

# RMIT Open Press Style Guide



# **RMIT OPEN PRESS STYLE GUIDE**

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RMIT Open Press  
Melbourne, Australia



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, it is respectful to formally womin djeka (welcome) people to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander country or land. At RMIT we do this with the following acknowledgement:



***'Luwaytini' by Mark  
Cleaver, Palawa.***

“We would like to  
acknowledge Wurundjeri  
people of the Kulin  
Nations as the Traditional  
Owners of the land on  
which the University  
stands. We respectfully  
recognise Elders past and  
present.”

At RMIT, we recognise and respect the unique culture and contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bring to our communities. We are also proud to provide study, cultural, and personal support to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their learning journey. We womin

## XII | ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

djeka you to further explore and experience more about Australian Indigenous culture by visiting our Ngarara Willim Centres (Indigenous education centres) and interacting with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students.

# ACCESSIBILITY

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## Accessibility statement

RMIT University supports the creation of free, open, and accessible educational resources. We are actively committed to increasing the accessibility and usability of the textbooks and support resources we produce.

## Accessibility features of the web version of this resource

The web version of this resource has been designed with accessibility in mind and incorporates the following features:

- Designed to consider the needs of people who use screen reading technology.
  - All content can be navigated using a keyboard.
  - Links, headings, and tables are formatted to work with screen readers.
  - Images have alt tags.
- Information is not conveyed by colour alone.

## Other file formats available

In addition to the web version, this book is available in a number of file formats, including:

- **Print PDF** – the format you should select if you plan to make a printed, physical copy of your book. This file meets the requirements of printers and print-on-demand services.
- **Digital PDF** – useful if you want to distribute your book as a digital file, but do not intend to print the file. Digital PDFs are optimised for accessibility, contain hyperlinks for easier navigation, and can be used online.
- **EPUB** – these files can be submitted to any popular ebook distributor and opened by most modern ebook readers. This is the file you'd use to submit your ebook to Kobo, Nook, iBooks, Amazon, and others.
- **Various editable files** – look for the 'Download this book' drop-down menu on the landing page to select the file type you want.

## Accessibility improvements

While we strive to ensure that this resource is as accessible and usable as possible, we might not always get it right. We are always looking for ways to make our resources more accessible.

If you have problems accessing this resource, please email us to let us know so we can fix the issue: [open.library@rmit.edu.au](mailto:open.library@rmit.edu.au).

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# VERSIONING HISTORY

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This page provides a record of edits and changes made to this text from pre-publication to its latest iteration. Whenever edits or updates are made to the text, we provide a record and description of those changes here.

If you have a correction or recommendation you would like to suggest, please contact the RMIT Open Publishing Team within the Library at: [open.library@rmit.edu.au](mailto:open.library@rmit.edu.au)

Version	Date	Type	Description
V1	19/8/2022	Published	



# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

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## Disclaimer

RMIT University Library staff have compiled this guide in good faith, exercising all due care and attention.

No representation is made about the accuracy, completeness or suitability of the information in this publication for any particular purpose. The publisher assumes no responsibility for any damage or injury to persons or property arising out of the use of any materials, instructions, methods or ideas contained in the guide. Readers should seek appropriate advice when applying the information to their specific needs.

## Attributions

This guide includes material adapted from third-party works under Creative Commons licences. In the case of multiple downstream adaptations, links to original works are included within the attribution statement where possible.

## Suggested citation

Thomas, C., Hurley, J., & Rata, R. (2022). *RMIT Open Press style guide*. RMIT Open Press. <https://rmit.pressbooks.pub/rmitopenpressstyleguide/>

## Suggested attribution

“RMIT Open Press Style Guide” by RMIT University Library is licensed under CC BY-NC 4.0

## Reviewers

Iza Bartosiewicz, Jack Dunstan, Adam Ferris, Matthew Millis, Stuart Moffat

## Copyright

This guide is provided under an Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International licence except where otherwise noted. The RMIT University Logo and cover design are ‘all rights reserved’.

We have made all reasonable efforts to:

- clearly label material where the copyright is owned by a third

party

- ensure that the copyright owner has consented to this material being presented in this guide.

### **External links**

This guide may include links to third-party websites that contain copyright protected material. Your access to the sites will be covered by terms between you and the other operator/owner of the site. We are not responsible for any of the content, including links found on the site. Read and abide by the websites' stated terms of use.

## **Published by**

RMIT University Library via RMIT Open Press.

## **Credits**

This open guide was adapted and created by the staff of the RMIT University Library. The authors gratefully acknowledge the content contributions of past RMIT staff. This is an original work.

## **Cover design**

By Dr. Lisa Cianci

Artwork ‘Luwaytini’ by Mark Cleaver, Palawa (underlayed)

Photo by Amador Loureiro on Unsplash

# PART I

# GETTING STARTED

## Getting started

Start here to understand how to go about planning your resource to meet the requirements of the RMIT Open Press Style Guide. This part covers:

- how to use this guide
- using the RMIT Open Press Style Sheet.



1.

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

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The RMIT Open Publishing Style Guide sets out the preferred style for your open publication manuscript. Use it in conjunction with the Australian Style Guide<sup>1</sup> (free registration required).

Specifically, the RMIT Open Publishing Style Guide sets out:

- where you should do things differently than described in the Australian Style Guide
- aspects which are not covered in the Australian Style Guide.

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1. Plain English Foundation. (2020). *The Australian style guide*.  
<https://www.australianstyleguide.com>

**Note:** if you wish to use another style guide as the basis for your open publication, please discuss this the RMIT Open Publishing Team and we will work with you.



## 2.

# THE STYLE SHEET

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As you are writing and editing, you will make a number of style decisions, such as:

- style manual(s) to base your work on, and any variations
- specialist dictionaries or vocabulary
- spelling variations
- referencing style, and any variations
- inclusive language conventions
- formatting choices (font, colours).

