Table of Contents

HBS CITATION GUIDE—2018–19 ACADEMIC YEAR

Citation Conventions
About This Guide ............................................................................................................................................. 5
Purpose of Citations .......................................................................................................................................... 5
What to Cite .................................................................................................................................................. 5
Types of Citations: Footnotes, Source Lines, and Bibliographies ................................................................. 6
  Footnotes and Endnotes ............................................................................................................................... 6
  Source Lines ................................................................................................................................................. 6
  Bibliographies ............................................................................................................................................. 6
Repeating a Citation ....................................................................................................................................... 7
  Ibid .............................................................................................................................................................. 7
Shortened Citation Form .................................................................................................................................... 7
Creating New Citation Styles .......................................................................................................................... 8
Permission Requirements .................................................................................................................................. 8

Examples of Citations
Advertisements ....................................................................................................................................................... 9
Analyst Reports .................................................................................................................................................... 10
Annual Reports ................................................................................................................................................... 10
Articles .............................................................................................................................................................. 11
Blogs ................................................................................................................................................................. 11
Bond Prospectuses ............................................................................................................................................ 11
Books (Printed) ............................................................................................................................................... 12
Brochures .......................................................................................................................................................... 14
Cases ................................................................................................................................................................. 15
Charts ................................................................................................................................................................. 16
Classroom Discussions .................................................................................................................................... 16
Compiled Information ...................................................................................................................................... 16
Conference Papers .......................................................................................................................................... 17
Databases ......................................................................................................................................................... 18
Downloaded Documents .................................................................................................................................. 18
E-Books ............................................................................................................................................................. 18
  CD-ROM ....................................................................................................................................................... 18
  Kindle ............................................................................................................................................................ 18
  Kobo ............................................................................................................................................................. 18
  Nook .............................................................................................................................................................. 19
  PDF E-book .................................................................................................................................................. 19
Email ................................................................................................................................................................. 19
Facebook ......................................................................................................................................................... 19
Films ................................................................................................................................................................... 20
Government Documents ..................................................................................................................................... 20
  Congressional bills ...................................................................................................................................... 20
  Congressional hearings, published .............................................................................................................. 20
  Congressional hearings, unpublished .......................................................................................................... 20
  Report for a public hearing ......................................................................................................................... 20
  Report of U.S. presidential commission ..................................................................................................... 21
  Testimony before congressional committee ............................................................................................... 21
  United States Code ..................................................................................................................................... 21
Citations of Commercial Databases

ABI/ProQuest ..................................................................................................................40
BCC Research ..................................................................................................................40
Bloomberg .........................................................................................................................40
Business Source Complete ...............................................................................................40
Capital IQ ..........................................................................................................................41
Compustat (see Standard & Poor’s) ................................................................................41
Datastream .......................................................................................................................41
Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) ....................................................................................41
eMarketer ..........................................................................................................................41
EMIS (Emerging Markets Information System) .................................................................41
Euromonitor (see Passport) .............................................................................................41
Factiva ...............................................................................................................................41
FactSet ...............................................................................................................................41
Frost & Sullivan ................................................................................................................41
Gartner Online Information Resources ...........................................................................41
Global Financial Data .....................................................................................................42
Hoover’s Online ...............................................................................................................42
I/B/E/S ...............................................................................................................................42
IBISWorld ........................................................................................................................42
JSTOR .................................................................................................................................42
LexisNexis Academic ......................................................................................................42
MarketResearch.com Academic ....................................................................................42
Mintel Market Sizes .........................................................................................................42
Mintel Reports ................................................................................................................42
NetAdvantage (see Standard & Poor’s) ...........................................................................42
OECD iLibrary ................................................................................................................42
OneSource Global Business Browser .............................................................................42
Orbis .................................................................................................................................42
Passport ...........................................................................................................................43
Preqin ...............................................................................................................................43
SDC (Securities Data Company) ....................................................................................43
Standard & Poor’s (S&P) ...............................................................................................43
  Compustat Data via Research Insight ...........................................................................43
  Execucomp .....................................................................................................................43
  Global Credit Portal .....................................................................................................43
  NetAdvantage ..............................................................................................................43
Statista .............................................................................................................................43
Thomson ONE ...............................................................................................................43
World Development Indicators (WDI Online) .................................................................43
Citation Conventions

ABOUT THIS GUIDE
This guide describes citation conventions for HBS students to use when writing research papers. For information about citing materials not covered in this guide, please contact rreiser@hbs.edu.

