Harvard Writing Style Format

A Harvard essay format is based on the Harvard style of writing, a generic form that uses the author/date style of writing within the text and a reference list or bibliography at the end of the paper/essay.

1. The basic pattern would look like this. “Tom (2009) is of the opinion that apples could be yellow.” This would be the author/date style. The page number could also be included if it’s a direct quote. It would then look like, “Tom (2009, P.5) is of the opinion that apples are yellow.”

2. The reference is detailed in the bibliography. The complete details would be presented here. It would look like [Author’s Surname, First Name, Year of publication, Title (italicized or underlined), Publisher, Place of publication]. This format would apply to a book that probably does not have an online presence. The bibliography could contain more than one author for the works, editors, sponsored text, and reference without authors.

3. A thesis is more organized and assignment details are more in order. For example, the reference would be [Author’s Last Name, First name, year of submission, title, degree, institution’s name, and location of the institution].

4. The Harvard essay format is used for article writing when specified. The format would appear like [Author’s last name, First name, Year of publication, Title, Name of the periodical published in, Volume number, Issue number, Page number]. An example of referencing using in an article would be Tom, AJ (2009), ‘Apples Are Yellow’, Organic Apples, vol. 25, no. 6, pp. 136-139.

5. The format could be used for websites and to reference electronic documents or E-books. The format changes a bit and it would look like [Author’s last name, First name, date of publication, title, edition, type of medium, viewing date, and URL]. If the date of publication and URL are not available, omit them.

6. In the text of the essay, reference material would generally appear at the end of the sentence. For example, Tom is of the opinion that apples could be yellow (Tom, 2009). Since the author’s name is included in the text, it could also be written as Tom (2009) is of the opinion that apples could be yellow. Other details would vary as per available information.
7. A very important point to note is that if a list of references would detail information only on those works cited within the text, while a bibliography would also include details of sources which might not be cited in-text but may be relevant to the topic.

8. The bibliography should contain references listed alphabetically, beginning with the author’s last name. If a name is not available, the title would take over. Following is a sample of a Bibliography from a Harvard style paper:


6) EMN (2005), “Female Participation in Microloan Programmes in Western Europe”, *EMN European Conference*, October.

