WHERE TO FIND BIBLIOGRAPHIC DETAILS

To cite correctly, you must have all the details. Sometimes it is not clear where to find them, or they have been mislaid. It may be tempting to invent details or use the material without acknowledging the source, but you should never do this – it is plagiarism.

I’ve got the book/journal article/website: now where do I find the details?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Details to Find</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A book</td>
<td>The back of the title page should tell you name/s of authors or editors, title, publisher, date and place of publication. (At the back of the text in some books, e.g. reports.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A journal article</td>
<td>Look at the top or bottom of the page. If the name of the journal is abbreviated, check the list of periodical abbreviations in the Library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A website</td>
<td>The title should be in the tab or bar at the top of the webpage. Try to find an ‘About’ page if you can’t find author or date: it may be linked at the foot of the webpage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I’ve got a great bit of information: but I don’t know where it came from!

Use what you have to search for the missing details...

- If you have a lengthy phrase or sentence, try searching for the quote in Google. Put it in quotation marks (" ”) to get the most relevant search results. If you know it’s a book, try Google Books: or for a journal article, Google Scholar.
- If you know the title of a book but no more, check the Library catalogue. Even if it’s out on loan, you will be able to check the details (though not page numbers). If you didn’t borrow it from the Library at Reading, you could try a global bibliographic database like WorldCat.
- If you borrowed the book from the Library, you may be able to jog your memory by looking at your borrowing record on My Account (currently in Unicorn only).
- If you know the title of a journal article, try one of the databases available through the Library webpages. Try the databases you usually use first, then a general one covering all subjects or look for a subject specific one.
- If you’re not sure of the title, check your reading list to see if it jogs your memory. Or trace your reading back – it may be something cited by another author.
- If it’s a total mystery, you could try asking a librarian to help. They can’t work miracles, but they’ll do their best. The Liaison Librarian for your subject will be the best person to try as they will be more familiar with the texts commonly used in your field. Their contact details are on the Library website.

Remember: if you don’t have the details, you can’t cite it correctly – and if you can’t cite it correctly, you can’t use it!