**Citing Electronic Resources in APA Style**

**Introduction**

In academic writing, a reference to a source of information is called citation. Typically it includes identifying information such as the author, title and source. When we are writing a paper or doing research on a topic, we must cite the sources. There are many reasons for citing the sources. The major reasons include the following:

* + To acknowledges the work of others whose scholarship contributed to our work
  + To helps the reader understand the context of our argument
  + To help the reader to locate the sources of information on the topic
  + To establish the credibility of your research and scholarship
  + To demonstrate our own academic ethics and integrity
  + To avoid plagiarism
  + To provide an important roadmap to our research process
  + **To add strength and authority** to our work

There are two parts to a citation:

* In-text Citation.
* End of the Text Citation or Reference List Citation

The in-text citation is the citation information given in the body of the research paper. It contains limited bibliographic details about the cited document, most of the time author name and year of publication. The End of the Text Citation or Reference List Citation is the list of references at the end of the research paper.

The American Psychological Association (APA) style manual is a widely accepted standard for preparing scientific papers and reports in the social sciences and other fields, such as behavioural sciences, education, business, and nursing. The APA provides guidelines on preparing the citations in a paper/report. The latest edition of American Psychological Association (APA) style manual is edition 6 published in the year 2010.

Electronic sources include websites, emails, films, television programs, social media, podcasts and radio broadcasts, online journals and eBooks. Electronic publishing is now a standard form of accessing information, but many sources are published in both paper and electronic formats. You should cite according to the format you accessed. Unlike fixed-media sources, online materials can easily be changed, or disappear altogether, so full and accurate citation information is essential.

An electronic source is any source that exists primarily in electronic form and is accessed primarily through electronic means. Websites, online periodicals, online books, e-mails and postings, and even CD-ROMs are all forms of electronic sources. But be careful: not all materials found through electronic means are necessarily electronic sources. For example, if a PDF of an article you found through a database on the library’s website was originally published in a printed journal, then the article doesn’t qualify as an electronic source. In short, there’s a difference between electronic sources and sources that are accessed electronically.

**General Rules**

1. Follow patterns for print sources when possible. Electronic citations require many of the same elements, in the same order, as fixed-media sources. As a general rule, provide as much information as possible concerning authorship, location and availability.
2. For the reference list, provide the following pieces of information:
   * Author
   * Date (published or last updated)
   * Title
   * Format description (where necessary) between square brackets
3. After providing basic information about an online source-author, date, title, and so on- add sufficient retrieval information so that readers can locate your sources on the Internet. For example, a webpage URL or a DOI.
4. Use a digital object identifier (DOI) when available. Current publications usually display the DOI- a fixed alphanumeric link to an online document- at the top of the first page. When it is available, use it to identify the source.
5. Use a uniform resource locator (URL) as an alternative. When a DOI is not available, use the URL of the home page of the online source. A complete URL is necessary only when a source is difficult to locate within a website.
6. Present a source's DOI or URL with care. To ensure that you record a DOI or URL exactly, copy and paste it into your reference-list entry.
7. Divide the DOI or URL when necessary.To avoid large spaces in citations, divide DOis or URLs *before* punctuation; however, retain *http:!!* as a unit.
8. Present retrieval statements with care.A retrieval statement ending with a DOI or a URL has no end punctuation because a closing period might be misinterpreted as part of the identification number or electronic address
9. Use retrieval dates onlywhen sources are likely to change (for example, wikis).

**Citing an Article in an Online journal**

1. To cite an article in an online journal, first provide the information that is required for the print version of the article. If the article has a DOI, use it. Otherwise, give the URL of the source as the retrieval statement.
2. Use the word “doi” followed by colon in case of articles with DOI
3. Use the words “Retrieved from” before the URL in case articles without DOI.

Example 1 (With DOI)

Brownlie, D. (2007). Toward effective poster presentations: An annotated bibliography. *European Journal of Marketing, 41*, 1245-1283. doi:10.1108/03090560710821161

Example 2 (Without DOI)

Kenneth, I. A. (2000). A Buddhist response to the nature of human rights. *Journal of Buddhist Ethics, 8*. Retrieved from http://www.cac.psu.edu/jbe/twocont.html

**Citing an E-Book**

1. To cite an e-book, prepare an entry in the same way as print book however, omit the city and publisher. Then present a retrieval information/statement with or without DOI as the case may be.

**Citing an Electronic Thesis / Dissertation**

1. Give the author and year of publication as in other sources
2. Give the title in italics
3. Give the type of resource (Master/ Doctoral etc. ) followed by the publishing Institution and place in bracket.
4. At the end, provide the retrieval statement with the prefix “ Retrieved from”

Example

Ignatov, I. (2013).  *Eastward voyages and the late medieval European worldview* (Master’s thesis, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand). Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10092/9187