

Using BibTeX to add a bibliography

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Overview

In this example, the use of BibTeX for incorporating references into a Markdown manuscript is described.

[BibTeX](#) is a file format used for describing references and is commonly used in conjunction with LaTeX documents. A `.bib` file contains one or more reference entries, each of which contains all of the necessary information to describe a single bibliography entry.

An example entry might look like:

```
@article{Yizhak2015,  
author = {Yizhak, Keren and Chaneton, Barbara and Gottlieb, Eyal and Ruppin, Eytan},  
keywords = {11,15252,20145307,2015,817,accepted 26 may 2015,cancer metabolism,doi 10,genome-  
pages = {1--17},  
title = {{Modeling cancer metabolism on a genome scale}},  
year = {2015}  
}
```

Additional fields for including an abstract, isbn, etc. may also be included.

Notice in particular the string just after the opening bracket on the first line: `Yizhak2015`. This will be the reference key you use to cite the article in your document text (more on this later.)

Most popular reference managers are capable of generating `.bib` files for a collection of references. For example, in Mendeley, you can use the “export” option on a selected set of references to generate a BibTeX file. An easy way to organize your references then is to simply have a separate folder for each manuscript in Mendeley. Indeed there is even an option to have Mendeley automatically generate a `.bib` file for each folder you create, such that whenever a new reference is added to that folder, the corresponding `.bib` file is automatically updated.

Adding a BibTeX bibliography

After generating a BibTeX bibliography, you need to tell Pandoc where to find it. To do this, edit the YAML block at the top of your Markdown document, and add a `bibliography` entry:

```
---
title: Using BibTeX to add a bibliography
author: Keith Hughitt
date: 2015/09/10
bibliography: references.bib
---
```

To cite an article in your bibliography, you simply add an entry of the following form:

```
[@Ref1; @Ref2; etc.]
```

For example, here we cite the first two entries from our bibliography (1, 2), and a few more (3–6).

To have a references section automatically generated and appended to the bottom of the file, we can then use the excellent [pandoc citeproc extension](#):

```
pandoc --filter pandoc-citeproc input.md -o output.pdf
```

Specifying the citation style to use

To specify which citation and bibliography style should be used for the output PDF, you can use the `--csl` citeproc parameter to choose from one of [over 7500 possible citation styles](#).

Simply download the citation style (.csl) file for the format you wish to use and modify your pandoc command to include it, e.g.:

```
pandoc --filter pandoc-citeproc input.md --csl nucleic-acids-research.csl -o output.pdf
```

Some additional examples of how to include citations in Markdown are described in the [RMarkdown documentation](#).

References

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3. Yao,S., Yoo,S. and Yu,D. (2015) Prior knowledge driven Granger causality analysis on gene regulatory network discovery. *BMC Bioinformatics*, **16**, 273.
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5. Yin,W., Garimalla,S., Moreno,A., Galinski,M.R. and Styczynski,M.P. (2015) A tree-like Bayesian structure learning algorithm for small-sample datasets from complex biological model systems. *BMC Systems Biology*, **9**, 49.
6. Yizhak,K., Chaneton,B., Gottlieb,E. and Ruppin,E. (2015) Modeling cancer metabolism on a genome scale.