Referencing – Vancouver style

In the Vancouver style:

• numbers appear in the text each time another writer’s ideas are cited, either in brackets (1) or in superscript ¹
• There is a reference list at the end, numbered in the order that the sources appear in the text. Make sure each source is given only one number.

Always follow information given to you by your lecturer. Some of the information in this resource comes from: Commonwealth of Australia 2002, Style manual for authors, editors and printers, 6th ed. John Wiley & Sons, Canberra.

Each source is given the same number each time it is referred to. This is different from the footnoting system as the numbers will be repeated in your work when you refer to a source more than once.

The Vancouver system requires an effective information management system. Each reference is added to a list, giving the full bibliographic details, ie:

author
date
title of book or journal
title of chapter or article if in an edited book or journal
volume number of journal
page numbers
publisher
place of publication

Editing can also be a problem when referenced information is deleted. It is useful to write the author’s name and date in the drafts, and only change the references into numbers when the work is complete. Then number and reorder the list of bibliographical information according to the order in which the references occur. The reference list will then accurately match the sources in the text.
Example of in-text referencing and reference list:

Below is an example of in-text referencing and a corresponding reference list using the Vancouver style. Note the following points:

In the text
• Some lecturers prefer identifying numbers to be in superscript \(^1\) rather than in brackets (1).
• Identifying numbers are placed outside the sentence punctuation.
• It’s common to have more than one source for a reference in the disciplines that use the Vancouver style – this can be accommodated easily by using more than one number.

Example

Allied health professions can be defined as ‘those professions (other than medicine and nursing) that are involved in patient care’. (1) While nurses make up 68% of the total health workforce and doctors make up 14%, allied health professions in total constitute 23%. (1) Addison claims that the professional claims of some allied health professions are part of a much wider challenge to medical autonomy in the health sector. (2) For Williams, the future of allied health lies in an increasing alliance between the often disparate individual health professions such as nutrition and dietetics, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech pathology to name a few. (1) The expertise of this group of health professions is often based in their concern for health promotion, and it is this distinctive contribution, Williams argues, that offers the greatest potential for allied health to significantly influence health policy independent of the medical profession. (1)

However, despite the commonality of concern for health promotion, Jones and Seaman argue that the disparity between the allied health professions is a major source of difficulty to creating a useful and powerful alliance. (3) Indeed, it seems that the professional claims and interests of individual allied health professions are not only preventing a united front, but the practitioners’ desire and need to promote themselves as physiotherapists, or nutritionists, or osteopaths, etc are at risk of destroying the public perception of unified professional body. (1, 3, 4)


In the reference list
• The only punctuation used in the author listing is a comma separating authors (if necessary) and a full-stop after the last author.
• Minimal capitalization is used in book and journal article titles.
• No italics or quotation marks are used for either book or journal article titles.
• When there are more than six authors list the first three and write et al. With six or less, list all authors.

Reference List


Note: the first two references are to edited book chapters, the third is to a book and the fourth is to a journal article.