

Appendix B

Documenting Your Electronic Sources

Copyright laws came into effect when people started realizing that income could be made by selling their words. In an era dubbed “The Age of Information,” knowledge and words are taking on more significance than ever. Laws requiring writers to document or give credit to the sources of their information, while evolving, are still in effect.

Various organizations have developed style manuals detailing, among other style matters, how to document sources in their particular disciplines. For writing in English composition and literature, Modern Language Association (MLA) and American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines are the most commonly used, but others, such as those in *The Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS), are available. Always find out from your instructor what style to use in a specific assignment so that you can follow the appropriate guidelines.

For general information on MLA and APA citations, the best print sources are:

Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 6th ed. NY: MLA, 2003.

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington: APA.

Because the methods of obtaining electronic information are developing so rapidly, printed style manuals have had difficulty in keeping up with the changes and in developing documentation styles for electronic sources. As a result, the most up-to-date information from the MLA and the APA about documenting online sources with URLs can be found on these organizations’ websites. This Appendix shows you how to credit your electronic sources based on the information there.

When you cite electronic sources, it is vital to type every letter, number, symbol, and space accurately. Any error makes it impossible to retrieve your source. Since electronic sources tend to be transitory, printing a hard copy of your

sources will make it easier for you to cite accurately and provide evidence for your documentation. MLA style encloses Internet addresses and URLs (Uniform Resource Locators) in angle brackets < >. If you see them around an address, do not use them as part of the address when you attempt to retrieve the source. APA style does not enclose URLs.

Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Guidelines

These guidelines follow the documentation style authorized by the Modern Language Association for electronic sources. Web sources are documented in basically the same way as traditional sources. According to the MLA website, the following items should be included if they are available:

1. Name of the author, editor, compiler, or translator of the source (if available and relevant), reversed for alphabetizing and followed by an abbreviation, such as ed., if appropriate
2. Title of a poem, short story, article, or similar short work within a scholarly project, database, or periodical (in quotation marks); or title of a posting to a discussion list or forum (taken from the subject line and put in quotation marks), followed by the description Online posting
3. Title of a book (underlined)
4. Name of the editor, compiler, or translator of the text (if relevant and if not cited earlier), preceded by the appropriate abbreviation, such as ed.
5. Publication information for any print version of the source
6. Title of the scholarly project, database, periodical, or professional or personal site (underlined); or, for a professional or personal site with no title, a description such as Homepage
7. Name of the editor of the scholarly project or database (if available)
8. Version number of the source (if not part of the title) or, for a journal, the volume number, issue number, or other identifying number
9. Date of electronic publication, of the latest update, or of posting
10. For a posting to a discussion list or forum, the name of the list or forum
11. The number range or total number of pages, paragraphs, or other sections, if they are numbered
12. Name of any institution or organization sponsoring or associated with the website
13. Date when the researcher accessed the source
14. Electronic address, or URL, of the source (in angle brackets)

Examples:

Book

Shaw, Bernard. Pygmalion. 1912. Bartleby Archive. 6 Mar. 1998 <<http://www.columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/shaw/>>.

Poem

Carroll, Lewis. "Jabberwocky." 1872. 6 Mar. 1998.
<<http://www.jabberwocky.com/carroll/jabber/jabberwocky.html>>.

Article in a Journal

Rehberger, Dean. "The Censoring of Project #17: Hypertext Bodies and Censorship." Kairos 2.2 (Fall 1997): 14 secs. 6 Mar. 1998 <http://english.ttu.edu/kairos/2.2/index_f.html>.

Article in a Magazine

Viagas, Robert, and David Lefkowitz. "Capeman Closing Mar. 28." Playbill 5 Mar. 1998. 6 Mar. 1998 <<http://www1.playbill.com/cgi-bin/plb/news?cmd=show&code=30763>>.

Article in a Newspaper

Sandomir, Richard. "Yankees Talk Trades in Broadcast Booth." New York Times on the Web 4 Dec. 2001. 5 Dec. 2001 <<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/business/media/index.html>>.