Use the RMIT Open Publishing Style Sheet [Microsoft Word] to record all decisions to ensure consistency amongst collaborators.

**Note:** all style resources you refer to must be available to the RMIT Open Publishing Team, either as Library-subscribed resources or free online. Alternatively, if you purchase an external

resource, please ensure that the RMIT Open Publishing Team and any external reviewers have access to it.

# PART II

# WRITING

## Writing

This part will help you:

- write your text clearly
- use language that is inclusive
- reflect the diversity of the RMIT University and broader communities
- create a resource that is accessible to all readers.



3.

# GRAMMAR, FORMATTING AND SPELLING

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## Grammar and formatting

Refer to the Australian Style Guide,<sup>1</sup> paying particular attention to:

- punctuation
- numbers and measurements
- dates and time
- shortened forms (abbreviations, contractions, initialisations and acronyms)
- person and organisation names
- lists.

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1. Plain English Foundation. (2020). *The Australian style guide*.  
<https://www.australianstyleguide.com>

## Spelling

Australian English spelling is preferred, but document other spelling variation choices in your Style Sheet.

## Specialist vocabulary

If your subject matter uses specialist vocabulary, provide this with your submission. Use your Style Sheet to:

- document specialist vocabulary
- provide a separate vocabulary list
- nominate a specialist dictionary, preferably with an online location.

Use the Pressbooks glossary tool to create embedded definitions within the published text. This tool also creates a complete glossary at the end of the resource.

## Abbreviations

Spell out in full any acronyms or initialisms the first time they are used in a chapter.

If the abbreviation is something that is commonly used in the discipline you are writing about, you may choose to use the

Pressbooks glossary tool to do this. Pressbooks then creates an embedded definition within the published text, as well as providing a complete glossary at the end of the resource.

If the abbreviation is not a term specifically associated with the discipline, such as an organisation name, then simply spelling it out may be more appropriate the first time it is used in a chapter, with the abbreviation in brackets. Subsequent mentions in the chapter can just be the abbreviation.

There are some circumstances where an abbreviation is so commonly understood that it is not necessary to define it for your intended audience, for example NASA, LASER.

## Examples

### Using the Glossary tool

**OER** are widely used to create textbooks which are appropriate to local cohorts and available to the community beyond academia.

### Spelling out an abbreviation

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) are a set of principles designed to

advance global equality. Considering the SDGs in your project goals will....



4.

# LANGUAGE

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## Clear language

We recommend you base your writing style on The Australian Style Guide<sup>1</sup> (free registration required).

If you prefer to use another discipline-specific manual, the RMIT Open Publishing Team will work with you. You will need to ensure that the RMIT Open Publishing Team has access to any alternative style manual.

Record which style manual you choose. Document any exceptions to the style manual clearly in your Style Sheet.

## Inclusive language

Use language which recognises differences and acknowledges that some groups may be historically marginalised or

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1. Plain English Foundation. (2020). *The Australian style guide*.  
<https://www.australianstyleguide.com>

disadvantaged. Considered language is one way of ensuring diverse representation in your text.

Be aware that language about cultural, sexual and gender identities is evolving.

Use the Australian Style Guide and/or the Australian Government Style Manual <sup>2</sup> for guidance, but if possible, consult with individuals or community groups about the language conventions they prefer.

Document your decisions in your Style Sheet.

Consider:

- preferred forms of address
- preferred naming conventions
- preferred pronouns
- sensitivities around human age, gender and ability.

## First Nations people

### Language

The Australian Government Style Guide has excellent

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2. Australian Government. (n.d.). *Australian Government style manual: Inclusive language*. <https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/accessible-and-inclusive-content/inclusive-language>

guidance on culturally appropriate language for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## Acknowledgement of Country

RMIT Open Press strongly encourages all authors to include an Acknowledgement of Country in their book front matter. You can use the Acknowledgement in this publication, or write your own.

## Acknowledging First Nations sources

When referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, see the Australian Style Guide, or consult with the groups or individuals you are writing about.

For other First Nations people, seek documentation from or consultation with representatives of the groups you are writing about.

Consider the inclusion of First Nations place or group names when referencing or attributing your sources, even if your chosen referencing style does not specify First Nations conventions.

Consider the inclusion of traditional naming conventions

and honorifics in in-text citations, such as Aunty or Uncle when citing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders.<sup>3</sup>

## Examples

### In-text citation

Aunty Bilawara, Larrakia, describes the importance of understanding the protocols of Aboriginal communities in which you are working.

### Reference list entry

Lee, B. (2022, April 13). *Australian High Commission: Australian Indigenous Elders webinar: Aunty Bilawara Lee* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/GGWmF-PX-MY>

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### In-text citation

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3. Southern Cross University. (2022). APA 7th referencing guide: Indigenous Knowledge. <https://libguides.scu.edu.au/apa/indigenous-knowledge>

Aunty Kerrie, Winninninni/Cadigal/Irish, describes the pervasive nature of culture and subculture, and provides alternative views to mental health care better aligned with Indigenous perspectives (Doyle, 2021).<sup>4</sup>

### Reference list entry

Doyle, K. (2021), *Culturally appropriate mental health care*. In *Mental health care: an introduction for health professionals* (pp. 116-165 ). John Wiley & Sons.

In some cases, it may be particularly important to include the Nation/Clan/Community/Language Group when referencing any form of traditional or cultural knowledge.<sup>56</sup>

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4. Note Aunty Kerrie's choice to include 'Irish'. K. Doyle, email to C. Thomas, 6 June 2022.

