APA Electronic References

Introduction
Researchers can now access electronically many of the same types of authoritative, current sources previously available only in print or other fixed media (i.e., microfilm, DVD, CD-ROM). Because not all Internet sources have title and copyright pages, the elements for a reference can be difficult to find. Here are some tips for properly citing sources pulled from the Internet and online library databases.

What to Include
In general, include the same elements, in the same order, as you would for a reference to a fixed-media source, and add as much electronic retrieval information as needed for others to locate the sources you cited.

Although the publisher's geographical location and name are included in references to non-periodicals retrieved in print or other fixed media, these elements are generally not necessary in references to materials retrieved electronically. If the publisher identity is not clear from the author name, URL, database name, or other reference information, include it as part of the retrieval statement:


Journal Articles
For journal articles downloaded from a journal database, always include the journal issue number (if available) along with the volume number, regardless of whether the journal is paginated separately by issue or continuously by volume:

Retrieval Date
For undated or otherwise changeable content retrieved from the open Web, as well as in-preparation, in-press, or preprint journal articles, include the retrieval date. No retrieval date is necessary for content that is not likely to be changed or updated, such as a journal article or book.


Electronic Book
Electronic books are available in a variety of formats and delivery methods. They may be viewed page-by-page on a public Web site, downloaded in part or in whole from a database (e.g., netLibrary, PsycBOOKS, Gutenberg Project), or purchased as audio files:


Note: Use “Available from” instead of “Retrieved from” when the URL leads to information on how to obtain the cited material rather than to the material itself.

Electronic Media Spelling Guide
Below is a list of common terms and their preferred spelling.

- database
- DOI
- e-journal
- e-mail
- FTP
- Internet
- LISTSERV* (tm)—the generic term is electronic mailing list
- online
- PDF
- SGML
- URL
- Web

*LISTSERV is a trademarked, proprietary term; unless you know that is what is being used, you should use “electronic mailing list” rather than the, admittedly, more commonly used “list server.”