

# ACS Format: Citing References in Text



*Writing Center*

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This Handout is based on the *ACS Style Guide: Effective Communication of Scientific Information*, Third Edition, 2006.

Writers incorporate researched information into papers in three ways: **paraphrase**, **summary**, and **quotation**. All three uses require citation to do the following:

- Identify the sources used in the paper
- Direct the reader to the alphabetical list of References
- Clearly distinguish the writer's own ideas from information taken from sources.

## Conventions:

- The most common way to cite references in ACS is to use superscript numbers after the punctuation of the sentence. Start with the number 1 and go up consecutively as more sources are added. If a source is repeated, use the original reference number. These superscript numbers will correspond to numbers in the References List. (See below for example).

In the case where the author's name does not appear in the sentence, write the information and follow the sentence with the superscript.

Example:

A dual property is exhibited by ADP.<sup>1</sup>

- If the author's name is integrated into the sentence, place the superscript number immediately following the name. When a reference has two authors, list both names joined by the word "and" followed by the superscript. For more than two authors, list the first author's name followed by "et al." and then the superscript.

Example:

Herman and Lee<sup>2</sup> have suggested that...

or

The data of Dahlmann et al.<sup>3</sup> support the argument that...

- For quotations, cite references in text by using the superscript after the punctuation (with or without the author's name as part of the sentence).

Example:

Gates concludes, "The organic chemistry of DNA damage is fundamentally important to diverse fields including medicinal chemistry, toxicology, and biotechnology."<sup>4</sup>

or

"The organic chemistry of DNA damage is fundamentally important to diverse fields including medicinal chemistry, toxicology, and biotechnology."<sup>4</sup>

- For a quotation of more than 50 words:
  - Type as a free-standing block of text indented on both sides
  - Do **not** use quotation marks.

Example:

A major adduct formed from phloretin and ACR was purified, and its structure was characterized by LC-MS and NMR spectroscopy as diACR-conjugated phloretin. The chemical nature of interactions between ACR and polyphenols was proposed as the Michael addition reaction of phloretin to the C=C double bond of ACR, followed by the formation of hemiacetal between the hydroxyl group in the A ring of phloretin and the C=O carbonyl group in ACR, thus yielding more stable products.<sup>5</sup>

- ACS also offers two less common ways to cite references (found on p. 287 of the ACS Style Guide):
  - Cite the author's name and year of publication in parentheses inside the punctuation with a comma separating the name(s) and year.
  - Use italic numbers in parenthesis on the same line as the text, but inside the punctuation.