5. UTS Library. (2022). Indigenous perspectives and practices: Referencing Indigenous materials. <https://studyguides.lib.uts.edu.au/indigenous/referencing>

6. MacLeod, L. (2021). More than personal communication: Templates for citing Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers. *KULA: Knowledge Creation, Dissemination, and Preservation Studies* , 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.18357/kula.135>

## Examples

**Reference list entry, traditional knowledge holder**

Jagamara, K. (Year). *Possum and Wallaby Dreaming* [Mosaic]. Warlpiri/Luritja, Papunya region, Northern Territory, Australia (Jagamara). Australian Parliament House, Canberra, ACT.  
[https://www.aph.gov.au/Visit\\_Parliament/Art/Icons/Icons/Kumantye\\_Jagamara\\_Possum\\_and\\_Wallaby\\_Dreaming](https://www.aph.gov.au/Visit_Parliament/Art/Icons/Icons/Kumantye_Jagamara_Possum_and_Wallaby_Dreaming)

**In-text citation, traditional knowledge holder**  
(no reference list entry required)

.... (K. Doyle. Winninninni/Cadigal/Irish, personal communication, June 6, 2022).

## Resources for acknowledging First Nations people

Consult widely when determining how best to acknowledge First Nations sources and document your decisions in your Style Sheet.

Some resources which may be helpful:

MacLeod, L. (2021). More than personal communication: Templates for citing Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers. *KULA: Knowledge Creation, Dissemination, and Preservation Studies*, 5(1), 1-5. <https://doi.org/10.18357/kula.135>

Southern Cross University. (2022). *APA 7th referencing guide: Indigenous Knowledge*. <https://libguides.scu.edu.au/apa/indigenous-knowledge>

UTS Library. (2022). *Indigenous perspectives and practices: referencing Indigenous materials*. <https://studyguides.lib.uts.edu.au/indigenous/referencing>

Younging, G. (2018). *Elements of Indigenous style: A guide for writing by and about Indigenous Peoples*. Brush Education.

## Age

Consider the preferences of groups you are writing about.

Follow the Australian Style Guide on age sensitivities, and on the use of numerals and hyphenation conventions when designating ages and age ranges.

Consider diversity when describing real or imagined populations. See Chapter 5 for guidance.

## Gender

Consider whether to use gender-neutral language where gender is not specifically relevant to the context, or whether to specify gender to ensure diverse representation in your text.

### Examples

#### **Gender neutral language**

*Police officer* not *policeman*

*They/their/them* etc. when referring to groups



or individuals and gender is unknown or is irrelevant to the context.

### **Diverse representation**

Teaching example:

*Dr Marie Pham is examining the patient...*

Determine individuals' preferred pronouns, noting that some individuals prefer to use gender-neutral pronouns, and record your decisions in your Style Sheet.

Follow the Australian Style Guide for specific guidance.

## **Disability**

Engage with the preferences of groups or individuals you are writing about and record your decisions in your Style Sheet. The National Center on Disability and Journalism provides guidance on issues to consider.<sup>7</sup>

Be aware of language that may be experienced as judgemental or contextually irrelevant by an individual or group you are referring to. This may include language that

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7. National Center on Disability and Journalism. (2021). *Disability language style guide*. <https://ncdj.org/style-guide/>

assumes disability to be a medical issue, such as ‘impairment’, ‘abnormality’ or ‘disorder’.

Consider whether or not to refer to disability in teaching examples, even where it is not specifically relevant to the context, to ensure diverse representation.

## Person-first versus identity-first language

Understand the difference between person-first and identity-first language.

- Person-first language puts the person before their condition or disability.
- Identity-first language puts a person’s condition or disability before the person.

Many style manuals, including the Australian Style Guide, state that you should use person-first language when writing about disability. However, many disability communities strongly advocate for identity-first language. Where possible, understand the preferences of the individuals or groups you are writing about.

## Examples

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**Person-first language**

People with autism

uses a wheelchair

They have a disability.

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**Identity-first language**

Autistic people

wheelchair user

They are disabled.

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5.

## DIVERSITY

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Where you **make up personas** within the text for teaching examples, reflect the diversity found within the RMIT University as well as the broader Australian and international communities. Consider including:

- culturally and gender diverse names for characters
- they/them pronouns, along with she/her and he/his
- diverse:
  - physiological or mental functional capacity
  - genders, sexes and sexualities
  - cultures, traditions and nationalities
  - ages
  - socio-economic backgrounds.<sup>1</sup>

However, when **referring to individuals**, either real or made

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1. Council of Australian University Librarians. (2022). *Open Educational Resources Collective publishing workflow: Check against inclusion and diversity standards*. <https://caul.libguides.com/oer-collective-publishing-workflow/review/check-inclusion-diversity> CC-BY 4.0

up, carefully consider whether characteristics such as gender, cultural/national background, LGBTQTI+ identity or disability identity are relevant to the context. The RMIT University Guide to Inclusive Language provides advice.<sup>2</sup>

## Examples

*Brian is a Chinese-Australian student...*

- Does this imply that the student is different to the norm? Or are you describing a Chinese-Australian experience, so Brian's cultural and national identity are relevant?

*A female magistrate presided...*

- Are you emphasising the perspective of a magistrate from a marginalised group? Or is the gender of the magistrate irrelevant to the context?

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2. RMIT University. (n.d.). *Guide to inclusive language*. <https://www.rmit.edu.au/students/support-services/lgbtiq>

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There are no right answers – just be sure to consider the impact of your language!

## 6.

# ACCESSIBILITY

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## Planning for accessibility

The RMIT Digital Accessibility Framework outlines the ‘objectives, principles and standards we need to meet to ensure our digital information and services are accessible’.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter will help you plan for accessibility from the beginning of your project. It is based on Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)<sup>2</sup> standards and the CAUL OER Collective Open Educational Resources Collective Publishing Workflow: Apply Accessibility Standards.<sup>3</sup>

The Accessibility Toolkit<sup>4</sup> provides further guidance

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1. RMIT University. (n.d.). *Digital accessibility*. <https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/diversity-and-inclusion/accessibility/digital-accessibility>
  2. Centre for Accessibility. (n.d.). *How do I achieve the WCAG standard?* <https://www.accessibility.org.au/guides/how-do-i-achieve-the-wcag-standard/>
  3. The CAUL OER Collective. (n.d.). *Open Educational Resources Collective publishing workflow: Apply accessibility standards*. <https://caul.libguides.com/oer-collective-publishing-workflow/design/apply-accessibility-standards> CC BY 4.0
  4. Coolidge, A., Doner, S., Robertson, T., & Gray, J. (2022). *Accessibility toolkit* (2nd

specifically for open textbook creators in the Pressbooks environment.

