

HOW TO CITE USING ACS STYLE

INTRODUCTION

In this video, we are going to look at how to cite sources properly using American Chemical Society or ACS style, which is one of the styles used in chemistry.

We'll cover where you need to cite and how to use ACS style.

WHERE DO YOU CITE?

First, where do you need to put citations?

When you cite sources, your citation always needs to have two parts. The first part is in your paper, at the end of every sentence that uses ideas from a source. This lets readers know which source you used, and is called an in-text citation.

The second part of your citation is the list of all the sources you've used, which goes at the end of your paper and is called a list of references. This part contains all the information that you would need if you wanted to locate a copy of each source you have used in your paper.

The two parts work together. The in-text citations refer to the full information about the source listed in the list of references at the end.

You need to have both parts to cite correctly and avoid plagiarism.

CITING IN ACS STYLE

Next, we'll look in more detail about how to cite using ACS style.

In ACS style you have 3 choices about how to format your in-text citations. You can number your sources using a number at the end of the sentence where you use a source, either in brackets and italics or in superscript.

Number your sources consecutively throughout your paper. Or, you can put the author's last name and the date of publication in brackets at the end of the sentence. All are correct, so it's up to you to choose.

The option you pick affects how you format your list of references at the end.

If you number your in-text citations, arrange the references in your list the way they appear in your paper. If you have a 3 in your paper after a reference, that source should be the third one listed, and have a 3 in front of it in the reference list to make it easy to locate. If you use the same source more than once in your paper, give it the same number each time.

If you list author last names in your in-text citations, arrange your list of references in alphabetical order by author last name.

You need a few pieces of information about each source to create a proper citation. For example, for a journal article you would need the title, the year it was published, the authors, the journal it was published in, the volume, and the pages.

ACS style consists of rules on how to arrange and format all this information into a citation. Let's break down a citation for a journal article in ACS style in detail so we can see what's involved in formatting properly.

First, list all the authors, last name first, followed by their initials with a period after each initial. Separate each of the authors with a semicolon. After the authors put the title of the article, with each word in capital letter and a period at the end of the title. After the title, list the name of the journal that the article was published in. It should be in italics, with each word capitalized. If the journal is online, put Online in square brackets after the title, and this time don't use a period.

In ACS style, journal titles should be listed by their abbreviation. If you don't know the proper abbreviation, you can look it up in CASSI, an online abbreviation search tool from the American Chemical Society.

Next, list the year of publication in bold, followed by a comma. Then, list the journal volume in italics, followed by a comma. Finally, list the pages of the article, followed by a period.

This is what a journal article citation in ACS style should look like in your reference list. As you can see, small details like punctuation and italics make a difference, so pay attention to them.

You'll need to refer to a guide to ACS style that lists all the citation rules you need to follow for different types of sources, and to CASSI for journal title abbreviations. You'll find links to both on this page.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, please ask us at library.wlu.ca/help/askus.