

SD4H Scientific Writing Course
October 31- November 4, 2022

References

Elly Munde

Monday, 31 January 2022



University of California
San Francisco

advancing health worldwide™

References

- **In the Internet age:**
 - No longer need an exhaustive literature review for every paper
 - Less need for bibliography-like references
 - Less need to “prove” you are a world’s expert:
 - But still need to show you understand the issues
 - 20 journal papers are usually sufficient (10 are even better)

References

- Include only published works
- Whenever possible, cite experts and the most important works in the field.
- Place reference numbers according to how the citation is written.
 - If an author is mentioned, place reference number *after* the author's name: "As shown by Bukusi (ref)"
 - If you cite more than one author, write "Bukusi and colleagues" or "Bukusi et al.", depending on the journal style.
 - If you cite only 2 authors, write "Bukusi and Cohen".

References

If ideas are referenced, place reference numbers at the end of the statement of each idea...

Example

Lower mortality rates have been associated with higher volumes of elective procedures in studies of percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty (refs), coronary stenting (refs), and coronary-artery bypass grafting (refs).

... unless all of the references refer to all of the ideas.

Example

Although ancrod does not directly affect any other coagulation factors or hematological components, rapid defibrinogenation does (refs).

References

- If more than one reference is needed for an idea, cite the references in chronological order within the group.
- In a table or figure, number the reference according to where the table or figure is first cited in the text.

References in the Introduction

- Specific facts, assertions, assumptions
- Seminal studies
- Review papers on topic
- 10 to 15 are usually sufficient

References in the Methods

- Previous publications from the same study
 - Especially if more detailed
- New or unique measures, lab tests
- Previously validated questionnaires
- New or complex theoretical models
- Occasionally unusual statistical tests
- 0, 1 or 2 are usually sufficient

References in the Discussion

- Strengthen causal inference:
 - Consistency in studies with similar or different methods
 - Biological plausibility, coherence
 - Alternative explanations
- Contradicting studies
- 10 – 15 are sufficient (some already used in Introduction)

Hierarchy of references

- Recent, peer-reviewed journal articles
- Very recent conference abstracts
- Guidelines (from respected institutions, WHO, UNAIDS, CDC)
- Medical text books
- Websites (from respected institutions, factual)
- Reports (if easily obtained, official)
- Dissertations (hard for others to access)
- Newsletters, fact sheets, non-peer reviewed

Cautious use of references

- In press (add full reference before printing)
- Personal communication (person, date)
- Unpublished data by one of the co-authors
- Unpublished data by someone else
- Journals may have specific instructions

References

Unpublished Data

- Listed in the text within parentheses: eg, “(unpublished data, with permission, E. Bukusi).”
- In these cases, a signed statement that the reference is correct should be obtained from the person giving the reference; this statement must be enclosed with your manuscript when it is submitted.

Avoid use of references

- From popular press
- Future publications:
 - Submitted by not accepted
 - Not yet submitted, in preparation
 - Not yet written
- References you don't have handy (you will be asked to cite fully)
- References you have not read

Additional tips for references

- Don't over do it:
 - Too many for one fact or common knowledge
- Results section should not have references
- Line references up with corresponding facts with the sentence (Otherwise in chronological order)
- Redo search if long lag in publication

Format for references

- Vancouver style, most common for biomedical journals

Kamya MR, Kigonya CN, McFarland W. HIV infection may adversely affect clinical response to chloroquine therapy for uncomplicated malaria in children. *AIDS* 2001; 15:1187-8.

- Psychology journals tend to use different formats (AIDS and Behavior)
- Check the journal's instructions for authors and follow the reference format they ask for.

Format for references

- For now, use placeholder:
 - [Last name of first author, year; next, year]
 - E.g., [Baryarama, 2002; Kaharuza, 2003]
- Number using journal format, Do last!
 - Superscript.^{1-4,12}
 - Bracket [1-4,12]. Parentheses (1-4,12).
 - Psychology journals (Barayama & Kaharuza, 2003).
- Endnote

Today's homework

- **Outline:**

- Major sections, major sub-headings, main points

- **Medline literature search:**

- Find 5 - 10 key references

- **Draft (revise):**

- Title
- Introduction (as 3-4 sentences or 3-4 paragraphs)