**Tips:**

Check the accessibility of any web content, including Pressbooks publications, using the WAVE Evaluation Tool (free browser extension).<sup>5</sup>

The Hemingway Editor online tool<sup>6</sup> will assist with accessible language.

## Organising content

### Parts, chapters and sections

Organise your content into parts and chapters, with chapter sections as appropriate.

You may choose to only use chapters to divide your content

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ed.). BC Campus Open Education. <https://opentextbc.ca/accessibilitytoolkit/> CC BY 4.0

5. WAVE (n.d.). *WAVE browser extensions*. <https://wave.webaim.org/extension/>

6. Long, A., & Long, B. (2021). *Hemingway editor*. <https://hemingwayapp.com/>



if your book is not lengthy or logically divided into larger chunks.

**Tip:** In the Pressbooks environment, you can divide your resource into parts, and divide the parts into chapters.

Within chapters, use headings to divide further into sections and subsections. Use the in-built heading options in the Pressbooks visual editor to create a meaningful content hierarchy.

**Note:** Using the inbuilt heading options is essential for screen reading software to correctly interpret the content for visually impaired users.  
**Do not** skip heading levels.

## Numbering

- Number parts numerically with Roman numerals (Part I, Part II, etc.).
- Number chapters consecutively from the beginning to

the end of the resource (e.g. Chapter 1 – Chapter 25).

- Do not number sections.

**Tip:** Pressbooks templates automatically number parts and chapters as described above.

## Part, chapter and section names

- Capitalise each word in part names.
- Capitalise each word in chapter names.
- Use the inbuilt heading styles in Pressbooks for sections within chapters (Heading 1, Heading 2, etc.).
- Use sentence case for section headings.

**Note:** Pressbooks templates will define how part and chapter names are capitalised on the page. However, the chapter and part headings will appear as you have typed them in the table of contents. Section headings will also appear as you have typed them.

# Navigation

Include part, chapter and section names in the table of contents up to heading level 1, as shown in the figure below.

**Tip:** In Pressbooks you can set the table of contents to include section heading 1 level using the settings **Appearance > Two-Level TOC**.

II. Understanding Open Licensing	–
5. Understanding Copyright	–
What is copyright?	
Who owns copyright?	
What are the rights of a copyright owner?	
How long does copyright last?	
6. Understanding educational statutory licences (An Australian context)	
7. Distinguish between materials that are all rights reserved, in the public domain, and openly licensed	–
What is all rights reserved?	
What is the public domain?	
What is openly licensed?	
8. Understanding Creative Commons licences	+

***Table of contents in a Pressbooks publication, showing part, chapter and section (heading level 1) titles.***

**Note:** If you import your content from a Word document into Pressbooks, it will automatically use the headings created in Word. It will use heading level 1 to define chapters.

## Images

Images should be supported by textual information unless, purely decorative.

- Include contextual or supporting details in the text surrounding graphs, charts and maps.
- Don't rely on colour to convey information.
- Include alternative (alt-text) descriptions of image content or function.
- Do not include descriptive text (alt-text) if an image doesn't convey content or information, or if the information repeats what is in the adjacent text.

**Tip:** The Web Accessibility Initiative Alt Decision Tree will help you decide what alt-text is

required.<sup>7</sup>

**Note:** Pressbooks automatically assumes no alt-text is required if you leave an image alt-text field blank. There is no need to insert “” if you are publishing in Pressbooks.

## Links

- Hyperlink any web addresses rather than inserting URLs.
- Hyperlinked words should describe the resource being linked to – don’t use generic text such as ‘click here’ or ‘read more’.
- If a link will open or download a file (like a PDF or Excel file), include textual reference in the link information with the file size and/or number of pages (e.g. ‘[PDF 28

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7. W3C Web Accessibility Initiative. (2017). *An alt decision tree*. <https://www.w3.org/WAI/tutorials/images/decision-tree/>

pages]’).

**Note:** Many referencing styles, such as APA, require a retrieval statement in the form of a URL. To meet accessibility standards, add a hyperlink to the resource title.

## Tables

- Include row and column headers.
- Include titles or captions.
- Don’t merge or split cells.
- Have adequate cell padding.

## Multimedia

- Create a transcript for each audio resource containing:
  - the speaker(s) name(s)
  - all speech content
  - relevant descriptions of speech
  - descriptions of relevant non-speech audio
  - headings and subheadings.
- Caption dialogue and/or narration, and describe all

relevant non-speech content.

- Include audio descriptions of contextual visuals (e.g. graphs, charts).

## Formulas

- For simple equations, use symbols that will be correctly interpreted by screen readers (e.g. minus signs instead of hyphens).
- For complex equations or formulas, use MathML or write in such a way that they can be translated into MathML (e.g. written in LaTeX and rendered with MathJax).
- Do not include equations as images with alt-text descriptions if MathML is not an option.

**Note:** Pressbooks includes MathJax integration via the LaTeX tool within the visual editor. There is also an option to use the WP QuickLaTeX plugin which allows you to write native LaTeX syntax directly into your books without wrapping shortcodes. Contact the RMIT Open Publishing Team for assistance with activating the plugin.

## Font size

In Pressbooks, font sizes for web versions are set to meet accessibility requirements.

When choosing settings for a PDF version, choose font size 12 points or higher for body text. Most other elements in your book are proportional to the body font size and will change accordingly.

