This quick guide summarizes rules set out by the Council of Science Editors (CSE) in *Scientific Style and Format*, sometimes known as the “CSE Style Manual”. In addition to providing formatting rules, it provides guidelines for consistency among references and their in-text citations. CSE provides a choice of three systems for citing references within a text: *Citation-Sequence, Citation-Name, and Name-Year*. This guide uses the *Name-Year system*, where in-text citations provide the author name(s) and year of publication to identify the sources. If you are required to use another format or require further detail, please refer to the CSE Style Manual:


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### CSE Challenge

Write a reference using this style for any of these DOI suggestions, then use this guide to self-correct your answer(s):

- 10.1371/journal.pone.0266938
- 10.1016/j.plantsci.2008.03.007
- 10.1007/978-0-387-45972-1

### General Rules of the CSE Style

1. **Titles for journals:** When citing a journal, use the official abbreviation of its title. (See page 3 for finding standard abbreviations.) Use only one period at the end of the journal abbreviation.  
   e.g.,  
   - *Can J Fish Aquat Sci.*  
   - *Mol Cell Biol.*  
   
   However, if the journal title consists of one word, there is no need to abbreviate it.  
   e.g.,  
   - *Science.*  
   - *Nature.*  
   - *Bioscience.*

2. **Article or book title:** When citing the title of a book or chapter, or an article title, capitalize the first word and any proper nouns or adjectives. Subtitles and all other words should be in lower case letters.  
   e.g.,  
   - *Wetland ecology: principles and conservation.*

3. **Author names:** Each author name is presented with the last name first, followed by a space, and then the author initial(s) as given (but without periods).  
   e.g.,  
   - Fazli Wahid → Wahid F  
   - You Young Kim → Kim YY

Within a reference, list author names in the same order as they are listed on the article or book. This reflects the amount of work each researcher contributed. The author whose name appears first is known as the “first author” or “primary author”. Separate multiple author names with commas.  

- Wahid F, Shehzad A, Khan T, Kim YY
Letters should match exactly how they are listed (including uppercase, lowercase, hyphens, and diacritics).

  e.g., Irene de la Cruz-Pavia → de la Cruz-Pavia
  Mónica De la Fuente → De la Fuente

Sometimes the author is an organization or a government body (instead of personal names). An acceptable abbreviation enclosed within square brackets can precede the full name. This will shorten an in-text citation but still be alphabetized in the list of references as starting with “Canadian” (see reference list on p. 11).

  e.g., Canadian Wildlife Federation. [CWF] Canadian Wildlife Federation.

4. **Taxonomic names**: Write the Latin or scientific names of organisms in capitalized italics (for the *Genus*) and lowercase italics (for the *species*):

  e.g., *Drosophila*  
  *Salmo salar*  
  *Pinus ponderosa*  
  *Rosa rugosa*

When using the names of higher orders and families, capitalize the name but do not italicize:

  e.g., Lepidoptera  
  Cetacea  
  Ranunculaceae  
  Falconidae

5. **Dates**: For books and journal articles list the year only.

  e.g., 2019.

For any medium or activity that is more specifically time sensitive, include the month using the first three letters, followed by the day.

  e.g., 2011 May 2.

Most website content can be changed in real time. This makes it challenging to determine when the content you are viewing was first published or last edited. For this reason, it is important to provide the exact date when you accessed and retrieved this kind of information.

  e.g., [accessed 2016 Aug 24].

For website content without a stated date, look for a copyright date (in the footer near the very bottom). This date can be used with the letter “c” in front of the year. Another option, if the information is obviously up to date, is to use the current year. When no date can be discerned, state that the date is unknown.

  e.g., c2020.  
  2022.  
  [date unknown].

6. **Medium designator**: For non-print items that use special equipment to read them, a medium designator is **required** in the reference. Include it in square brackets after the item title.

  e.g., [DVD].  
  [microfiche].  
  [podcast].  
  [video].

7. **Content designator**: For specialized subject matter, a content designator is **optional** in the reference. These informative labels provide a helpful context and can be included after the item title in square brackets.

  e.g., [dissertation].  
  [editorial].  
  [image].  
  [map].

