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Citing references

This table provides guidance on inserting references in the text in Cochrane Reviews. The study and reference IDs must be linked to the reference list.

Guidance	Correct	Incorrect
Separate multiple citations with a semicolon.	(Smith 2000; Robb 2001)	(Smith 2000, Robb 2001)
List in alphabetical or chronological order (from earliest to latest), and be consistent within a single document.	Alphabetical: (Bakri 1988a; Bakri 1988b; Davis 2003; Slinn 2001)	Alphabetical: (Bakri 1988a; Bakri 1988b; Slinn 2001; Davis 2003)
	Chronological: (Bakri 1988a; Bakri 1988b; Slinn 2001; Davis 2003)	Chronological: (Bakri 1988a; Bakri 1988b; Davis 2003; Slinn 2001)
No 'and' before the final citation	(Davis 2001; Omari 1988; Preston 1988; Slinn 2001)	(Davis 2001; Omari 1988; Preston 1988; and Slinn 2001)
Citations can be used as part of a sentence or placed in round brackets within the closest punctuation. Note: see below for single sentences containing multiple pieces of information	The study was successful (Robeson 1990).	The study was successful [Robeson 1990].
	The study was successful (Griffin 1990); it confirmed previous findings (Howes 1995).	The study (Griffin 1990) was successful; it confirmed previous findings (Howes 1995).
	Williams 1991 reports the full details.	(Williams 1991) reports the full details.
Sentences that include multiple pieces of information supported by a number of citations should be structured so that it is clear to which piece of information each citation refers.	Smith 1990 included women only, while Jones 1999 included men only. or: One trial included women only (Smith 1990), while another included men only (Jones 1999).	One trial (Smith 1990) included women only, while another (Jones 1999) included men only.
Rephrase to avoid using 'et al.' in the text.	Boddy and colleagues wrote that... The Boddy study mentions...	Boddy et al. wrote that...