(Material in this chapter from **Images** onwards is adapted from “Open Educational Resources Collective Publishing Workflow: Apply Accessibility Standards” by The Council of Australian University Librarians, The CAUL OER Collective is licensed under CC BY 4.0)<sup>8</sup>

## Accessibility resources

Use the following resources to learn more about making your open publication fully accessible.

- Government of South Australia. (n.d.). Online accessibility toolkit. <https://www.accessibility.sa.gov.au/>

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8. The CAUL OER Collective. (n.d.). *Open Educational Resources Collective publishing workflow: Apply accessibility standards*. <https://caul.libguides.com/oer-collective-publishing-workflow/design> CC BY 4.0



CC BY 3.0 AU

- RMIT University (n.d.). *Digital accessibility* [RMIT login required]. <https://rmit.edu.au.sharepoint.com/sites/digitalandexperienceteam/SitePages/Accessibility.aspx>



## PART III

# ACKNOWLEDGING SOURCES

### **Acknowledging sources**

Part III will guide you on when, where and how to provide acknowledgements for your sources. It covers:

- the differences between attribution, citation and referencing
- general guidelines for acknowledging sources
- acknowledging Creative Commons and public domain sources
- using copyright material and trade marks with permission.



7.

# ATTRIBUTION, CITATION AND REFERENCING

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## Attribution, citation and referencing: what's the difference?

Citations, attributions and reference lists work together to meet academic integrity standards and legal copyright requirements, and they also enable your reader to locate your sources. They have different formats and purposes.

## Features of attribution, citation and referencing

Features of attribution, citation and referencing

What	Purpose	How
<p><b>Citation</b></p> <p>Standard in academic practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Brief details, usually author last name and year.</li><li><b>Either</b> placed within the text immediately adjacent to the cited information that is from another source <b>or</b> a footnote is used to point the reader to the full reference (preferred in the RMIT Open Press style).</li></ul>	<p>Sign-posts that the information is from another source and acknowledges the original author(s)</p> <p>Directs the reader to the full details of the cited material in the corresponding entry in the reference list</p>

What		Purpose	How
<h3>Attribution</h3> <p>Legal requirement when using Creative Commons licensed material</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Hyperlinked bibliographic details (including original work for adaptations) and hyperlinked Creative Commons licence type.</li><li><b>Either</b> placed within the text immediately adjacent to information that is from a Creative Commons licensed source <b>or</b> in the form of a reference list entry.</li></ul>	<p>Fulfills the legal requirement of reuse.</p> <p>Hyperlinks to the original online location of the work and to the terms of the Creative Commons licence.</p>

What		Purpose	How
<b>Reference list</b>  Standard in academic practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete bibliographic details, and Creative Commons licence type if applicable.</li><li>• Placed at the end of the chapter, section or book.</li></ul>	Enables the reader to find the source material in its original published format, and understand any Creative Commons terms of reuse.	Provides full bibliographic details, and hyperlinked Creative Commons licence type if applicable.



# General guidelines for acknowledging sources

## Quotes and paraphrases

Use **citations and referencing** for quotes and paraphrases from **any written source**, either Creative Commons or non-Creative Commons.

- Choose a citation style as a basis and record it in your Style Sheet along with any variations you choose to make. See RMIT University Library resources on referencing.<sup>1</sup>
- Use the inbuilt footnote tool in Pressbooks **even when the citation style you are using as a basis is an in-text style** such as APA. This allows readers to quickly jump via the footnote number to the reference, and provides a numerically ordered reference list at the end of each chapter.
- Build your footnoted references as you normally would, according to your citation style.

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1. RMIT University Library. (n.d.). *Referencing*. <https://www.rmit.edu.au/library/study/referencing>

- For Creative Commons sources, **add the hyperlinked Creative Commons licence type** at the end of the footnoted reference. See Chapter 8: Acknowledging Creative Commons and public domain sources for details and examples.

**Note:** Permissions may be required for direct quotes or paraphrases from sources which do not have a Creative Commons licence. The Australian Copyright Council provides some guidance. Consult the RMIT Open Publishing Team for more specific assistance.<sup>2</sup>

## Media, figures and tables

### Media, figures and tables from Creative Commons sources

- Use the RMIT University Creative Commons Attribution Builder <sup>3</sup> to build attributions.

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2. Australian Copyright Council. (2020). *Quotes and extracts*.  
<https://www.copyright.org.au/browse/book/>

- Be sure to tick the box ‘this work is a derivative’ if the resource you are using is a derivative of an original work, providing the URL of the original, shown below.

**RMIT Attribution Builder: derivative tick-box** (Adapted from “RMIT Attribution Builder” by RMIT University Library is licensed under CC BY 4.0 / A derivative from the original work)

See Chapter 8: Acknowledging Creative Commons and public domain sources for details, including where to place the attribution within your text.

Media, figures and tables not based on

## Creative Commons sources

Media, figures or tables created by third parties will need a permission statement or other acknowledgement.

**Note:** an acknowledgement is needed even if you are the creator of material that has been previously published elsewhere.

See Chapter 8: Acknowledging Creative Commons and public domain sources for details, including where to place the attribution within your text.

8.

## ACKNOWLEDGING CREATIVE COMMONS AND PUBLIC DOMAIN SOURCES

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### Written sources with a Creative Commons licence

For paraphrases and direct quotes:

- Create footnotes using the footnote tool in Pressbooks.
- Construct references according to your citation style.
- Add the hyperlinked Creative Commons licence type at the end of your footnoted reference, regardless of the citation style.

**Tip:** When you add a footnote in Pressbooks,

you can format the text in the visual editor to add italics and hyperlinks *after* the footnote has been inserted.