8. **Geographic names**: For Canadian provinces and American states, use the two-letter postal abbreviation.

  e.g.,  
  Toronto (ON):  
  Cambridge (MA):

For other countries, use the name as it is listed within the publication. Each country name can be spelled out or listed using the 2-letter ISO country code.

  e.g.,  
  Oxford (England):  
  Oxford (UK):  
  Delhi (India):  
  Nairobi (KE):

Two large publishing cities are exceptions and do not require the country or state.

  e.g.,  
  London:  
  New York:

9. **DOI**: Stands for “digital object identifier” and begins with the number “10”. If a DOI exists, it should be included at the end of the citation, using the URL format of “https://doi.org/...”.

  e.g.,  
  If the DOI is 10.1371/journal.pone.0266938, use this URL format:  
  https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0266938.
10. **Volume and issue numbers:** Note that there are no spaces between these numbers.
   
   e.g., 244(2):
   
   All journals have a volume number but **not** all journals have a single-issue number. If issues are combined, include both numbers. If there is no issue number, list the volume only.
   
   e.g., 51(3-4): 607:
   
11. **Page numbers:** These numbers may or may not be obvious. Download the document or article as a PDF if this format is available and record the specific range of page numbers.
   
   e.g., 604-612.

   Include any prefix with the page number(s). In this example, the letter “S” stands for a journal supplement.
   
   e.g., S9-S11.

   If the first page is numbered page 1, the page numbers most likely correspond to the PDF and not the journal or the book. In this case, indicate the total number of pages using the notation [about # p.].
   
   e.g., [about 11 p.]

   This “about” notation indicates the length of the item, recognizing that enlarging or decreasing the font size or page magnification when printing the document may change the total number of pages.

12. **Document/article number:** Some journal articles are assigned a document or article number. This reflects the emerging digital publishing environment when articles are numbered individually. If so, include it using the format of a lowercase “e” in front of the document number, followed by the number of pages.
   
   e.g., volume number(issue number):eDocument. [about # p.]
   
   Sometimes the DOI may include the article number. This occurs in the example below.
   
   e.g., DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0266938 for “e0266938.”


   https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0266938.

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**Verifying how to abbreviate Journal Titles**

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has appointed the ISSN International Centre as the authority for ISO 4 (Information and documentation - Rules for the abbreviation of title words and titles of publications).

**ISSN Tool: List of Title Word Abbreviations (LTWA)**

https://marcinwrochna.github.io/abbrevIso/

1) Put the full name of the journal into the text box: Journal of Neuroscience Methods

2) Copy the "Probably standard ISO-4 abbreviation": J. Neurosci. Methods

For CSE8 titles, do not use Italics and use only one period at the end: J Neurosci Methods.

If you already have a journal abbreviation you need to confirm that it is the standardized version; use one of these non-standardized resources to lookup the full title. Once established, put the full title into the ISSN Tool (above) to determine the standardized abbreviation:


- Searchable database called CASSI: American Chemical Society’s Source Index. https://cassi.cas.org/search.jsp
Book

Author(s) or editor(s). Year. Title. Edition. Place of publication: Publisher. Extent.

The “Extent” refers to the total number of pages or the page numbering. In a reference to an entire book, this element is optional, but in a reference to a part of a book (e.g., a chapter), the pagination of the part is required. In some cases, the extent will include the name of the part of the book, followed by its page numbers.

One author

For 2 or more authors

Chapter (part) of a book

Figure or map (part) of a book

Book with editor(s)

Chapter or article in an edited book

Note: In this example, ME Gavito is the author of the article called ‘Mycorrhizae and crop production in a world of rapid climate change: a warning call’ which can be found on pages 293-310 in a book called ‘Mycorrhizae in crop production’ which was edited by C Hamel and C Plenchette.

Organization or government body as author

Entry in an encyclopedia or dictionary with author(s)

Entry in an encyclopedia or dictionary with editor(s)

No author(s) and no editor(s): Use the title as the initial element
e-Book

Author(s) or editor(s). Year. Title. Edition. Place of publication: Publisher; [date updated; accessed date]. Notes. URL.