PURPOSE OF CITATIONS
There are three main reasons to include citations in your papers:

• To give credit to the authors of the source materials you used when writing the paper.
• To enable readers to follow up on the source materials.
• To demonstrate that your paper is well-researched.

There are many ways to document your research. The following guidelines, based on The Chicago Manual of Style, present one method. Whichever method you choose, it is important to follow a format that is clear and consistent.

WHAT TO CITE
You should cite all direct quotations, paraphrased factual statements, and borrowed ideas. The only items you don’t need to cite are facts that are common knowledge, such as the year of the first U.S. stock market crash. However, if you present facts in someone else’s words, you should cite the source of those words. In addition, if you paraphrase large amounts of information from one source, you should cite that source, as emphasized in the following guidelines from sourcing expert Gordon Harvey:

When you draw a great deal of information from a single source, you should cite that source even if the information is common knowledge, since the source (and its particular way of organizing the information) has made a significant contribution to your paper.¹

Failure to give credit to the words and ideas of another author is plagiarism. Most people don’t intend to commit plagiarism, but may do so inadvertently because they are in a hurry or because of sloppy work habits. For tips on how to avoid plagiarism, see the following resources:


Types of Citations: Footnotes, Source Lines, and Bibliographies

Citations can appear in three main forms: footnotes (or endnotes), source lines, and bibliographies. Each form contains similar information arranged in different ways. The following sections provide details about each form.

Footnotes and Endnotes

Footnotes and endnotes have the same function—to cite the exact page of a source you refer to in your paper. The only difference between footnotes and endnotes is placement: footnotes appear at the bottom of the page, whereas endnotes appear at the end of the document.

The main characteristics of footnotes and endnotes are as follows:

- They are preceded by a number.
- The author’s name is in natural order.
- The elements of the citation are separated by commas.

The following examples show a quotation and its corresponding footnote or endnote:

Quotation cited in text
Sahlman says, “Taking advantage of arbitrage opportunities is a viable and potentially profitable way to enter a business.” 32

Corresponding footnote or endnote

Source Lines

Source lines typically appear under charts, exhibits, figures, tables, and other graphical items. Source lines should acknowledge the source of the graphic or the data that was used to create it. A source line begins with the word Source and continues with the same information that would appear in a footnote or endnote.

The following are some examples of source lines:

Source: Jon F. Thompson, Cycle World, vol. 35, no. 6 (June 2012), p. 23.


Bibliographies

A bibliography lists all of the references you used to create a research paper. The bibliography appears at the end of the paper, after the endnotes (if any).
Should You Include a Bibliography?

If you have included complete footnotes (or endnotes) and source lines in your paper, then you don’t need to include a bibliography unless your professor has requested one, or unless you want to provide a summary of the sources you used when writing your paper.

Formatting a Bibliography

Bibliographies have the following formatting conventions:

- The first author’s name is inverted (last name first), and most elements are separated by periods.
- Entries are arranged alphabetically by the author’s last name, or by the first word of the title if no author is listed.
- Entries have a special indentation style (hanging indent) in which all lines but the first are indented.

Examples of Bibliography Entries

The following are examples of bibliography entries:


REPEATING A CITATION

After the first complete citation of a work, you may abbreviate subsequent instances by using either Ibid. or a shortened form of the citation.

Ibid.

Use Ibid. to repeat a citation that appears immediately after the original one. Ibid. takes the place of the author's name, the title of the work, and as much of the subsequent information as is identical. For example:


51 Ibid., p. 6.

If you are planning to rearrange your footnotes or endnotes later on, it’s a good idea to use the shortened citation form rather than Ibid.