## Examples

### Footnotes in the text

Derosa and Jhangiani (n.d.) ask us to consider our hopes and vision for higher education when planning an open pedagogy project.<sup>1</sup>

Wiley and Hilton (2018) state that “the connection between open educational resources and open pedagogy marks a significant departure from the way the term

---

1. [1]

was used in the 20th and early 21st centuries”.<sup>2</sup>

### Reference list entries

1. Wiley, D. & Hilton, J. (2018). Defining OER-enabled pedagogy. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 19(4). <http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/3601/4724> CC BY 4.0
2. Derosa, R., & Jhangiani, R. (n.d.). Open pedagogy. In E. Mays (Ed.), *A guide to making textbooks with students*. Rebus Community, <https://press.rebus.community/makingopentextbookswithstudents/chapter/open-pedagogy/> CC BY 4.0

**Note:** For accessibility purposes these reference list entries have the resource titles hyperlinked, and the URLs not linked.

**Tip:** While copyright generally restricts using direct quotes from written resources unless permission is given, you can generally use lengthy direct quotes from Creative Commons licenced sources, except when there is a non-derivative licence element (-ND). Consult the RMIT Open Publishing Team for clarification if required.

**Note:** When you are **paraphrasing or quoting** from a Creative Commons text, there is no need to add 'adapted from', as convention assumes this to be the case for written resources, and this will be covered in the copyright statement in the front matter of the book.

## References for adapted Creative Commons works

If the Creative Commons source **is itself an adaptation**, you must **also refer to the original work**. Add a forward slash



and the words ‘is a derivative of’, followed by the hyperlinked title of the original work, as highlighted in the example below.

### Example

#### **Reference for a derivative work with details of the original work placed after the reference**

Evans, R., Mihalicz, M., & Sterling, M.  
(n.d.). *Indigenous lifeways in Canadian business-ECO*. eCampusOntario.  
<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/eoindigenousbusinessttopics/> CC BY-NC 4.0 /  
is a derivative of Indigenous lifeways in Canadian business

## Figures, data or embedded media with a Creative Commons licence

Creative Commons licensed figures, embedded media or data in a table will require a correctly constructed attribution. Use

the RMIT University Creative Commons Attribution Builder.

Place the attribution in brackets below the material as outlined in Chapter 11: Captions for figures, table and media.

## Examples

**Embedded YouTube video with attribution  
placed in brackets below the figure, data or  
embedded media**

***ED Talks – Open Educational Resources (3:14  
mins)***



(*Ed Talks: Open Education Resources* by College of Business and Law, RMIT University and James Galpa-Grossklag is licenced under CC BY 4.0)

**Table with attribution in brackets below the table**

***Table 5: External wall temperatures vs air temperature, 16 January 2022, 12:00pm***

Location	Measured wall temperature
North west wall	39oC
North east wall	38oC
South west wall	28oC
South east wall	27oC

*(Adapted from “Building surface temperature variations” by Jake Smith, ThermoBuild is licensed under CC BY 4.0)*

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**Figure with attribution in brackets after the caption below the image**



**Birrarung (Yarra River) at Deep Rock Historic Swimming Hole** (“Birrarung at Deep Rock Historic Swimming Hole” by Carrie Thomas is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)

## Sources in the public domain

There are two circumstances where source material may be in the public domain:

1. The original work has been placed in the public domain by the rights holder.
2. Copyright on the original work has expired.

### The original work has been placed in the public domain by the rights holder.

Some work placed in the public domain by the rights holder may carry the specific public domain mark, CC0. Where source materials have this, then acknowledge them as described for Creative Commons sources, including the hyperlinked public domain mark. Use the RMIT University Creative Commons Attribution Builder.

### Copyright on the original work has expired

If the resource which is in the public domain **does not have** a CCO mark, then simply acknowledge it as for a non-Creative

Commons licensed source. See Chapter 9: Using Copyright  
Material and Trademarks With Permission.

9.

## USING COPYRIGHT MATERIAL AND TRADE MARKS WITH PERMISSION

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### Permission acknowledgment for copyright material

Where a rights holder has granted you permission to use their material within your publication, you will need to acknowledge this in two places:

1. within the text
2. as a general notice in the front matter.

#### Within the text

For copyright material (such as an image, material in a table

or embedded media), add a permission notice in brackets immediately after the caption.

For written material such as an extensive quote, add a permission notice in brackets after the quoted material and footnote number.

Consult with the RMIT Open Publishing Team for precise wording as it will depend on the terms of use.

## Example

### **Lengthy quote used with permission**

‘Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Maecenas porttitor congue massa. Fusce posuere, magna sed pulvinar ultricies, purus lectus malesuada libero, sit amet commodo magna eros quis urna. Nunc viverra imperdiet enim. Fusce est. Vivamus a tellus.’<sup>[1]</sup> (Quoted with permission)

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### **A photograph used with permission**





**Figure 9.1: Lichen on granite, Mount Stapylton, Grampians National Park** (*C. Thomas, 2021. Used with permission*)

## In the front matter

Add a disclaimer statement to the front matter covering all copyright sources used with permission. This will also go into the online record for the resource.

Consult with the RMIT Open Publishing Team for precise wording as it will depend on the copyright owners' terms of use.

## Example

### **Copyright notice for a resource front matter and online record**

The Pressbooks Network Manager's Guide by Pressbooks is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, except where otherwise noted.

## Using trade marks with permission

Trade marks are a different category of intellectual property to copyright. They also require permission for reuse from the rights holder.

When using a trade mark with permission, add a permission statement according to the trade mark owners' specifications. This may be *either*:

- immediately after the image, in parentheses

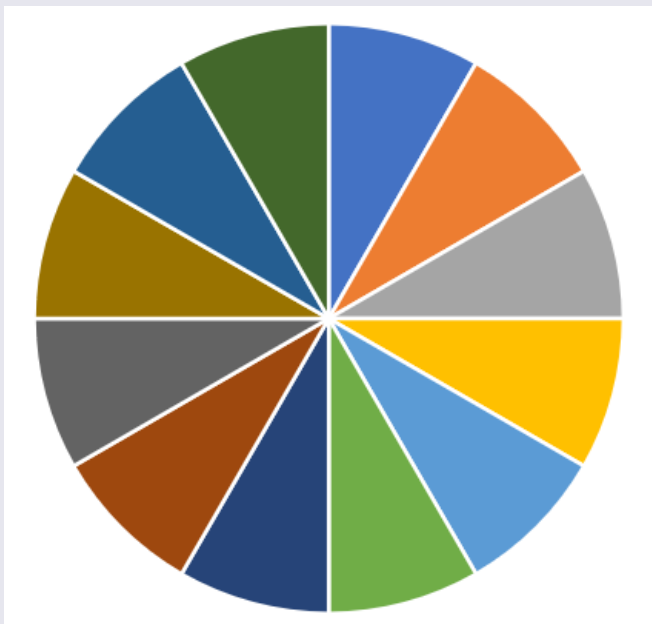
*or*

- a general statement in the front matter if multiple trade marks are used.