Chapter or article (contribution) in an edited e-book


Contribution in an online encyclopedia or dictionary with author(s) and editor(s)


Note: A multi-volume work may have a copyright date that differs from when the entry was last updated, revised or modified. The corresponding in-text citation will use only one date, in this case (Campbell c2020). If you use the copyright date, include a lowercase “c” in front of the year.

Conference Paper

Author(s) of paper. Year. Title of paper. In: Editor(s). Title of book. Number and name of conference; date of conference; place of conference. Place of publication: Publisher. Extent. Notes.


Technical or Government Report

Author(s) or editor(s). Year. Title. Edition. Place of publication: Publisher. Extent. Report No.: Notes. URL.


Thesis or Dissertation

Author. Year. Title [content designator]. Place of publication: Publisher (often a university). Extent. URL.

Newspaper Article

Author(s). Date. Article title. Full Newspaper Title. Section: first page (column).

Print newspaper article

Online article from a newspaper database, such as Factiva or Eureka

Note: In this example, the online version of the article did not provide a column number.

Online article from a newspaper website

Note: If the name of the newspaper is not geographically specific, add the name of the city.

Website

Author(s). Date. Title of website. Place of publication: Publisher; [date updated; accessed date]. URL.


Notes: An author name and a date may not be listed. When it looks like an organization is both author and publisher, place the organization in the publisher position. When no date is stated, look for a copyright date. This can be used with the letter “c” in front of the year. Another option, if the information is obviously up to date, is to use the current year. When no clear date can be discerned, state that the date is unknown.

Blog Post

Author(s). Date. Title of post [medium designator]. Title of blog. [date updated; accessed date]. URL.


Online Video

Title of video [medium designator]. Date posted, length. Title of program [if applicable]. Producer. [accessed date]. URL. consider


Database or Dataset

Author(s). Year. Title [medium designator]. Place of publication: Publisher; [date updated; accessed date]. URL.


Personal Communications

References to personal communications (e.g., letters, personal conversations, email messages), which are not publicly retrievable, should be placed in the body of the paper rather than listed in the references section. Example:

During the 2007 season, observers noted four humpback females in the bay, while the following year, only two females were seen (2009 email message from R Comeau to the author; unreferenced).

Additional References

The CSE manual provides guidelines to assist researchers who are writing scientific papers and citing scholarly sources, such as journal articles and technical reports. If a type of publication or resource is not included in the official CSE guidelines, use only if permitted by your course instructor.

Lab Exercise  (not included in the official CSE Guidelines)

Author (if unknown, replace with title of lab). Year. Title [content designator]. University. Department. Course number. Extent.


Lecture  (not included in the official CSE Guidelines)

Relevant lecture content can sometimes be cited (consult with instructor for their preference). If it comes from your learning environment and is not in the public scholarly domain, it would not be included in your list of references.

  e.g., In her 2020 September 30 lecture on ________, K. Watkins explained that ________.

You could also paraphrase what was said followed by a parenthetical citation:

  e.g., ________ (Watkins 2020 Sep 30 lecture on species diversity; unreferenced).

PowerPoint Slides  (not included in the official CSE Guidelines)

Author(s). Year. Title [medium designator]. University. Department. Course number. Extent (number of slides).

MacDonald Eddington J. 2021. Using the style guides to build your references (or literature cited) page & in-text citations [PowerPoint slides]. Dalhousie University. Writing Centre. 44 slides.
In-text Citations (using the year (N-Y) system)

Within the text of your paper or document, to cite an author’s work (i.e., to paraphrase and acknowledge the source of the information), give the author(s) last names only and year. Some instructors also require page numbers (or other position designators) for information from a specific location in the cited document.

Each citation belongs inside the relevant sentence, within parentheses and before the period, but not necessarily at the end of the sentence. All sources cited in the text of a paper must be included in the list of references and all references must be cited in the text.

Examples of citations within parentheses in the text of a paper

One author  (Beals 2019)

Two authors  (Glasner and Rothman 2004)

More than two authors  (Benoit et al. 2010)

Organization or government as author  (Government of Canada 2021)

No author  (McGraw-Hill dictionary...2002)

Use the first word or first few words of the title, followed by an ellipsis.

No date  (Polybrominated...[date unknown])

Works by same author(s) in different years  (Gemmrich and Garrett 2008, 2011)

Separate years with a comma.

