

I was just berated in an article review: “a bibliography is NOT a reference list!”. I will admit that up to now, I have used the two terms interchangeably, and have tended to use the term “bibliography”, as I like the sound of the word better, than the more pedestrian term: “reference list”.

My bad! They are not the same at all, despite looking very similar.



In short, a bibliography are the sources used to create the text, and need not be complete, - indeed, it may be curated to include only those the author believes are most relevant and interesting for the reader to know about.

A reference list, is different. Every source cited in the text, must be included in the reference list, and every reference in the references list, must be cited in the text.

With my enthusiastic use of Mendeley, and the requirements of most journals, I will now have to wave goodbye to my much loved and sophisticated sounding word. Pedestrian, here I come!

APA Style Blog: Reference List or Bibliography: What’s the Difference?

by Jeff Hume-Pratuch Did you know that there’s no such thing as a bibliography in APA Style? It’s a fact! APA Style uses text citations and a reference list, rather than footnotes and a bibliography, to document sources. A reference...