Consult with the RMIT Open Publishing Team for precise wording as it will depend on the trade mark owners' terms of use.

## Examples

### **Permission notice for a trade mark used with permission**



**Runaway Cycles logo** (Runaway Cycles logo is protected under trade mark legislation and used with the permission of Runaway Cycles. For more information, go to <http://runawaycycles.org.au/>)

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## **A trade mark permission notice for the front matter and online record**

All logos represented in this publication are protected under trade mark legislation and are used with the

permission of the corresponding organisation.

## Embedded videos without a Creative Commons licence

You can **embed** a video in your resource **without permission**, even if it does not have a Creative Commons licence or is not in the public domain. This is because when you embed a video, it is still being hosted on the original site (e.g. YouTube or Vimeo), so the instance which appears in your Pressbook is not a copy as such.

However, you must still determine that the **original video does not breach copyright**. For example it must be uploaded to the hosting site by the creator, and must not contain third party material which the creator does not have permission to reuse. Contact the RMIT Open Publishing Team for assistance if you are unsure.

An embedded video **still requires an acknowledgement**, regardless of whether it has a Creative Commons licence or not. Make a simple statement with the hyperlinked video title and the creator's name. See Chapter 11: Captions for Figures, Tables and Media.



## PART IV

# FIGURES, TABLES AND EMBEDDED MEDIA

### Figures, tables and embedded media

Part IV will guide you in including figures, tables and embedded media. It covers:

- placement and numbering
- captions and including acknowledgements
- referring to these materials in the text.

Figures

include **graphs, charts, maps, posters, drawings** and **photographs**. Tables are **tabulated data** which may be numerical and/or textual. **Videos** are

recordings embedded in the text which exist as host to an external location.



10.

# PLACEMENT AND NUMBERING

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## Placement

Place figures, tables and embedded media immediately after the paragraph in which they are first mentioned.

## Numbering

### Figures and tables

Where there are few figures and/or tables in your text, you may not need to number them.

However, you may choose to number your figures and tables for clarity if:

- numbering is standard in your academic field
- there are more than a few in the one chapter
- if they are mentioned multiple times throughout the

chapter

- if they are mentioned in more than one chapter.

**Tip:** In Pressbooks you can use the Anchor tool to link back to any place within your book from any other place. If your figure or table is mentioned in multiple places, you could use this to aid navigation, with or without numbering.

If you choose to number your figures and tables, do so using a decimal system based on the chapter number:

- The numeral(s) before the decimal point is the chapter number where the figure or table appears.
- The numeral(s) after the decimal point is the sequential figure or table number within that chapter.

The words Table or Figure will be capitalised, and in bold and italics. See Chapter 11 for details on setting out captions.

Examples

***Table 2.1: Historical population changes***

(First table in chapter 1)

---

***Figure 3.4: Anatomy of the scapula***

(Fourth figure in chapter 3)

11.

# CAPTIONS FOR FIGURES, TABLES AND MEDIA

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## Caption elements

Captions for figures, tables and media will contain the following elements:

- They **may have a number**, as discussed in Chapter 10.
- They **must have a title**.
- They **must have an acknowledgement**, unless the material was created specifically for the publication.

## Title and number

- The title should be short and descriptive.
- The title should be in sentence case except for proper nouns.
- For numbered tables or figures, precede title with the

word Table or Figure, followed by the number then a colon (e.g. ***Table 2.4: Population changes***).

- The title and numbering should be bold and italicised.

## Acknowledgements

Any figure, table or media which was not created by the author(s) for the book must have an acknowledgement.

The acknowledgement may be:

- an attribution if the source has a Creative Commons licence
- a permissions or copyright statement if the source is used with permission
- a reference for a source that is not Creative Commons licensed but does not require permission (e.g. it is in the public domain or you have had advice from the RMIT Open Publishing Team that you may use the material under existing copyright)
- an acknowledgement statement for an embedded video which does not have a Creative Commons licence.

See Part III: Acknowledging Sources for details on correctly providing acknowledgement.

## If the source has a Creative Commons licence

Use the RMIT Attribution Builder to create an attribution.

- For tables and figures, add the attribution in parentheses after the title.
- For embedded videos, add the attribution in parentheses underneath the video.
- The attribution should be italicised.

See the OER Capability Toolkit for more on giving attribution for Creative Commons licensed sources.<sup>1</sup>

**Note:** in Pressbooks when you add an image using the Add Media function, you can create your caption using the dialogue box. Here you will have the option to create an attribution. However, this attribution will not display in your text.