Shortened Citation Form

Use the shortened citation form to a repeat citation that is after, but not contiguous to, the current one. This form is preferable to Ibid. for citations that you intend to rearrange later.
The shortened citation should include enough information to help readers identify the source—i.e., the last name of the author; enough of the title to be clear; and the page number, if different from the first. For example:


2 [Citation of different source]

3 Hounshell, *From the American System*, p. 119.

**Creating New Citation Styles**

If you can’t find an example of the type of source material you want to cite, and if you’ve exhausted other resources (including *The Chicago Manual of Style* and reiser@hbs.edu), then just cite all of the details that would help readers find the source easily. Think about the four “W”s: WHO created the work, WHAT is the title and type of information, WHEN was it published, and WHERE can readers find it?

The following examples show citations that were created without templates but are precise and easy to follow:

- Author’s email survey of students from MBA class of 2013, November 16, 2012, Harvard Business School, Boston, MA.


- Caroline J. Ferguson and Barbara A. Schaal, “Phylogeography of Phlox pilosa subsp. ozarkana,” poster presented at the 16th International Botanical Congress, St. Louis, 1999.

When you’re citing unusual source materials, don’t be too concerned about following a particular format; instead, just include all of the details that would help readers locate the information quickly. (It’s usually better to provide too much rather than too little information.)

**Permission Requirements**

If you plan to publish your paper or distribute it beyond your classroom (e.g., on the Web), and if the paper contains the following kinds of information, then you might need permission from the copyright holder:

- Graphical items (charts, graphs, maps, photographs, tables, etc.)
- Entire documents or articles
- Excerpts of text or data that are greater than 10% of the original

Be sure to check the copyright holder’s permission requirements before redistributing any of their information outside the classroom. The copyright holder might be a person, an organization, or even a state or national government.
Examples of Citations

This section shows examples for the most common types of source materials. For information about citing other materials, see Creating New Citation Styles on p. 8, or contact rreiser@hbs.edu.

A few notes:

ACCESS DATES – For brevity, access dates for URLs show only the month and year (e.g., June 2012). However, if you’re citing information that pertains to a time-sensitive field such as medicine, then it makes sense to include a complete access date.

CAPITALIZATION – Titles in citations are capitalized exactly as they appear in the source documents. For example, under Analyst Reports, the first two examples use sentence-style capitalization, whereas the next two use headline style. These styles reflect the capitalization style of the original documents.

When all-caps are used in the title of a source document only for the sake of design (and not for any substantive or semantic reason), they should be converted to headline-style caps in the citation. For details on headline-style capitalization, see The Chicago Manual of Style.

FOOTNOTE VS. BIBLIOGRAPHY FORMAT – Most examples appear in both footnote and bibliography format. Although your paper will probably require citations in footnote format only, the bibliography format is shown in case your professor wants you to include a bibliography.

These examples are based on the “Notes and Bibliography” style that is described in The Chicago Manual of Style. That manual also describes the “Author-Date” style, which is preferred by some publishers. For descriptions of each style, see The Chicago Manual of Style.

URLs – In the examples, some URLs have been replaced by [URL]. In your paper, you should replace [URL] with the actual URL, or with a shortened URL if space is limited.

ADVERTISEMENTS

On the Web

Footnote


Bibliography

ANALYST REPORTS

Signed (on the Web)

Footnote

Bibliography

Unsigned

Footnote

Unsigned (via database)

Footnote

ANNUAL REPORTS (PRINTED)

Footnote
4 General Motors, 2001 Annual Report (Detroit: General Motors, 2002), p. 34.

Bibliography

NOTE: Publication details, such as the location and name of the publisher, are optional in citations of annual reports — e.g., the following format is also fine: General Motors, 2001 Annual Report.

ANNUAL REPORTS (ONLINE)

On the Web

Footnote

Bibliography
On the Web (via database)

Footnote


Bibilography


ARTICLES

See Newspapers (Printed); Periodicals (Printed).

BLOGS

In the first example below, “blog” is in parentheses because it is not part of the blog title. In the second example, “blog” is italicized and capitalized because it is part of the blog title.

Blog post

Footnote


Footnote


Comment on blog post

Footnote


BOND PROSPECTUSES

Footnote

8 Formula One Finance B.V., August 1999 prospectus for US$1.4 billion of 100% Secured Floating Rate Notes, due 2010.
Bibliography

Formula One Finance B.V. August 1999 prospectus for US$1.4 billion of 100% Secured Floating Rate Notes, due 2010.