Article in a Reference Database

"Jupiter." Britannica Online. Vers. 97.1.1 Mar. 1997. Encyclopaedia Britannica. 29 Mar. 1998 <<http://www.eb.com:180>>.

Posting to a Discussion List

Grumman, Bob. "Shakespeare's Literacy." Online posting. 6 Mar. 1998. Deja News. <humanities.lit.author>.

Scholarly Project

Voice of the Shuttle: Web Page for Humanities Research. Ed. Alan Liu. Mar. 1998. U of California Santa Barbara. 8 Mar. 1998 <<http://humanitas.ucsb.edu/>>.

Professional Site

The Nobel Foundation Official Website. The Nobel Foundation. 28 Feb. 1998 <<http://www.nobel.se/>>.

Personal Site

Thiroux, Emily. Home page. 7 Mar. 1998 <<http://academic.csubak.edu/home/acadpro/departments/english/engthrx.htmlx>>.

Government or Institutional Site

Zebra Mussels in Vermont. Homepage. State of Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. 3 May 1998 <<http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/waterq/smcap.htm>>.

Synchronous Communications (such as MOOs, MUDs, and IRCs)

Ghostly Presence. Group Discussion. telnet 16 Mar. 1997 <moo.du.org:8000/80anon/anonview/14036#focus>.

Gopher Sites

Banks, Vickie, and Joe Byers. "EDTECH." 18 Mar. 1997 <gopher://ericyr.syr.edu:70/00/Listservs/EDTECH/README>.

FTP (File Transfer Protocol) Sites

U.S. Supreme Court directory. 6 Mar. 1998 <[ftp://ftp.cwru.edu/U.S.Supreme.Court/](http://ftp.cwru.edu/U.S.Supreme.Court/)>.

Online Work of Art

Van Gogh, Vincent. The Olive Trees. 1889. Museum of Modern Art, New York. 5 Dec. 2001 <<http://www.moma.org/docs/collection/paintsculpt/recent/c463.htm>>.

Online Interview

Plaxco, Jim. Interview. Planetary Studies Foundation. Oct. 1992. 5 Dec. 2001 <<http://www.planets.org>>.

Online Film or Film Clip

Columbus, Chris, dir. Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone. Trailer. Warner Brothers, 2001. 5 Dec. 2001 <<http://hollywood.com>>.

Electronic Television or Radio Program

Chayes, Sarah. "Concorde." All Things Considered. Natl. Public Radio. 26 July 2000. 7 Dec. 2001 <<http://www.npr.com/programs/atc/archives>>.

Synchronous Communication

Author's last name, First name. Identifying label. "Title of work." xx Month 20xx. Name of forum. xx Month 20xx. <[Telnet://lingua.networkname](http://telnet://lingua.networkname)>.

Generally follow the guidelines for other online citations, modifying them wherever necessary, but always provide as much information as possible. Some cited material will require identifying labels (e.g., Interview or Online posting), but such labels should be neither underlined nor set within quotation marks. When documenting synchronous communications that are posted in MOO (multiuser domain, object oriented) and MUD (multiuser domain) forums, name the speaker or speakers; describe the event; provide the date of the event and the name of the forum (e.g., linguaMOO); and cite the date of access as well as the network name (including the prefix Telnet://).

Work from an Online Service

Author's last name, First name. Publication. 20xx.
Internet Provider name. xx Month 20xx. Keyword:
Name.

Or

Last name, First name. Publication. 20xx. Internet
Provider name. xx Month 20xx. Path: Name; Name;
Name.

Brash, Stephen B. "Bioprospecting the Public Domain."
Cultural Anthropology 14.4 (1999): 535-56.
ProQuest Direct. Teaneck Public Library,
Teaneck, NJ. 7 Dec. 1999 <<http://proquest.umi.com>>.

