

# Author-date: Internet referencing

Internet resources are those information materials that are available through a web browser. Not all Internet resources are suitable sources of information for university studies and must be critically assessed for usefulness and reliability. When you reference Internet material, you must ensure that your reader has a clear path to find the resource to which you are referring.

1. Using information from the Internet?
2. In-text references
3. The reference list
4. The dark Internet

## 1. Using information from the Internet?

The Internet allows you to access information from anywhere, and at any time. However, the information you retrieve may be a confusing collection of information in a wide variety of formats. Online information, along with your print resources, must ALWAYS be evaluated for relevance, currency, reliability, accuracy and coverage.

For information on evaluating sources, see UNE homepage > click Library > Training & help > click eSKILLS UNE > go to 3. Selecting and sorting your information > select Evaluating.

## 2. In-text reference

Internet in-text references require the author, date and page number (e.g. Jackson 2006:21), just as for in-text references to printed material; however, many Internet sites do not have specified authors, dates or page numbers. There are a number of conventions that you need to follow to allow for these differences.

### ❖ NO specified author

Treat as you would any other information without a specified author. Begin the in-text reference with the name of the organisation that produced the document. **IF** there is no organization, then use the title.

NO AUTHOR? Use the organisation

1. Students at graduate level need to evaluate their resource material so that they can ensure that it is relevant to their argument (Learning systems 2009:10).
2. No student should use Internet material without first assessing its origins ('Assessing your resources' 2007:2).

NO AUTHOR? NO ORGANISATION?  
Use the title of the document

### ❖ Dates/NO date

There are often TWO dates: date created & date last modified/updated. Use the 'date (**year only**) last modified' as this is the site from where you have taken the information. **IF** there is no date at all, then treat as you would any other information without a specified date. Write **n.d.**

3. Smith (n.d.:21) considers that the electronic environment has no predictable formats.

### ❖ NO pages

NO DATE? Use n.d. (means no date)

COUNT the paragraphs if they are in the document. **IF** there are no paragraphs then place the word **online** after the date.

NO PAGE NUMBERS? Count the paragraphs

4. Lyons (2007:para. 23) asserts that 'the idea of page numbers in text does not carry over to on-screen documents'.
5. PDF files online usually carry page numbers, the same as other print materials. ('Referencing Internet resources' n.d.:online)

NO PAGE NUMBERS?  
NO PARAGRAPHS TO COUNT?  
Write the word **online**

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### 3. Reference list examples

When you write your reference list, you need to analyse the patterns of each reference type. The basic details that you need to look for are about authors, dates, titles, editions and publishers/URLs.

Salinger, M. & Preston, R. 2000 (updated 3 May 2001), 'Using critical thinking', *College Thinking Styles*, New Think Consortium. Retrieved 7 June 2009 from <http://www.criticalthinking.org/College/uniclass/Using.html>

**Analysis:** Author > Year > (date of last revision if given), > 'Title of article/section', > *Title of Web Site* > Title of Organisation. Retrieval statement (date of access and URL).

author/s surname/s & initial/s      year of publication      date of last revision      title of article/section if applicable      title of web site in italics  
Salinger, M. & Preston, R. 2000 (updated 3 May 2001), 'Using critical thinking', *College Thinking Styles*, New Think Consortium. Retrieved 7 June 2009 from <http://www.criticalthinking.org/College/uniclass/Using.html>  
Title of organisation that produced the site      Date you accessed the site  
URL on a separate line

#### ❖ Capitalisation styles

'Title of the article/section'; *Title of the Web Site*; Title of the Sponsor

Minimal capitalisation and single inverted commas

Maximal capitalisation and italics

Maximal capitalisation

Not all Internet sites give information that conform to this example, and there are variations in format depending on the type of Internet source you are using. Use the guidelines below and, if still in doubt provide as much information as you can as closely as possible to the above format.

#### ❖ Authors

Treat as you would any other information without a specified author. Begin the reference list item with the name of the **organisation** that produced the document. **IF** there is no organization, then use the document **title**.

The University of Melbourne 2008 (updated 19 October 2009), 'Evaluating sources', *AIRport*, The University of Melbourne. Retrieved 15 December 2009 from <https://airport.unimelb.edu.au/gate5/writing/argument/>

#### ❖ Dates

You will need to search the site for (a) when the site was first published (b) when the site was last updated/revised. Use whatever information you can find, **IF neither of these is available, then use .n.d. (no date)**.

Johnson, P.J.& Abby, G.Y. n.d. *Bits and Bytes*. Retrieved 21 Dec. 2009 from <https://john.abby./bits 'n'bytes>

#### ❖ URLs

Take a **new line** for the URL. If you have to **break the URL** to begin a new line, do so after the slash or before a full stop. Do not allow your word processor to insert a hyphen at the break. **Never** place a full stop at the end of a URL.

### 4. The 'dark Internet'

The term **dark internet** is used when a web address cannot take the user back to the actual site (e.g. in a Blackboard unit frame; a purchased Internet article).

If you have any doubts, copy the web address into your browser and check that it reaches the source that you have referenced in your essay. If it does not, then you would have to find a way to get the correct address (e.g. hover over the link, OR to open the site > right click > select 'This Frame' > select 'Open Frame in New Window' > copy the URL > paste into your Reference list). If there is no reliable way to show the way back to the site, include your source as an appendix.

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