

How to format references with 'et al.'

The expression 'et al.' is Latin and short for 'et alia' (meaning 'and others'). It is used to list additional authors in a citation when a work was written by (usually) three or more authors.

Examples:

1. Names used within the sentence:

A study by Khan et al. (2015) found that ...

2. Names given in brackets:

A key study (Khan et al., 2015) found that ...

Points to check:

Check your institution and faculty referencing guidelines for the following points, as rules vary:

- the specific requirements on the number of authors to be represented by 'et al.';
- whether you need to show the full list of all authors' names the first time you cite a work with several authors, then use 'et al.' for later citations;
- whether you need to list all of the authors' names in your reference list and / or bibliography at the end of your assignment.

Main points to remember:

- 'al.' is abbreviation, so it should always be followed by a dot.
- Some institutions may require you to put any Latin terms in italics: *et al.*
- If you need any other punctuation, e.g. a comma, then it follows the dot.
- If you later refer to the authors, remember you will need to use the plural (= more than one), e.g. 'The authors found that ...'.