

A Guide for Citing Sources

What is a citation?

A citation provides details on a source, such as its title and authors. When you use a source, you give credit to the authors for the information you found with a citation. A list of all your citations is called a **bibliography**.

Why should you cite?

When you share ideas that are not your own, you need to tell your audience where you found them. This helps others find the same information. When you do not cite a source and take credit for research or an idea that is not your own, you are **plagiarizing**.

Keep in mind not everything published online, or even in books, is true. Sometimes, authors:

- Make mistakes, such as not understanding the information they found.
- Present only the facts that fit the story they want to tell – and hide the other facts that don't fit their story. This one-sidedness is called **bias**, and this type of writing is not truthful because it does not tell the whole story.
- Use outdated information when new discoveries are made about a topic. Everything changes all the time!

By citing your sources, you allow others to check your work and make sure that the information you are using is correct. Likewise, when you use sources cited by others, you can check whether their information is correct.

It's *always* good to question sources – especially those used by professionals like museums, libraries and the media – because you want to guarantee that the information you are learning and teaching to others is true.

How do you cite sources?

There are several styles for citing sources in your text and in your bibliography. Different academic fields typically use different styles – ask your teacher or professor which one to use for your assignment. To learn how to correctly format your citations, check out these websites:

- [Purdue University's Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#): General research resources, including guides to different citation styles
- [Zotero](#): Free software program for organizing and citing research
- [Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide](#)
- [MLA Style Quick Guide](#)

Many museums and research libraries – including us! – specially format citations for sharing their sources. Learn how to correctly cite from the Museum and Memorial's Collection with this guide.

National WWI Museum and Memorial Citation Style

Objects from the Online Collections Database

Online Collections Database, <"catalog number">, www.theworldwar.org/research/database. National WWI Museum and Memorial. Online. Accessed <Access date>.

Example:

Online Collections Database, "1940.1.32", www.theworldwar.org/research/database. National WWI Museum and Memorial. Online. Accessed March 23, 2022.

Objects from Online Collections Database – Individual Letter(s)

Online Collections Database, <"catalog number – Letter #XX">, www.theworldwar.org/research/database. National WWI Museum and Memorial. Online. Accessed <Access date>.

Example:

Online Collections Database, "2015.162.4 – Letter #004", www.theworldwar.org/research/database. National WWI Museum and Memorial. Online. Accessed March 23, 2022.

Online Exhibits

Author. <"Exhibit Title."> Online Museum Exhibit. <Website URL>. Accessed <Access date>.

Example:

National WWI Museum and Memorial. "War Fare: From the Homefront to the Frontlines." Online Museum Exhibit. www.theworldwar.org/exhibitions/war-fare. Accessed March 23, 2022.

Articles and Website Interactives

Author. <"Article Title."> <Website URL>. Accessed <Access date>.

Example:

- National WWI Museum and Memorial. "Women in World War I." www.theworldwar.org/learn/women. Accessed March 23, 2022.
- Nancy Bristow. "Pandemic Then and Now: Lessons from the 1918 Influenza." www.theworldwar.org/learn/about-wwi/pandemic-then-and-now. Accessed March 23, 2022.
- National WWI Museum and Memorial. "Interactive WWI Timeline." www.theworldwar.org/interactive-wwi-timeline. Accessed March 23, 2022.

Exhibitions

<"Exhibit Title."> Museum Exhibit. (Kansas City, MO: National WWI Museum and Memorial). Visited <Date of visit>.

Example:

"Main Gallery." Museum Exhibit. (Kansas City, MO: National WWI Museum and Memorial). Visited March 23, 2022.

Questions on citations? Contact research@theworldwar.org or call 816.888.8142.