What are the key concepts and/or theoretical framework?

- What are its main findings or core argument?
- How might this research paper be useful for my own project?

This is all well and good, but what should the notes themselves look like I hear you ask ...

- Well, and this is becoming a theme, there is no right answer. What should good notes look like?

* * *

Types of notetaking

There are many different ways of taking notes, and the one that you prefer will depend on your own way of visualizing and remembering information. The following are three of the most common types used by students. Try out a few methods and see what works for you.

Linear notetaking	Spider notetaking	Tabular notetaking																				
		<table border="1" data-bbox="724 861 983 1052"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>1945-1979</th> <th>1979-1996</th> <th>1996-2007</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Domestic Political Ideologies</td> <td>Social Democracy</td> <td>Liberalism Technicism</td> <td>'The Way' New Labour</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Provisions</td> <td>welfare state 'from cradle to grave'</td> <td>Prudentialism and 'left hand rule'</td> <td>Prudential</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nationalism</td> <td>Internationalism Social Solidarity</td> <td>Cost-price competition Market</td> <td>Trade liberalisation Market</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management</td> <td>Bureaucratic Efficiency + control</td> <td>Processes + structures</td> <td>???</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		1945-1979	1979-1996	1996-2007	Domestic Political Ideologies	Social Democracy	Liberalism Technicism	'The Way' New Labour	Provisions	welfare state 'from cradle to grave'	Prudentialism and 'left hand rule'	Prudential	Nationalism	Internationalism Social Solidarity	Cost-price competition Market	Trade liberalisation Market	Management	Bureaucratic Efficiency + control	Processes + structures	???
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Nationalism	Internationalism Social Solidarity	Cost-price competition Market	Trade liberalisation Market																			
Management	Bureaucratic Efficiency + control	Processes + structures	???																			
<p>Notes which follow the order of the points made are called sequential or linear notes. They are most commonly used for lecture notes, but can also work for books.</p> <p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Simple and familiar approach. ✓ Good for listing information. ✓ Good for detail. 	<p>A spider diagram way of summarizing the information that you have found in a visual way, with the central theme in the middle and then other key points linked around it.</p> <p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ You can see complex relationships. ✓ New material can be added at any point. 	<p>Notes are drawn out on a table to enable you to make quick and easy comparisons between different issues and ideas.</p> <p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Useful for codifying and categorizing information. ✓ Very detailed. ✓ Good for essay planning. ✓ Useful exam revision style. 																				

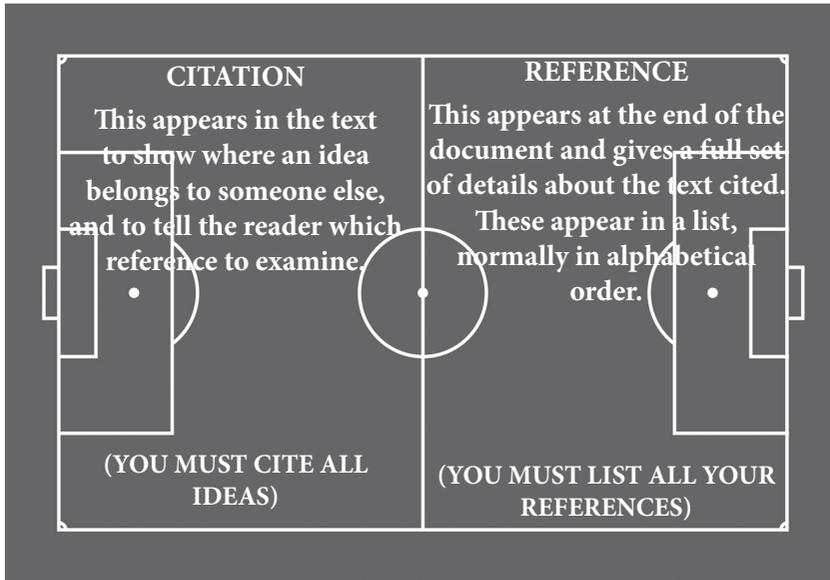
<p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Order tends to follow the source. × Difficult to go back and insert additional information. × Repetitive format. × Poor at conceptual/big picture level. × Can reduce complex issues to lists and bullet points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Good for planning essays as you can design various versions without throwing out old ones. ✓ Links between important points are easily seen. ✓ Visual nature helps you remember the information. <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Hard to produce, especially from lectures and they require practice. 	<p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Hard to draw out 'on the fly' as you need to know most parameters before you begin.
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When you have finished making your notes, read through them, make sure you have all the information you need and that you can read your own notes – it's bad enough trying to read the handwriting of your professor, worse if you can't read your own. And then file them safely and in an organized manner until you need them for writing purposes. And even better, your notetaking isn't just great for helping you learn materials, good notekeeping also helps you with your referencing.