**BOOKS (PRINTED)**

**One author**

Footnote


Bibliography


**Two authors**

Footnote


Bibliography


**Three authors**

Footnote


Bibliography


**More than three authors**

Footnote

Bibliography


Editor

Footnote


Bibliography


Multiple editors

Footnote


Bibliography


Corporate author (organization, association, or corporation)

Footnote


Bibliography


Edition

Footnote


Bibliography

Chapters or other titled parts of a book

Footnote


Bibliography


Footnote


Bibliography


Books (Online)

See E-Books.

Brochures

According to The Chicago Manual of Style, “pamphlets, corporate reports, brochures, and other freestanding publications are treated essentially as books.” 6

Signed

Footnote


Bibliography

Unsigned

Footnote


Bibliography


Footnote


Bibliography


CASES (PRINTED)

Printed

Footnote


Bibliography


CASES (ONLINE)

On the Web

Footnote


Bibliography

Footnote


Bibliography


CHARTS

When citing a chart, illustration, or other graphical item, use the same style that is used to cite tables. See Tables.

CITATION WITHIN A CITATION

See Secondary Sources.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSIONS

Footnote


Bibliography


COMPILED INFORMATION

The way you create a graphical item like a chart, exhibit, or table determines how you should word the source line for it. The following examples show source lines that vary according to how the item was created.

Item copied directly from a single source

Source: [Citation of SOURCE — e.g., author, title, publisher, date, etc.]

Item compiled from multiple sources

Source: Compiled from [SOURCE 1], [SOURCE 2], and [SOURCE 3].
Item compiled from multiple sources, including the author’s own calculations
Source: Compiled from [SOURCE 1], [SOURCE 2], and author’s calculations.

Item in format created by the author, but based on data from multiple sources
Source: Author, based on data from [SOURCE 1], [SOURCE 2], and [SOURCE 3].

See also Tables.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

Published (in printed form)

Footnote

Bibliography

Published (in online form)

Footnote

Bibliography

Unpublished

Footnote
Bibliography


DATABASES

To cite information you found in a database, see Citations of Commercial Databases on p. 39.

DOWNLOADED DOCUMENTS

Footnote


E-BOOKS

To cite an e-book, include the same information you would include when citing the printed version but change the publication date (if needed) and add the format or type of e-reader. In addition, include the URL if you read the e-book on the Web.

NOTE: The following examples are shown in footnote format only.

CD-ROM


NOTE: If there are no page numbers, it’s fine to cite a chapter number, section name, or whatever type of locator is used in the book.

Kindle


Kobo

Nook


PDF E-book


EMAIL

Footnote

1 Sender’s Name, “Subject,” email message to Recipient’s Name, Date.

NOTE: *The Chicago Manual of Style* says the following about email addresses in citations: “An email address belonging to an individual should be omitted. Should it be needed in a specific context, it must be cited only with the permission of its owner.”

FACEBOOK

The following examples are shown in footnote format only.

Generic example

1 Username or Group Name, “First few words of post,” Facebook, Date, Time, URL, [access date].

Specific examples


Comment on Facebook post

Films
See Movies; Videos and Multimedia; Webcasts.

Government Documents
The following are some examples of citations for government documents. For more examples, see the information about public documents in The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th and 16th editions.

Congressional bills

Footnote

Bibliography

Congressional hearings, published

Footnote

Congressional hearings, unpublished

Footnote

Bibliography

Report for a public hearing

Footnote
Bibliography

Report of U.S. presidential commission (online)

Footnote

Bibliography

Testimony before congressional committee (printed)

Footnote

United States Code

Footnote

ILLUSTRATIONS
When citing a chart, illustration, or other graphical item, use the same style that is used to cite tables. See Tables.

INTERVIEWS

Television12

Footnote
Bibliography


**Published or recorded**

Footnote


Bibliography


Footnote


Bibliography


**Unattributed**

Footnote


**Unpublished**

Footnote (three variations)


14. Author’s interview with Gene Powell, Fort Worth, Texas, July 26, 2011.

Bibliography

Powell, Gene. Interview by author. Fort Worth, TX, July 26, 2011.

