

Don't let *AI* FAKE your references!

AI-generated citations can look completely credible, and still be wrong. Take a few minutes to check them before you include them in your work.



What is a citation hallucination?

AI can generate references that look academically convincing but are inaccurate or don't exist. They may contain:

Made-up sources

The article simply doesn't exist.

Mixed-up sources

Real authors or journals with invented information.

Wrong details

Incorrect title, year, volume, pages or DOI.

Misrepresented sources

The source exists, but doesn't actually support the claim.

Verify a citation: step by step

1

Search

Search the exact title + author in the IEU Library Catalog, Web of Science, Scopus or Google Scholar.

2

Try again

Nothing? Search different combinations: author + journal, author + keywords, title + keywords.

3

Check

Match the author, title, journal, year, volume, pages and DOI.

4

Read

Found it? Don't stop there. Read the abstract or full text.

5

Confirm

Does the source actually support the claim?

Before you ask AI for references:

A better prompt can reduce the risk of fake citations.

DON'T START WITH:

"Give me 10 academic references about..."

TRY:

"Suggest keywords to research..."

"Which journals cover research on...?"

"What search terms could I use for...?"



Red flags:

You can't find the article in trusted databases.

The DOI doesn't resolve or leads to a different source.

The author, journal or details don't match.

The paper doesn't contain the information claimed.

Stuck? Ask a librarian!