Formatting items in your Bibliography and Footnotes

The following contains guidance as to the Department of Historical Studies’ preferred method for formatting footnotes and bibliographic items in undergraduate assignments – such as essays and projects.

A: Books

In the bibliography books should be cited by their full title (including subtitle, if there is one, after a colon) together with place of publication and date. Thus:


Note the use of italics (and no inverted commas) to render the title, and the absence of a comma between the title and the bracket. All but the most common words begin with a capital letter (for more on this, see below). Note too the relative position of the surname and initials; this order is reversed in footnote references.

Given names should be rendered as initials, not in full.

In the footnotes, the first reference to a book should give its full title, place of publication and date, just as it appears in the Bibliography, plus page extent/s. Note, however, that the initials now come before the name. Thus e.g.:


How does one establish what the title of a book actually is? It sometimes happens that there are slightly different versions of the title in various parts of the book. Disregard the dust-jacket (if there is one, of course) and go by the internal title page. This is not the very first page, which usually has just the title on it, but the page which is overleaf. (It will usually have the author’s name and the name of the press on it as well.) Follow what this title page says; the only addition which need be made routinely is supplying a colon to separate the title and the subtitle. Look out for minor variations. For example, there is sometimes a comma before the dates at the end of a title, sometimes not.

After the first reference the title should be abbreviated in later footnotes.

When abbreviating you should:

1. Drop the definite or indefinite article if this is the first word of the title.
2. Retain all the other words up to and including the first noun.

Thus: Housley, *Italian Crusades*, 34-42.

It is not uncommon that an author has produced several works with similar titles and you are using more than one of them. If this is the case, expand the abbreviated reference until you reach the first noun which makes the title you mean unambiguous.
Use short titles rather than using op. cit. (‘the work mentioned’). Op. cit. can be very confusing because it obliges the reader to trawl back through the earlier notes in order to establish what exactly is being referred to.

Similarly, avoid using ibid. (‘the same work’) when you find yourself having to refer to the same title in consecutive notes. Instead, simply repeat shortened titles. If you do use it, do so only when one title is mentioned in both notes, so that there is no uncertainty about what the ‘same work’ refers to. And be aware that late cutting and pasting, where the text includes a footnote, can result in your ibid referring to the wrong source.

Avoid id./ead. (‘the same male/female author’). Repeat the name.

If a book is part of a series, it is generally speaking not necessary to give series titles if they are not numbered: e.g. Oxford Historical Monographs or Oxford Medieval Texts. If the series is numbered, it can be an awkward decision where to include it without making the whole reference rather cumbersome. The best technique is to tuck the series, not italicised, inside the brackets and separated from the place and date by means of a semicolon. Thus:


When referring to a multi-volume single work, it is a good idea to give the volume number as a lower-case roman numeral. This prevents any confusion with page references. Thus:


When abbreviating book titles, do not use acronym-type abbreviations Thus, for example, *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians* could not be SCC.

To discover the place of publication of a book, use the internal title page and the page which gives details of, *inter alia*, the International Standard Book Number (ISBN). The place of publication is not necessarily the same as the place where the book was set and/or printed. If two or more places of publication are given, confine your reference to the first place mentioned: this applies even if one of the other places is in the UK. So, University of Chicago Press = Chicago and London = for our purposes Chicago.

Volumes with multiple authors

In footnotes, render multi-authored works as:


In the bibliography, the name of just the first author is inverted. This:

Edited volumes


Again, just the first name of multiple authors is inverted in the bibliography:


B: Articles

The same basic rules apply regarding the bibliography: the entry in the bibliography will read:


In the case of articles, it is the title of the journal which must be italicised. Thus:


Note carefully the position of the commas and the use of single inverted commas for the article’s title. There is no comma before the bracket.

Double inverted commas are reserved for quotation marks within the title: e.g.:


Full page extents of an article or paper are supplied in the bibliography. In the footnotes, simply cite the specific page(s) that relate to your intended reference.