Works by same author(s) in same year  (Smith 2007a, 2007b)

Use lower-case letters starting with “a”.

Works by same first author in same year  (Wackernagel, Lewan et al. 1999; Wackernagel, Onisto et al. 1999)

List enough additional authors to distinguish each article.

Works by multiple authors  (Gemmrich and Garrett 2008, 2011; Benoit et al. 2010; Beals 2019).

Arrange sources first by year of publication and then alphabetically by author, separating authors with a semi-colon

Placement of in-text citations

An in-text citation should appear next to the text to which it refers. Here are several examples of where to locate an in-text citation within a sentence:

A recent review (Beals 2019) examined the nutrient density of this crop...

Studies of large surface waves in the ocean (Gemmrich and Garrett 2011, 2012) have shown that...

Smith (2007b) analyzed data on a global scale, while other case studies conducted in specific locations (Zuur et al. 2007; Keddy 2010) to demonstrate that not all statistical models were appropriate for analyzing ecological data.

Postharvest senescence impacts the overall crop value enough that studying physical, chemical, and genetic methods are worthwhile for extending shelf life (Chen et al. 2008).
Citing Source Material: In-text Citations, References, Quotations, and Paraphrases

You are the person choosing which ideas to include (and which not to include) in your assignments and papers. These choices are key to your analysis and encompass not only your own ideas but also the source materials you have chosen.

You must use your narrative to show the reader why you have chosen this source (i.e., given sufficient context to connect the material to your own analysis) and let your reader know the source of each piece of information in your paper using both an in-text citation and a reference list.

In CSE, as with other styles, you signal the source through the in-text citation, placed adjacent to the idea you are citing, though not necessarily at the beginning or end of the sentence. For example:

Gavito (2007) argued idea X, while Beals (2019) argued idea Y; however, no one has considered idea Z.

At the end of the document, you must provide a full reference list entry for each source, so the reader can locate the documents you used.

Quotations are used infrequently in academic science writing; usually, relevant material from scholarly sources is included using paraphrases. If you do use exact wording, that wording must be enclosed in quotation marks.

Paraphrases capture and express the idea in a source in your own way and words. Paraphrasing is not a rearranging of words or finding synonyms for words in the original passage; doing so will result in an inadequate paraphrase, which is a type of plagiarism.

Note: You do not necessarily need to agree with the source – you should address that in your context and analysis – but the material you have cited must accurately capture the source author’s meaning in addition to being correctly attributed.

To create an acceptable paraphrase

1. Decide to include something from a specific source for a particular reason (e.g., as evidence, an example, a comparison, etc.)
2. Think about and understand the chosen material.
3. Put aside the source material before beginning your paraphrase.
4. Think about (or talk out) how to explain the idea to another person in your own way and with your own words.
5. Write from your understanding.
6. Read over your draft and revise to capture as fully as you can what you understand the writer meant.
7. Go back to check the original source to ensure you have captured the author’s meaning accurately.
8. This process is a loop and can be repeated and revised, as needed.
9. Remember to include the in-text citation (this connects your words to where the concepts came from).

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1 Have you carefully considered including a variety of relevant sources and perspectives from the published literature? If the information you have found is not relevant, do not include it, but ask yourself if you looked for relevant information that describes other points of view and perspectives than your own. Consider if other works have a possible bias and distinguish facts from opinions. Finding alternative views in the scientific literature and including them in your paper demonstrates a higher standard of writing.

The Federal Government of Canada (2021) encourages all members of the research community to address equity issues by considering underrepresented groups (e.g., women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, racialized minorities, and individuals from the LGBTQ2+ community); and to support diversity by considering differences in race, colour, place of origin, religion, immigrant and newcomer status, ethnic origin, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and age.

We encourage all writers to consider your research topic from the perspective of equity, diversity and inclusion.
Sample References

The cited sources must be arranged alphabetically by author name. Within a given source, be sure to maintain the original order of the scientists’ names. CSE8 does not require using a hanging indent to format the list of references, but using this technique makes it easier to locate a reference, so consider it highly recommended.

Below is how the list should look aside from being double-spaced. (Single spacing was used to save space.)

References


