Reference Guide: IEEE Style

For more detailed guidelines and other resources, visit the IEEE Author Tools web site at www.ieee.org/web/publications/authors/.

TEXT CITATIONS

- Cite references in numerical order beginning with the main text, not the preliminary pages.
- Once you number the reference, use the same number in all subsequent citations.
- Each reference number should be enclosed by square brackets on the baseline of the text, with a space before the bracket, and before the punctuation: “... our earlier alloy laser work [12].”
- It is not necessary to mention the author(s) of the source unless it is relevant to your text. Similarly, it is almost never useful to give the dates of references when you cite them in the text. If you do include author names in text, list all authors if there are one or two, but use “et al.” for more than two. (Note that “et al.” is not italicized.) Examples:
  One author: “Smith [1] reports …”
  Two authors: “Smith and Jones [12] report …”
  Three or more authors: “Smith et al. [23] report …”
- It is not necessary to say “in reference [27] …”; the phrase “in [27] …” is sufficient.
- To cite more than one source at a time:
  Preferred
  [1], [3], [5]
  [1]-[5]
  Acceptable
  [1, 5, 7]
  [1-5]

You may have to adjust your software to get the preferred form.

THE REFERENCE LIST (at end of chapter or thesis)

- List references in the order they were cited (numerical order, starting with [1]), not alphabetical order.
- Set bracketed numbers on the baseline and flush left, forming their own column that hangs out beyond the body of the references. Allow space such that reference bodies remain aligned when bracketed numbers increase to double and (if necessary) triple digits. This is called a hanging indent (see examples later in this guide).
- List only one reference per bracketed number.
- The names of all authors should be given in the reference list unless there are more than six, in which case you may use “et al.” (no comma before “et”) after the name of the first author.
- Footnotes and other words and phrases not part of the reference format should not be included in the reference list. Phrases such as “for example” should only be given in the text.


Style for Titles

- Set the titles of books (including handbooks and manuals), periodicals, conference proceedings, and standards in italics with headline-style capitalization (capitalize the first and last words, and all important words in between; lowercase articles, prepositions, and conjunctions—though there are exceptions).
- Set the titles of articles, book chapters, reports, theses and dissertations, conference papers and presentations, and patents in quotation marks with sentence-style capitalization (capitalize first word of title and subtitle, as well as proper names and most initialisms).

Punctuation

Place punctuation inside quotation marks. An example with a question mark is provided below under “Periodicals.”

Abbreviations

- Either spell out the entire name of each periodical you reference, or use accepted abbreviations. Either way, be consistent.

Spacing

Please note the correct spacing and punctuation for author names:

D. L. Tao, C. Siva Ram Murthy, and S. Al Kuran
but
T.-C. Hsu and L. A. Stein-Rosenberg

BOOKS


—example of a chapter


—example of an edition

PERIODICALS

For article submissions that have not yet been accepted for publication, use the phrase “submitted for publication” in place of the date. If they have been accepted, but not yet published, use “to be published” in place of the date. Note that the periodical number is optional when the month of publication is given.


ARTICLES FROM PUBLISHED CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS
The word “in” before the conference title is not italicized.


PAPERS PRESENTED AT CONFERENCES, BUT UNPUBLISHED

REPORTS (technical reports, internal reports, memoranda)
Provide report number and month if available.


THESES and DISSERTATIONS


MANUALS

COURSE MATERIALS

—example of a handout (treat title as article, give specific date)


—example of a packet/book (treat title as book)

UNPUBLISHED SOURCES


CATALOGS
[18] Catalog No. MWM-1, Microwave Components, M. W. Microwave Corp., Brooklyn, NY.

PATENTS

STANDARDS

ONLINE SOURCES

—example of a journal article


—example of a conference presentation


—example of a report