**JOURNALS**

See *Periodicals* (Printed).
LEGAL CASES

The following examples are shown in footnote format only.

U.S. Supreme Court


Lower federal courts


State and local courts


For more examples of legal citations, see the following resources:


The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (Harvard Law Review Association).


Introduction to Basic Legal Citation, ed. Peter W. Martin (Cornell Law School, Legal Information Institute, 2017), http://www.law.cornell.edu/citation/.

LINKEDIN PROFILES

Footnote


MAGAZINES

See Periodicals (Printed).

MAPS

Public domain maps

Footnote

Bibliography


Footnote


Bibliography


Copyrighted maps

Footnote

17 Used by permission of Graphic Maps, a d/b/a of the Woolwine-Moen Group, © 2007 Graphic Maps. All rights reserved. [URL], accessed July 2007.

Bibliography

Graphic Maps, a d/b/a of the Woolwine-Moen Group. © 2007 Graphic Maps. All rights reserved. [URL], accessed July 2007.

NOTE: The wording of citations for copyrighted information will vary according to each copyright holder’s requirements. The Terms & Conditions link in most databases provides guidelines for using and citing their data.

MARKET RESEARCH REPORTS

Footnote


Bibliography

MEMORANDUMS

Footnote
30 Harold Lehman to Runako Gregg, memorandum regarding [subject], [date], [company], from [source of memorandum — e.g., company, person, or external source].

Bibliography
Lehman, Harold, to Runako Gregg. Memorandum regarding [subject], [date], [company]. From [source of memorandum — e.g., company, person, or external source].

MINISODES

Footnote
31 “Arnold the Entrepreneur,” minisode adapted from same episode on Diff’rent Strokes (NBC, Season 7, Episode 8, originally aired November 17, 1984), available from YouTube, [URL], accessed April 15, 2009.

MOVIES

Footnote
32 Jerry McGuire, directed by Cameron Crowe (Columbia/TriStar Pictures, 1996). Film.

Bibliography

Movie (DVD)

Footnote
33 Jerry McGuire, directed by Cameron Crowe (Columbia/TriStar Pictures, 1996; Sony Pictures, Special Edition DVD, 2002).

Movie (Blu-ray Disc)

Footnote
33 Jerry McGuire, directed by Cameron Crowe (Columbia/TriStar Pictures, 1996; Sony Pictures, BD, 2008). See also Videos and Multimedia; Webcasts.

MUSIC

Recordings

Footnote
Bibliography


**NEWS RELEASES**

See *Press Releases*.

**NEWS WEBSITES**

Signed article

Footnote


Bibliography


Unsigned article

Footnote


Bibliography


**NOTES:**

In a bibliography entry for an unsigned article, the name of the news organization (e.g., CBS News) should stand in place of the author’s name.16

The names of news websites (e.g., Reuters, CBS News) should appear in roman (vs. italic) type.

**NEWSPAPERS (PRINTED)**

Signed newspaper article (in a specific section)

Footnote

Bibliography


Unsigned newspaper article

Footnote


Bibliography


Unsigned newspaper editorial

Footnote


Bibliography


NOTE: In a bibliography entry for an unsigned editorial, the name of the newspaper (e.g., The Wall Street Journal) should stand in place of the author’s name).

NEWSPAPERS (ONLINE)

Footnote


Bibliography


NEWSWIRES

The following examples are shown in footnote format only.


NOTES (HBS)

HBS technical notes are often referred to as notes. When citing notes, use the same style that is used to cite cases.

Printed

Footnote


Bibliography


Online

Footnote


Bibliography


PERIODICALS (PRINTED)

Signed articles

Footnote


Bibliography


Footnote

Bibliography


Footnote


Bibliography


Unsigned articles

Footnote


Bibliography


Footnote


Bibliography


NOTE: According to *The Chicago Manual of Style*: “In citations to a particular passage in a journal article, only the pages concerned are given. In references to the article as a whole (as in a bibliography or reference list), first and last pages are given.”