When the title of a journal starts with the definite article, this is not reproduced. So *English Historical Review*, not *The English Historical Review*.

For articles in edited collections, use the form:


Abbreviated as Bolton, ‘Cistercians’.

If there are two or more editors use (eds.), as above.

Some journals list the titles of their articles with no upper-case letters other than the beginning of the first word and, of course, proper nouns. Here you should standardise by having capital letters throughout.
C. Exhibition catalogues

When citing catalogues of art exhibitions in your bibliography:


In footnotes:

L. Parris (ed.), *The Pre-Raphaelites*, exhibition catalogue, London: Tate Gallery, 1984

Note two special difficulties with exhibition catalogues:

(1) It may be difficult to find the author or editor's name(s), particularly in older catalogues, where the authors may be anonymous. If no author is listed on the title page, use the name of the author of the Introduction (or first essay, if there is no introduction). If you cannot find an author's name at all, cite the catalogue by its title (and alphabetise it in the bibliography by the first word of the title); for example:

> Great Victorian Pictures: Their Paths to Fame, exhibition catalogue, London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1955

(2) Title pages of catalogues often include both the name of the exhibiting museum or organisation (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art) and the name of the publisher (New York: Harry N. Abrams). It is most important to cite the exhibiting museum or organisation; if you wish, you may include both. For example:


D. Referring to works of art

a) When citing the title of a painting or sculpture for the first time in the text, give full details of date and location, e.g.:

Examples of this technique can be identified in Botticelli's *Mystic Nativity* (1500, London, National Gallery) and in the *Apollo and Daphne* by Gianlorenzo Bernini (1622-1625 Rome, Villa Borghese) ...

Subsequent references to the same work normally require only the title, but sometimes when an artist has produced several works of the same subject (such as Cézanne's paintings of Mont Sainte-Victoire) it is necessary to specify the particular one referred to by identifying it by date and/or location to avoid confusion.

b) Titles of works of art should always be italicised. (If coursework is handwritten, underlining may be used in place of italics.)

c) References to architectural works should be in normal script, not underlined or italicised, but should have dates and locations, e.g.:

the church of S.Giorgio Maggiore by Andrea Palladio (begun 1566; Venice) ...
E: Websites

World Wide Web pages are cited thus (with the date on which you found the material you have used):


A comprehensive guide to such conventions can be found at:

Melvin E. Page, ‘A brief citation guide for internet sources in history and the humanities’ prepared for H-AFRICA Humanities On-Line, and History Department, East Tennessee State University.


F: Manuscripts and Archival Records

This is likely to be a consideration at the dissertation stage. With manuscripts and archival materials, conventions vary because of the wide variety of documentation preserved in many different places. You should consult your tutor about the most suitable conventions for the particular material you are studying.

The general rule is that manuscript material is cited by city and location, with no underlining. Thus:

London, British Library, Add. MS 8873.

The standard abbreviation for manuscript is MS, for manuscripts MSS.

Manuscripts are cited by folio (fo) number + r (for recto, the front - equivalent to an odd-numbered page in a book) or v (for verso, the back - equivalent to an even-numbered page). Thus:

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 44, fo. 76r.

The plural of fo. is fos.

Where you are referring to a particular document within a file, give sufficient information to allow your reader easily to locate the archive, the file, and the document in question. Thus:


Further references to items in this archive would be rendered thus:


G. Miscellaneous sources

1. The format to use when citing a newspaper article is thus:


2. The format to use when citing a UK government document is thus:
3. Citing a source quoted in another secondary source works thus:


4. Citing material obtained from a CD-ROM should be rendered thus:


**H: Capitalisation of titles**

It is impossible to provide unambiguous rules about the use of capitals in titles. The general rule is that important words take a capital. You will not go far wrong if you use a capital for the following: nouns, adjectives, adverbs and most verbs.

