

## How to be more Efficient with Bibliographic Citations and References

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For an article to be published, one of the requirements is that the citations and the corresponding references be properly formatted. It is not uncommon for editors to hear complaints from authors about the burden posed by all the requirements imposed by scientific journals.

At the Brazilian Journal of Videoendoscopic Surgery we favor the Vancouver style of referencing. In this style citations in the text are identified with superscript Arabic numerals and the references at the end of the article are numbered consecutively in the same order as they appear in the text. When there are up to six authors, all of them should be named in the references. If there are more than six authors, name the first six followed by "et al.". The names should be separated by commas; periods are not used to separate the authors' initials. Note that the year of publication comes after the name of the journal and not at the end. For example: "Parkin DM, Clayton D, Black RJ, Masuyer E, Friedl HP, Ivanov E, et al. Childhood leukaemia in Europe after Chernobyl: 5 years follow-up. *Br J Cancer* 1996; 73:1006-12."

The problem is that in addition to these norms, there are many other rules to be followed, not always known by the authors. Moreover, during the drafting of the article, the author inserts citations and the corresponding references. It's not unusual as an article

is being finalized for the author to shuffle the order of paragraphs, thus changing the sequence of some of the citations, which can generate a lot of work.

To overcome these challenges/difficulties, software programs were created that automate the numbering and formatting of citations and references. All the user has to do is choose the desired style and program does the rest. Most of these programs integrate with Microsoft Word®, further facilitating the work. The best known commercial software programs are EndNote® and Reference Manager®.

There is, however, an excellent free program: the Mendeley Desktop®. This "freeware" also offers an interesting feature; it organizes the PDF files of your bibliographic references. Just drag this type of file into a folder and the program extracts the information to be used later in the references. It too integrates with MS Word®, and there is a free application for the iPhone® and iPad®. The program is easy to use. Windows, Mac OS, and Linux versions can be downloaded at: <http://www.mendeley.com/download-mendeley-desktop>. It's worth checking out!

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