PERIODICALS (ONLINE)

Article from online journal or magazine

Footnote


Bibliography

Signed

Footnote

Bibliography

Unsigned

Footnote

Bibliography

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Footnote
26 Sender’s Name, personal communication [or pers. comm.] to author, April 12, 2018.

Footnote
1 Sender’s Name, text message to author, April 12, 2018.

PODCASTS

As the following examples show, some websites use the term podcast or webcast and others specify the file type, such as audio or video.


See also *Webcasts*. 
**POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS**

Footnote


Bibliography


See also *Conference Papers (Unpublished)*.

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Printed**

Footnote


Bibliography


**On the Web**

Footnote


Bibliography


**PROCEEDINGS**

See *Conference Papers*.
RADIO PROGRAMS

Footnote

Bibliography

Footnote

See also Podcasts.

RESEARCH PAPERS

See Working Papers (Printed).

SEC FILINGS

Footnote

Bibliography

Footnote

Bibliography

SECONDARY SOURCES

It is best to consult an original source whenever possible, but if the original source is unavailable, use the following citation style. (In the following examples, the Zukofsky article is the original source.)
Footnote


Bibliography


Speeches

Footnote


Footnote


Tables

Source lines are typically used to cite the source of a table or other graphical item.

Data from a table


Entire table (or other graphical item)

Source: Michael E. Porter, *Competitive Strategy* (New York: The Free Press, 1998), p. 73, Figure 3-4. Used with permission from The Free Press.

Technical notes

HBS technical notes are often referred to as notes. When citing notes, use the same style that is used to cite cases.

Television programs

Footnote

Bibliography


**THESES AND DISSERTATIONS**

Footnote


Bibliography


**TRANSCRIPTS**

Conference speech

Footnote

Person’s Name, Person’s Title, remarks made at [Conference Name], Location, Date. From transcript provided by CQ FD Disclosure, URL, accessed [month/year].

Television program

Footnote


**TWITTER**

The following examples are shown in footnote format only.

Generic Example

15 First Name, Last Name (Twitter handle), “The tweet in its entirety,” Twitter, Date, Time, URL.

Specific Examples

16 Tyra Banks (@tyrabanks), “Broke up with the gym this morning. It just wasn’t working out,” Twitter, 24 June 2013, 7:11 a.m., https://twitter.com/tyrabanks.

17 Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses (@AMSN), “Writing a letter to an elected official can be a great way to be someone who actually makes a difference,” Twitter, 7 April 2011, 5:51 a.m., [URL].
NOTE: If the company’s name and Twitter handle are the same, then it’s OK to omit the Twitter handle from the citation. For example:

18 TechCrunch, “Apple Re-Invents Its Wheel with iOS7, Takes Developers Along For the Ride,” Twitter, 18 September 2013, 12:20 p.m., [URL].

19 MarketWatch, “He’s baaaaack. Furby reclaims spot on Wal-Mart’s list of ‘hot’ holiday toys,” Twitter, 15 September 2013, 4:35 a.m., [URL].

NOTE: If the citation includes the complete text of the tweet, then the URL is optional. For example:

20 The Economist, “When the Frankfurt motor show opens this weekend visitors will encounter many new electric vehicles,” Twitter, 12 September 2013, 6:43 p.m.

UNPUBLISHED PAPERS

Footnote


See also Working Papers (Printed).

VIDEOS AND MULTIMEDIA

Commercial video

Footnote


Footnote


HBS video (multimedia)

Footnote

Bibliography

HBS video (special event)

Footnote

Bibliography

YouTube video

Footnote

Bibliography

Footnote

Bibliography

WEBCASTS

As the following examples show, some websites use the terms podcast or webcast and others specify the file type, such as audio or video.

Footnote
Bibliography


Footnote


See also Podcasts; Videos and Multimedia.

WEBSITES

Company website

Footnote


Bibliography


Personal website

Footnote


Bibliography


Other kinds of websites

Footnote


Bibliography

**WORKING PAPERS (PRINTED)**

**NOTE:** The copyright holder for an academic working paper is typically the author.

**Printed**

**Footnote**


**Bibliography**


**Footnote**


**Bibliography**


**WORKING PAPERS (ONLINE)**

**On the Web**

**Footnote**


**Bibliography**

YELP REVIEWS

Footnote


Bibliography

Citations of Commercial Databases

This section shows how to cite information from commercial databases. A few notes:

- Brackets [...] indicate variables to be supplied by the writer.