Referencing

Referencing is one of those tasks that most people hate, find rather tedious, and also often get wrong, which is hardly surprising given the million different referencing styles. This is frustrating for everyone, but it is one of the most important parts of academic writing. Almost all of the work you produce, even in your dissertation, is about showing your lecturers that you have read widely and understood the texts that you have been reading (at least understanding most of it). It may come as a nasty shock to hear that your lecturers often have very little interest in your own opinion, instead they are interested in how you see the opinions of others. So, referencing then serves two equally important roles for you as a student. The first is to give credit for ideas to those who had them, and the second is to show your professor that you have read widely, and well. Every university and publication has some slight differences in the way in which they like the format of referencing (one of the joys of academic life), and you should check your specific style guides to find out what this is, but here we offer some of the general principles of referencing and see why it is important.

Referencing is a game of two halves:



How do we play this game in real life? And avoid being offside (plagiarism). Let's start with the following situation, you have found a wonderful book and it is full of great ideas. You have read it through and have made notes about these ideas. Let's say for the sake of argument that the book is about chickens and their road crossing habits, and that the book was written by Sarah Smith in 2012. The thing you thought was particularly interesting was that chickens cross roads a lot, and you want to state this in your paper. Well, we know this isn't your idea, so we need to tell the reader that you read Sarah's book and that it was her idea. We can do this in a number of ways:

We could <i>cite</i> Smith indirectly , like this:	Smith (2012) has stated that chickens often cross roads.
Or we could <i>cite</i> Smith indirectly like this:	Chickens are often found crossing roads (Smith, 2012).

Note that in both these cases we are taking Smith's words and rephrasing them into our own words (see chapter 8), but also notice that it is still very clear that it is Smith who had this idea, and it is something that we have read.

Sometimes we read something that is just so amazing, or uses such specific terminology, that it is just impossible for us to rephrase. To share Smith's work that way would require a little more care, as we then need to quote Smith.

We could cite Smith directly with a quote like this:	'Chickens love the smell of cars' (Smith, 2012: p.23).
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Notice that things that are a little different here, we now have quotation marks, and everything between those are exactly the same as how Smith wrote them in her text. We have also added a page number to the citation, this way the reader could go and find the exact same quote themselves from the original source.

And that is basically it for our in-text citations, they really only fall into three types. Of course, there are some variations, such as what happens if there is no author? Or no date? What about if there is more than one author? The handy table below will help with those, but remember you should check the guide from your own institution.

Problem	Solution
There is no page number	Replace page number with: n.p.
There is no date	Replace date with: n.d.
Two authors	List both names (Smith and Jones, 2017).
More than two authors	List the first name, but then et. al. – (Smith et. al., 2017)
The article doesn't have an author	List the name of the publication as the author. The in-text citation and the reference list should match. E.g. (BBC, 2017).

So those are our citations, but that is only half the story, we also need to add this text to our reference list, this is the list of all the articles, books and other things we have cited in our essay or thesis. This comes at the very end of an essay and should be a full list of everything cited (used in the essay) in alphabetical order. Our example might be listed like this:

Smith, S. (2012) Why chickens cross roads. *Journal of chicken studies*. Vol.4(2) p.155–167.

This tells the reader the text is by Smith, it was published in 2012, that it was published by the *Journal of chicken studies*, volume number 4, issue number 2, and that the article started on page 155. This means that anyone reading your work can go back and find this article and read the exact same version as you. This isn't to check up on you, it is because your writing will be so interesting that people will want to go and read further and find out more about the subject.