Or

Dutton, Gail. "Greener Pigs." Popular Science 255.5
(1999): 38-39. ProQuest Direct. Teaneck Public
Library, Teaneck, NJ. 7 Dec. 1999 <<http://proquest.umi.com>>.

For works that have been accessed through an online service, either through a library service (e.g., ProQuest Direct or Lexis-Nexis) or through one of the large Internet providers (e.g., America Online), you may not know the URL of the source. In such cases, cite the keyword or path that led to the source, if applicable, and separate each individual item in the path with a semicolon; the keyword or path will be the last item in the citation. For sources accessed through library services, as above, cite the name of the service, the name of the library, the date you assessed the material, and the URL of the service's homepage. If you also know the name of the database used, include that information (underlined) before the name of the online service.

American Psychological Association (APA) Style Guidelines

The most recent (5th) edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* includes general guidelines for citing electronic sources, and the APA has published specific examples for documenting Web sources on its Web page. Go to:

<http://www.apastyle.org/electre.html>

In general, document these sources as you do traditional sources, giving credit to the author and including the title and date of publication. Include as much information as possible to help your reader to be able to retrieve the information. Any sources that are not generally available to your readers should be documented within the body of your writing as a personal communication but not included in your reference list. Such sources include material from listservs, newsgroups, Internet relay chats (IRCs), MOOs, MUDs, and e-mail.

According to information at the website for the American Psychological Association entitled "How to Cite Information From the World Wide Web," all references begin with the same information that would be provided for a printed source (or as much of that information as possible). The Web information is then placed at the end of the reference. It is important to use the "Retrieved from" and the date because documents on the Web may change in content, move, or be removed from a site altogether. To cite a website in text (but not a specific document), it's sufficient to give the address (e.g., <http://www.apa.org>) there. No reference entry is needed.

Use the following guidelines to include a source in your reference list:

Name of author [if given]. (Publication date) [in parentheses]. Title of the article [following APA guidelines for capitalization]. Title of periodical or electronic text [italicized]. Volume number and/or pages [if any]. Retrieved [include the date here] from the World Wide Web: [include the URL here, and do not end with a period]

Examples:

Journal Article

Fine, M. A. & Kurdek, L. A. (1993, November). Reflections on determining authorship credit and authorship order on faculty-student collaborations. *American Psychologist*, 48.11,

1141-1147. Retrieved March 6, 1998 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.apa.org/journals/amp/kurdek.html>

Newspaper Article

Murray, B. (1998, February). Email bonding with your students. *APA Monitor* [Newspaper, selected stories online]. Retrieved March 6, 1998 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.apa.org/monitor/bond.html>

World Wide Web Site

Williams, Scott. (1996, June 14). Back to school with the quilt. *AIDS Memorial Quilt Website*. Retrieved June 14, 1996, from <http://www.aidsquilt.org/newsletter/stoires/backto.html>

File Transfer Protocol (FTP), Telnet, or Gopher Site

Altar, T.W. (1993). *Vitamin B12 and vegans*. Retrieved May 28, 1996, from <ftp://ftp.cs.yle.edu>

King, Jr., M.L. (1963, August 28). I have a dream [speech]. Retrieved January 2, 1996, from <telnet://ukanaix.cc.ukans.edu>

Synchronous Communications (MOO, MUD, IRC)

Harnack, A. (1996, April 4). Words [Group discussion]. Retrieved April 5, 1996, from <telnet://moo.du.org/port=8888>

Web Discussion Forum

Holden, J.B. (2001, January 2). The failure of higher education [Formal discussion initiation]. Message posted to <http://ifets.mtu.edu/archives>

Listserv (electronic mailing list)

Weston, Heather (2002, June 12). Re: Registration schedule now available. Message posted to the Chamberlain Kronsage dormitory electronic mailing list, archived at <http://listserv.registrar.uwsp.edu/archives/62.html>

Newsgroup

Hotgirl (2002, January 12). Dowsing effort fails. Message posted to <news://alt.science.esp3/html>