The following do not take a capital: conjunctions, prepositions, verbs expressing a state (esp. ‘to be’), modal verbs (e.g. ‘might’, ‘should’, ‘could’), pronouns, and the (in)definite article. The first letter of the first word of a title is always a capital.

**I: Abbreviations**

In longer pieces (projects and dissertations), works referred to frequently may conveniently be cited by an abbreviation, provided a List of Abbreviations is included at the beginning of the dissertation. Thus:

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AHR  American Historical Review
EHR  English Historical Review
JEH  Journal of Ecclesiastical History
AH   Art History
JAH  Journal of Art History
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You will become familiar with the journals and series that crop up regularly in your chosen subject area: look at the List of Abbreviations in the books you use.

Be fairly sparing with abbreviations. A good rule of thumb is that a journal may be abbreviated if you have references to three or more different articles appearing in it.

One- or two-word journal titles should not be abbreviated. So, *Medieval Studies* does not become *MS*, nor *Speculum S*.

If they are not in your original List of Abbreviations, do not abbreviate journal titles, on the second and subsequent appearances in the notes. So, if you do not choose to abbreviate *English Historical Review* as *EHR* from the start, do not shorten to e.g. *Eng. Hist. Rev.* in the notes.
J: Arrangement of the Bibliography

The Bibliography should be split into three parts:

Manuscripts, Archival Material (where used) and works of Art

Primary Sources

Secondary Works

The listing of secondary works is quite straightforward. Go alphabetically by author. When listing several works by one author, you should list them by date, starting with the first to be published.

Primary sources are also listed alphabetically. Medieval authors are listed by their first names, not their second names, toponyms or sobriquets. Thus:

Orderic Vitalis, not Vitalis, Orderic

John of Würzburg, not Würzburg, John of

Ralph Glaber, not Glaber, Ralph

If the name of the author is part of the title of the work, you should detach it and adjust the title accordingly. For example, above reference is made to Giles Constable’s edition of Peter the Venerable’s letters. The edition is actually entitled The Letters of Peter the Venerable, but it is given here as Peter the Venerable, The Letters...

If a work is anonymous, or if one is dealing with a collection of sources where there is no imputed authorship (e.g. a collection of documents), it is listed alphabetically by the title. Ignore definite/indefinite articles. Thus Les documents de l’abbaye de Cluny would be alphabetised at the letter D.

If a source appears within a larger collection, it is treated as analogous to an article in a collection. That is to say, it is cited inside single inverted commas. So:


K: Miscellaneous Points

Different works are separated in notes by a semicolon. Thus:

[The first two works have already been cited, so they are abbreviated. Davis is appearing for the first time]

Romance-language (French, Spanish, Italian) titles seldom use capitals other than for the first word and proper nouns. If capitals are not used, they should not be supplied.

For spelling conventions (e.g. ise or ize, erred or ered) as well as for much else, you should consult The Oxford Writers’ Dictionary, comp. R. E. Allen, which is widely available in paperback (Oxford Reference). This is an invaluable book.

See also Fowler’s *Modern English Usage*, ed. R. W. Burfield, another paperback in the Oxford Reference series. *The Oxford Style Guide* (formerly *Hart's Rules for Compositors and Readers at the University Press*) is very useful too, but be warned that it uses OUP conventions which sometimes depart from what is recommended here.

Be alert to the fact that some American university names are not the place of publication. Thus Yale = New Haven; Harvard = Cambridge, Mass.; Cornell = Ithaca, NY. But Princeton = Princeton.

Do not rely solely on the spellcheck facility of your software. It can mangle proper nouns. It cannot distinguish homonyms (e.g. hoarse/horse). And often it uses American spellings. Beware also the autocorrect function: in the first draft of these guidelines EHR was routinely corrected to HER.

The superscript catch-numbers of notes in the main text appear after the punctuation. Thus: \(^1\) not \(^3\).

Translations of foreign terms should be given in the text in brackets after their first appearance.