There are also plenty of other cool things we can do with our citations that will help make our writing rich, interesting and complex – all the things that

academic writing should be. We will look at these in depth in other chapters, but you could try things like;

Indirectly citing 3 different authors who all had similar ideas;

Not all chickens liked the other side of the road (Jones, 2011; Abdul, 2015; Lopez, 2013).

Here, each of Jones', Abdul's and Lopez's texts say something very similar, and we can just include them all in the same citation, using a semi-colon to make it clear they are different texts and not co-authors. Each of the three texts would also then be listed fully in our reference list.

You might see or want to use **other variations** of this, such as;

Chickens are most happy when it is sunny (Conway *et al.*, 2015; Smith, 2012; Mills and Boon, 2014).

Here, the first text has more than two authors, so we write *et al.* (but we name all the authors in the reference list at the end). The second text is just one author. The third text has two authors. All three papers though agree that chickens are most happy when it is sunny. For more on how to bring multiple texts together like this, see chapter 8 on synthesizing.



You must always remember to:

- ✓ Put your reference list in alphabetical order.
- ✓ Make sure the order of information in the reference is correct.
- ✓ Ensure punctuation is exact.
- ✓ Make sure you are also using the correct typeface and style to match the rest of your document.

Referencing digital media

The tips and tricks above are great, but do they work for other forms of media? Well almost. Referencing systems are always being updated and changed so that they can include other forms of writing, although they don't always keep up with modern technology, and so debates around the right way to cite and reference things like Twitter are still ongoing. What is important to remember is that even a slightly incorrect reference is better than no reference at all. And

one that has too much information is better than one without enough. So when you are referencing things like Twitter or YouTube make sure you note down not only the person's name, the year of publication and the name of the video or podcast, etc. but also take a note of user names, URLs, and the exact date of publication. You should check your own libraries resources on referencing to see how your university would like you to reference social media, but here is our recommendation:

In text	In references
(michaelao, 2019)	@michaelao (March, 2019) "Journalists covering # PeoplesVoteMarch and thinking about 'balancing' this with Farage, Here's the link to Galtung's piece" https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/18/johan-galtung-news-principles-journalists-too-negative?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other ... @BBCPolitics @NickCohen @bbclaurak [Twitter Post] Available from: https://twitter.com/michaelao/status/1109432533261914112

Online tools for notetaking and referencing

The internet also offers us a huge range of tools for helping you to organize your notes and to help you with your referencing. There are many factors to consider when choosing which one to use, for example, you might be looking for the fastest and easiest option—something that is easy to learn and will let you store all your documents easily. Or you might need something that interacts well with other databases and specific tools you need for the analysis in your work. Either way, let's not forget this: it does need to be free or cheap.

But wait... there's still more!



Use bookmarks and sorted bookmark folders to note interesting things to come back to from the internet. Easy to forget otherwise. Start by creating folders for what's most important. Chrome and Safari seem better to me for this. Sadly, Firefox can be a bit clunky especially on older PCs.

Richard – MA student

Overview of some key resources for digital reference lists and organizing reading (Adapted from University of Toronto, 2019)

	 RefWorks	 Zotero	 Mendeley	 EndNote Basic (Web-only)	 EndNote Desktop (X8)
How much does it cost?	Many institutions have access for free for their students. Check with your library	Free and open source	Free for everyone	Free	Many institutions have access for free for their students. Check with your library
How does it work?	Web-based interface accessible anywhere	Plugin for Firefox or desktop client which can be linked to Chrome or Safari	Desktop client (Win/Mac/Linux)	Web-based interface. Register through Web of Science. Accessible anywhere.	Desktop client (Win/Mac)
Can I use it on my mobile device?	RefMobile website (free)	Third party apps for iOS & Android (various prices)	iOS app (free)	iPad app (Free)	iPad app (Free)
Can I save citations while I browse?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can I search external databases?	Yes	Limited: ISBN, DOI, or PMID lookup	No (coming soon)	Yes	Yes

Can I automatically grab Pdfs?	Yes: can automatically grab PDFs with citations, can add notes and other attachments, can retrieve citation data for PDFs, can archive web pages	Yes: can organize and annotate PDFs, can retrieve citation data for PDFs	No	Yes: System Find Full Text embeds PDFs to your citations where available.	
Can I run a full text search on my account?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Can I collaborate with others?	Yes: can share folders publicly or privately with RefShare, can share account to collaborate on papers	Yes: can share references through public or private group libraries	Yes: can share references through public or private groups	Yes: can share references privately via groups	Yes: share references with or without PDFs.
What citation styles are available?	3,000+ output styles	2,800+ citation styles (CSL)	2,800+ citation styles (CSL)	3,400+ output styles	5,000+ output styles

