

Building a bibliography

For a term paper: typically, no need to cite sources outside the course. But **versions for conferences or publication do need to cite widely!**

How to find relevant sources

- **The bibliography of papers you have read** directly on the topic
- **Papers** you have read in other contexts that come to mind. The connection could be an **analogy, structural similarity**, or that they discuss your topic briefly though their overall focus is elsewhere. Where a paper cites someone else for a point, cite the original source.
- **Google Scholar and PhilPapers search.** Try out multiple relevant key words. Especially for science papers, reasonable to focus on most cited (weighing for how recent the paper is).
- **Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy and Philosophy Compass.** Read relevant overviews, and then papers references there. (Handbooks by Oxford and Routledge, where available, are also often very helpful for surveys.)

It's good to have a sense of which philosophy journals are reputable:

Meta-rankings and existing rankings of philosophy journals

From: **Ranking philosophy journals: a meta-ranking and a new survey ranking**

Journal	PCA	AM	HM	Weighted	Leiter	SJR	CiteScore	h5-index	JNCI
Noûs	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	4	1
Philosophical Studies	2	5	4	4	8	8	6	2	7
Philosophy & Phenomenological Research	3	3	2	3	5	5	5	3	10
Synthese	4	4	3	2	11	13	4	1	2
Mind	5	2	5	5	2	3	3	5	24
Australasian Journal of Philosophy	6	7	7	9	6	7	7	7	22
Philosophical Review	7	6	6	7	1	2	2	12	27
Journal of Philosophy	8	8	8	6	4	6	9	14	16
Pacific Philosophical Quarterly	9	10	9	8	15	10	11	8	4
Erkenntnis	10	12	10	11	13	14	13	6	4
Philosophical Quarterly	11	9	12	14	9	12	9	10	25
European Journal of Philosophy	12	11	13	17	18	19	18	10	20
Canadian Journal of Philosophy	13	14	15	13	12	11	14	17	4
Philosophical Issues	14	13	11	10	27	4	11	17	7
Inquiry	15	15	17	16	22	15	18	14	15
Journal of the APA	16	16	16	15	19	23	18	14	8
Philosophers' Imprint	17	17	14	12	7	9	13	10	10
Analysis	18	18	18	21	10	21	24	18	21
American Philosophical Quarterly	19	19	19	18	14	16	18	20	13
Ratio	20	20	20	19	25	17	18	22	19
Metaphilosophy	21	21	21	20	31	26	22	20	13
Southern Journal of Philosophy	22	22	22	22	30	24	18	20	13
Res Philosophica	23	24	23	23	33	22	22	24	11
Dialectica	24	23	25	26	23	20	26	25	23
Philosophia	25	25	27	25	32	25	26	24	19
Thought	26	26	26	24	20	18	27	26	17
Philosophy	27	27	28	27	29	27	24	27	26
International Philosophical Quarterly	28	29	29	29	35	28	28	28	28
Review of Metaphysics	29	28	24	28	34	29	29	29	29

This table reports our meta-rankings as well as some of the prominent existing rankings. "PCA" is the aggregation of the existing rankings using Principal Component Analysis; "AM" is the aggregate ranking based on the arithmetic mean, and "HM" is based on the harmonic mean. "Leiter" is Brian Leiter's 2018 "general" philosophy journals ranking; "SJR" is the ranking induced by Scimago; "CiteScore" is the ranking induced by Scopus; "JNCI" is the ranking induced by World of Science

This list is only generalist journals. In philosophy of mind and philosophy of psychology, *Mind & Language*, *Philosophical Psychology*, and *Review of Philosophy and Psychology* are also reputable

Carolina Flores

sources. (There are other extremely prestigious venues in other subfields; e.g. *Ethics* or *Philosophy and Public Affairs* are comparable to top-15 generalist journals).

It can be worth seeing the first stage of collecting a bibliography as analogous to brainstorming: collecting all articles that seem relevant, then culling/selecting the ones you will actually read (or read in detail).

How to select what to read

- It depends on how much time you have!
- Prioritize articles that are **directly** on your topic and **published in well-regarded venues**. (Within that: the ones that seem most interesting to you.)
- **Read literature review pieces** on the topic to know the lay of the land.
- When short on time, prioritize **recent** articles that also summarize older, important pieces. (And then can cite those based on having learned what points they make).
- Can cite articles based on the abstract/skimming if just citing e.g. “For defenses of view X, see...” or similar kinds of referencing.
- Hack: read articles that are not as directly central but seem especially suggestive to you, by people whose work you tend to like, etc. (as a source for “special sauce”).

Managing a bibliography

Some people use bibliography managers (Zotero, Mendeley, etc.). Search “Citation Management” or “Bibliography Management” online for guides. What I do:

- I put relevant articles in the same folder with name “AuthorName_PaperTitle”.
- I use Obsidian (or another note-taker/word processor) to take summary notes, with an index at the top. I usually include quick comments on central points.
- I write papers in Latex using Overleaf and use BibTex to save citation names. (And use Google Scholar or PhilPapers to get .bib files/formatted citations.)
 - In Word or Google Docs, **use the Citation tool. Do not write citations by hand** (more work, more likely to make mistakes).
 - **Do not leave citing for the end.** It will create way more work and be overwhelming. Take the time to find who you need to cite as you go along.
- My personal view: err on the side of **citing more rather than less**, and look around to know what is out there and make sure you do not snub people who have said very relevant things to your project, defended views you mention, etc.