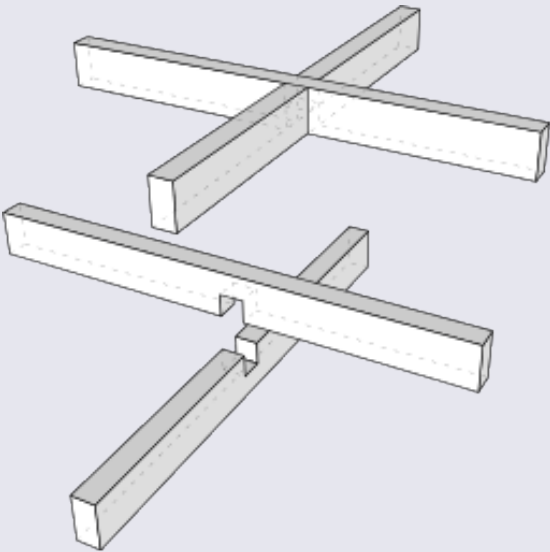
---

1. Blake, J., Halson, J., Kolk, I., Lennox, A., Moffat, S., Ponte, F., Rata, R., & Thomas, C. (2022). *The OER Capability Toolkit*. RMIT Open Press.  
<https://rmit.pressbooks.pub/oercapabilitytoolkit> CC BY-NC 4.0

Instead, *after* you have added the image, edit the caption in the visual editor to include your attribution or permissions statement.

## Examples

**Caption with acknowledgement below for a Creative Commons licensed image**



**Simple halved joint** (Simple halved joint 2014  
by Crati licensed CC BY-SA 3.0)

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**Caption with acknowledgement below for  
Creative Commons licensed data**

***Table 2.1: Components of quarterly  
population change, March 2017-March  
2021***



---

	<b>Total growth</b>	<b>Natural increase</b>	<b>Net overseas migration</b>
Mar-20	110,742	35,563	75,179
Jun-20	24,686	32,925	-8,239
Sep-20	-12,397	30,565	-42,962
Dec-20	2,427	31,865	-29,438
Mar-21	20,968	35,663	-14,695

---

*(Adapted from “Components of quarterly population change (2021)” by Australian Bureau of Statistics is licensed under CC BY 4.0)*

---

**Caption with acknowledgement below for an embedded video with a Creative Commons licence**

***What is open research? (1:25 mins)***



*("What is Open Research?" by Wellcome Trust is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0)*

---

**Caption with acknowledgement below for  
embedded video without Creative Commons  
licence**

***Encouraging native animals in urban habitat  
(16:35 mins)***



(*[“Encouraging native animals in urban habitat”](#) by  
Urban Eco Warriors*)

## If the source is used by permission

Add your permission statement in parentheses after your table, figure or media title.

The statement should be italicised.

See Chapter 10: Using Copyright Material and Trademarks With Permission for more on creating a permission statement.

Example

### **Caption and permission statement for an image used with permission**



**Figure 9:2: Pincushion hakea, All Nations Park Northcote** (C. Thomas, July 2022. Used with permission)

## Other copyright material

It is sometimes possible to use material that is under copyright but does not have a Creative Commons licence without permission, as long as the source is properly acknowledged.

Use the footnote function in Pressbooks to add a citation within the text referring to the figure or table, and create a

reference according to your referencing style. See Chapter 8: General Guidelines for acknowledging sources.

Contact the RMIT Open Publishing Team for assistance in determining whether you can use copyright resources in your OER.

## Examples

### Caption with footnoted references for copyright information

***Table 5.1 Gait rehabilitation after stroke, treatment efficacy***

Study	Robotic assisted	Virtual reality	Circuit class
Bonini-Rocha et al., 2018 <sup>[1]</sup>	Low efficacy	Moderate efficacy	Moderate efficacy
Bortole & Royal, 2015 <sup>[2]</sup>	Moderate efficacy	Low efficacy	High efficacy
Kal, 2018 <sup>[3]</sup>	Low efficacy	Moderate efficacy	High efficacy

Note: this table draws from multiple sources. Each

in-text citation requires a corresponding footnoted reference.

## Adding captions

### Images – adding captions using the Add Media function

After you have added an image using the Add Media function in Pressbooks, use the edit-image tool to add a caption.



**Accessing the the edit-image tool – use this to add a captions to images.**

**Tip:** The caption will appear **below** the added image, and be accessible to screen reading software. It will be automatically italicised.

Once you have added the image with its caption, you can edit the caption using the visual editor:

- Bold the figure number (if there is one) and title. It will be automatically italicised.
- Add an acknowledgement in brackets.

See Part III Acknowledging Sources for details on when and how to add acknowledgements.

## Adding captions manually – tables and videos

If adding a **table or video**, you will have to manually type in the caption.

In this case, place the title **above** the table or video, and place the acknowledgement **below**.

**Tip:** It is necessary to place the title above for accessibility reasons so that screen readers read out the title before they pass onto the table or video underneath it.



### Example

### Caption and acknowledgement for a table

***Table 6.2: Temperature anomalies (Land-Ocean Temperature Index. L-OTI), deviations from the corresponding 1951-1980 means***

Year	Global	Northern hemisphere	Southern hemisphere
2011	0.61	0.74	0.47
2012	0.65	0.81	0.48
2013	0.68	0.8	0.55
2014	0.75	0.92	0.57
2015	0.9	1.18	0.62
2016	1.02	1.31	0.73
2017	0.92	1.18	0.67
2018	0.85	1.04	0.66
2019	0.98	1.22	0.75
2020	1.02	1.36	0.68
2021	0.85	1.15	0.55

*(Adapted from “GISS Surface Temperature Analysis (GISTEMP v4) 2022” by GISTEMP Team, NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies is in the Public Domain, CC0)*

12.

## REFERRING TO FIGURES, TABLES AND EMBEDDED MEDIA IN THE TEXT

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Refer to the figure or table descriptively within the text using plain language, stating what the reader should see.

If the figure or table **is not numbered**, then include the title or a simple description and the location.

If the figure or table **is numbered**, then also include the number when you refer to it.

Examples

**Embedded media and unnumbered tables or figures**

The photo below shows cloud formations above the high altitude peak.

In the diagram of the sacroiliac joint we referred to above, you can see that the hip...

Dr Tuğba Aydem describes the study in the video below.

---

**Numbered tables or figures**

The data in Table 2.1 shows how populations have expanded in all jurisdictions over the past decade.

The correct method for manipulating the sacroiliac joint is illustrated in Figure 3.4.