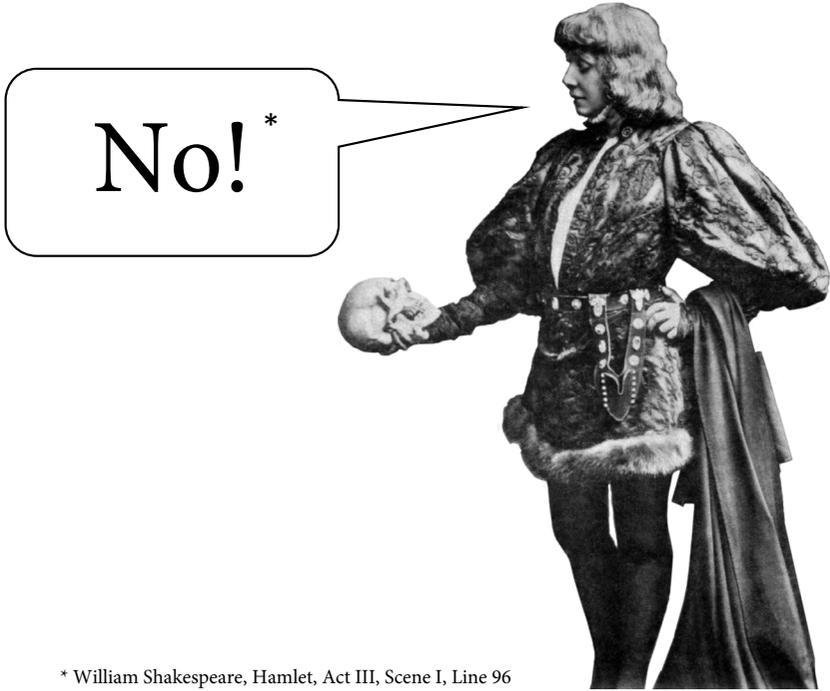
<p>Other Options</p> <p>While the table above gives us a good overview of some options, there are of course plenty of others out there too, including: BiBTeX; Citelighter; Docear; Qiqa and ReadCube. As with much of the advice in this book, the secret is to find the one that works best for you, and then stick with it.</p>	<p>Online Options</p> <p>There are also lots of free online systems for helping with citations. These tend to only have basic features, but they could be a good place to start, or if you work remotely. Some good ones are BibMe, CiteThisForMe, and EasyBib. Be careful though, not all online tools are reliable, and you should always backup your work on a local disk too.</p>
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Plagiarism

Dun Dun Dunnnnn!!! This word instils fear into students across the land, and if it doesn't, then it really should. It is also often a little misunderstood. Plagiarism itself is defined as 'The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own' (OED, 2012). The word actually comes from the Latin for kidnapper, so you can think of plagiarism as like kidnapping an idea. Universities take this very seriously (both kidnapping and plagiarism, but only one of those is dealt with here), and if you are found to have plagiarized it can result in you being asked to leave the university, and you don't get your money back, and you definitely don't get to wear one of those fancy hats at graduation. The good news is it is actually pretty easy to avoid plagiarizing if you follow a few simple rules:

- ❑ Always use your own words, even if you are worried about your language skills.
- ❑ Avoid using too many quotations – We want to see your own writing too, so look at using paraphrasing and summarizing (chapter 8).
- ❑ Reference your sources using the style of your institution.
- ❑ Don't just copy information from other places, always use your own words when making notes.
- ❑ If you are using a direct quote, make you notes in a different colour, so you remember that those words are not your own, and you can give it the proper citation.
- ❑ If you are going to shorten a direct quote you can indicate this by using three dots inside parentheses (...) where you have removed the words.
- ❑ NEVER submit work written by someone else, or that has been copied from another student.

We can boil all this down to one simple question: Can I submit a paper without citing all sources? The answer is 'No'.



* William Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act III, Scene I, Line 96

References

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