
Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) style sheet

We recommend that you use this style sheet in conjunction your School's referencing guide. For general help with referencing see the [Academic Skills Kit](#).

You'll find further information on using the RSC style on the [referencing guide from the Royal Society of Chemistry](#).

RSC style rules

Citations

RSC is a numeric style that uses superscript numbers for in-text citations. Each source has its own number based on the order of appearance in the text and this number is used whenever this source is cited. The superscript numbers should usually be placed at the end of the sentence after the punctuation but can be after the author's name or relevant term or compound in the sentence. For example:

Several recent studies^{7,13,20-22} show a direct connection with...

or

As Sunni and Latif conclude, "Dark and Milk chocolate appear to be an effective way to reduce perceived stress in females".¹⁴

The author(s) can be mentioned at their first citation in the text. For papers with three or more authors you should use the first name followed by *et al.*

Reference list

Each in-text number is matched to a full, numbered reference in a reference list at the end of your work. The reference list is arranged in numerical order.

All author names need to be referenced – **do not use et al.**

RSC referencing styles use an established list of abbreviated journal titles to make their references more concise. Refer to the [Chemical Abstracts Service Source Index \(CASSI\)](#) when referencing journal articles.

If an abbreviation is not listed for a particular journal, reference the journal title in full.

Reference examples

A selection of examples to get you started:

Print book

1. Initial. Surname, *Title*, Publisher, Place of Publication, year of publication.

For example:

1. J. Grix and G. Watkins, *Information Skills: Finding and Using the Right Resources*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2010.

E-book

2. Initial. Surname, *Title*, Publisher, Place of Publication, year of publication.

For example:

2. R. Salecl, *A Passion for Ignorance: What We Choose Not to Know and Why*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2020.

An edited book chapter

3. Initial. Surname, in *Title*, ed. Editor Name(s), Publisher, Place of Publication, year of publication, chapter, pages.

For example:

3. C. Isenhour, in *Sustainability: Key Issues*, ed. H. Kopni and E. Shoreman-Ouimet, Routledge, Abingdon, 2015, ch.6, pp. 133-154.

Journal article

4. Initial. Surname, *Journal Title* (abbreviated using [CASSI list guidelines](#)), year, **volume in bold**, page number(s).

For example:

4. A. Dal Monte, S. De Betta, M. Raciti Castelli, and E. Benini, *Compos. Struct.*, 2017, **159**, 144–156.

Where page numbers are unknown, replace with a DOI: (Digital Object Identifier), e.g. DOI: 10.1039/C2CC17634C.

Online newspaper article

5. Initial. Surname, *Title of newspaper*, year of publication. URL, (accessed Month Year).

For example:

5. M. Cuff, *iNews*, 2021. <https://inews.co.uk/news/environment/moth-numbers-uk-fall-by-one-third-sparking-fears-for-long-term-survival-wildlife-895041>, (accessed April 2021).

Online report

6. Author, *Title*, Department/Division Report number (if given), Publisher, Place of publication, Year. URL, (accessed Month Year).

For example:

6. Ofcom, *Understanding Online False Information in the UK: Economist Discussion Paper Series*, Issue number 2, Ofcom, London, 2021.
https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/211986/understanding-online-false-information-uk.pdf (accessed March 2024).

Webpage

7. *Title of resource*, URL, (accessed Month year).

For example:

7. *How to keep your eyes healthy and protect your vision*,
<https://www.bupa.co.uk/newsroom/ourviews/healthy-eyes>, (accessed April 2025).

Online PhD thesis

8. Initial. Surname, PhD thesis, University name, Year.

For example:

8. F.J.G. Robinson, PhD thesis, Newcastle University, 1972, <http://hdl.handle.net/10443/511> (accessed April 2025)

Patent

9. Patentee(s), Patent issuer (abbreviated), Patent number, Year.

For example:

9. I. Chesterton, US Pat., US20150251986, 2015.

Citing ChatGPT and other generative AI

Until official guidance is released, reference generative AI as personal communication for RSC:

Reference list example:

OpenAI, unpublished work.