- When you cite information from a database, remember to mention both the copyright holder/owner of the information, and the provider that made it available. In addition, if you want to distribute the information outside the classroom, you should seek permission from the copyright holder. **Be sure to check the copyright holders’ requirements before distributing any of their information outside the classroom.** The Terms & Conditions or Copyright link in most databases provides guidelines for using and citing their data.

- URLs are optional in database citations. If you include a URL, use only the briefest form which points to the main page of the database.

- The following examples cover some of the most frequently used databases at Baker Library. For a complete list, see http://www.library.hbs.edu/databases/completelist.html.

**ABI/ProQuest**

**Generic Example**
Source: [Description of information — e.g., author, title, publisher, date, etc.], ABI/INFORM via ProQuest, accessed [month/year].

**Specific Example**

**BCC Research**

**Information Owned by BCC**
Source: BCC Research, accessed [month/year].

**Other Information**
Source: [Description of information], via BCC Research, accessed [month/year].

**Bloomberg**

**Information Owned by Bloomberg**
Source: Bloomberg LP, accessed [month/year].

**Other Information**
Source: [Description of information], via Bloomberg LP, accessed [month/year].

**Business Source Complete**

Source: [Description of information], Business Source Complete, EBSCO, [access date].
Capital IQ
Source: [Description of information], Capital IQ, Inc., a division of Standard & Poor’s.

Compustat (see Standard & Poor’s)

DataStream
Information Owned by Datastream
Source: Thomson Reuters/Datastream, accessed [month/year].

Other Information
Source: [Description of information], via Thomson Reuters/Datastream, accessed [month/year].

Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)
Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, [Description of information — e.g., EIU Country Data or EIU Country Report, author, title, date, etc.], accessed [month/year].

eMarketer
Source: [Description of information], eMarketer, accessed [month/year].

EMIS (Emerging Markets Information System)
Source: [Description of information], EMIS, a Euromoney Institutional Investor Company, accessed [month/year].

Euromonitor (see Passport)

Factiva
Source: [Description of information], via Factiva, accessed [month/year].

FactSet
Source: [Description of information], FactSet, accessed [month/year].

Frost & Sullivan
Source: [Description of information], Frost & Sullivan, accessed [month/year].

Gartner Online Information Resources
Text:
Source: [Description of information], Gartner, Inc., accessed [month/year].

Graphics:
Source: [Source line under graphic], as published in [description of info.], Gartner, Inc., accessed [month/year].
Global Financial Data
Source: [Description of information], Global Financial Data, Inc., accessed [month/year].

Hoover’s Online
Information Owned by Hoover’s
Source: [Description of information], Hoover’s Inc., accessed [month/year].

Other Information
Source: [Description of information], via Hoover’s Inc., accessed [month/year].

I/B/E/S
Source: Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S, accessed [month/year].

IBISWorld
Source: [Description of information], IBISWorld, accessed [month/year].

JSTOR
Source: [Description of information], via JSTOR, accessed [month/year].

LexisNexis Academic
Source: [Description of information], via LexisNexis Academic, accessed [month/year].

MarketResearch.com Academic
Source: [Description of information], via MarketResearch.com, accessed [month/year].

Mintel Market Sizes
Source: [Description of information], Mintel, accessed [month/year].

Mintel Reports
Source: [Description of information], Mintel, accessed [month/year].

NetAdvantage (see Standard & Poor’s)

OECD iLibrary
Source: [Description of information], OECD iLibrary, accessed [month/year].

OneSource Global Business Browser
Information Owned by OneSource
Source: [Description of information], OneSource Information Services, Inc., accessed [month/year].
Other Information
Source: [Description of information], via OneSource Information Services, Inc., accessed [month/year].

Orbis
Source: [Description of information], Bureau van Dijk, accessed [month/year].

Passport
Source: [Description of information], Euromonitor International, accessed [month/year].

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