



Citing Sources ***Print vs. Electronic Resources***

Reference Department
Albert S. Cook Library

Citation work is a very important part of research and requires attention to detail. The citation not only documents your research, but allows the reader to access your sources for further investigation. When citing sources, following the format of a style manual is not arbitrary. You cannot choose which pieces of information you will include and the way in which you format that information.

Your instructor will tell you which style manual is to be used for your class. The most popular style manuals are: The MLA Style Manual, The APA Style Manual, and the Chicago Manual of Style. Some frequently used examples from each of these can be found on the Cook Library Homepage under the Citing Sources link in the "Get It" column. If you are not sure which style guide your instructor wants to see used, ask for clarification.

The following rules will apply to any style manual:

- You should not combine styles or change within the document from one style of citation to another one.
- The style guides show you the proper abbreviations, capitalization and punctuation to be used in the citation.
- You must follow the format shown; you cannot add in extra pieces of information, nor should you change the order of the information given. (Ex. If the title of a book is shown in the example as being underlined, you will need to do the same in your citation. You do not have the choice whether or not to underline – you must follow the example.)

Once you have decided on the appropriate style guide to use, you must decide if the source that you are citing is a print or an electronic source.



Decisions, Decisions!!

Print vs. Electronic Citations

Print sources include books and newspaper or journal articles. If you read the **actual hard copy source or if you are holding a photocopy of the actual journal or newspaper article in your hand, you will need to do a print citation for that source.** On the other hand, if you read the **electronic full text version of the article on your computer, then printed it out, it is considered an electronic source.** Even though you have printed it out from the database, the article was reformatted for electronic delivery and is different from the print/hard copy original described above. Examples of typical MLA **print** citations for a bibliography (the list of works that you used in your research) are below for these three types of sources. Use them as a model and supply your own information in the same order and format as shown in the example.

A book with one author:

Kaku, Michio. Hyperspace: An Scientific Odyssey through Parallel Universes, Time Warps, and the Tenth Dimension. New York: Oxford UP, 1994.

A journal article:

Craner, Paul M. "New Tool for an Ancient Art: The Computer and Music."
Computers and the Humanities 25 (1991): 303-13.

A newspaper article:

Feder, Barnaby J. "For Job Seekers, a Toll-Free Gift of Expert Advice."
New York Times 30 Dec. 1993, natl. ed.: C1+.

Electronic sources include websites and full text articles that you have retrieved from an online database. Examples of online databases include Humanities Abstracts and MLA Bibliography. They are electronic indexing tools that sometimes provide full text electronic document delivery. If you have printed out the electronic, full text version of an article from a journal and read that copy when doing research, then you must use the electronic citation format for citing that source. The following is a list of the elements of an **electronic, full text journal citation in MLA format.** You need to supply all of these pieces in your citation.

- name of author, editor, or compiler of the document or article (if available)
- title of document (article title), in quotation marks
- title of source (journal title), underlined
- copyright date (month, year) of journal and pages
- for a subscription service, the name of the database (Ex. Humanities Abstracts or MLA Bibliography) underlined
- service provider or producer of that database (Ex. EBSCO or OCLC FIRSTSEARCH) typed all in capital letters

- name of the institution or organization providing you access to the database (Towson University provides you access, even from home, to these databases)
- date of access (date you looked at the information online) - notice that the day of the month is printed first, followed by the month, then the year
- URL - Uniform Resource Locator, or web address, in angle brackets < > (web address of the service provider of the database)

If you are retrieving articles from our databases, in most cases, you will be able to find all of these pieces of information. The first example below shows you the pieces of information needed for a journal citation in the proper order and with correct punctuation and capitalization.

Follow this model to cite an **electronic, full text journal article** from an online database:

Author's last name, first name. "Title of article." Periodical title Publication date [day month year]: Page numbers. Database name. Database provider. Library. Date of access [day month year] <URL of database provider>.

Here is an actual example of an **electronic full text journal citation** with all of these pieces:

Vera, Yvonne. "Observation as System in Eugene O'Neill's The Iceman Cometh." Modern Drama Fall 1996: 448+. Academic Search. EBSCO. Albert S. Cook Library, Towson University. 10 February 2000 <http://www.ebsco.com/>.

Hint: if you are having trouble finding the URL of the service provider of the database, follow this tip.

- go back to the **Cook Library Homepage**
- go to **Find It column – Search for Articles**
- select **Online Databases A – Z**
- locate your database from the list and allow the mouse to hover over the title
- look in the lower left status bar of you browser and the URL will display – you need only copy the address up to the .org or .com portion of the URL for your citation

Here is an example of an **electronic, full text newspaper article citation**:

Crowley, Michael. "Campaign 2000 / Forbes; Costly Effort Shows Few Results." The Boston Globe. 7 February 2000: A9. Academic Universe. LEXIS-NEXIS. Albert S. Cook Library, Towson University. 10 February 2000 <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe>.



What do I do with websites?

Websites can be confusing as much of the information that should be included in the citation may be not provided on the site. If you are

missing pieces of the requested information for the citation, move on to the next piece of the citation for which you can provide the data. Continue to follow the order of the citation format, skipping over the missing part of the citation. Below is the format for citing a **website** in MLA citation style, followed by an actual citation.

Author's last name, first name (person responsible for the site). Title of web document.

Copyright date or date of last update [day month year]. Name of sponsoring organization (where available). Date of access [day month year] <URL of the website>.

Personal website:

Brians, Paul. Chinua Achebe: Things Fall Apart Study Guide. 31 January 2000.

Dept. of English, Wash. State U. 10 February 2000

<<http://www.wsu.edu:8000/~brians/anglophone/achebe.html>>.

The above example is for a personal website, produced and maintained by one individual. Many sites are produced by an organization or association and will not have one person's name as the author.

Professional or organizational website:

Romance Language and Literatures Home Page. 1 January 1997. Dept. of Romance

Langs. and Lit., U of Chicago. 8 July 1998 <<http://humanities.uchicago.edu>>.

The above examples were all taken from the MLA Style Guides link on the Cook Library Homepage. Additional examples are available for a variety of citations and style guides on our homepage. The most complete examples and discussion of citations can be found in each of the complete style manual texts. The Cook Library has copies of the latest style manuals for the above noted associations.

For research help on this or any other research project, contact a reference librarian in person at the Cook Library Reference Desk, by phone at (410) 704-2462, or via e-mail at <http://cooklibrary.towson.edu> under Services for Students.