



DOI/URL Guide

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Updated:

What is a DOI?

A DOI is a “digital object identifier.” The purpose of a DOI is to identify content and provide a persistent (reliable) link to its location on the internet. It is important to include the DOI in your citations because it will allow readers to find the original source.

A DOI is preferred over an URL because DOI’s are accessible, simple, and direct.

How to find the DOI

There are a number of ways to find a DOI.

1. Provided in the article’s citing information
Every database/journal webpage/etc. will have their citing information formatted differently. Some may provide it near the title, after the cited works, or through another tab. To locate it, take a quick look around.
 - Near the top (title) or bottom (after cited works) of the article
 - Listed in the ‘Detailed Record,’ ‘Indexing Details,’ etc.
2. Do a quick search!
Not all databases will include the DOI in the citation information. If you cannot find it, do a quick search using a website designed to find DOI’s.
 - [Crossref](#)
 - [QuestQuery](#) – this is same as Crossref, but asks for more details
3. Can’t find a DOI!
Don’t get frustrated if you can’t find a DOI, not all articles have them. Although most new articles have DOI’s now, older articles will not. And while most databases provide the DOI, it is not yet a consistent practice.
 - If no DOI can be found, use a permanent (stable) URL

What is a URL?

A URL is a “uniform resource locator.” The URL is used to specify addresses on the World Wide Web (www.) When using a URL, you do not want to copy and paste the address that appears in your address bar. Instead you want to locate a permanent (stable) URL or better known as the **permalink**. The permalink is preferred because the link won’t break when the website is updated.

How to find the Permalink?

Each database will have a different name for the permalink:

- Permalink
- Bookmark
- Document URL
- Stable URL
- Etc.

Databases will provide the permalink in different locations. They may be located:

1. With the citing information
2. At the top of the screen

When NOT to use the permalink

Only include database information (such as the permalink) when specified by the citation style or if your material is not easily located elsewhere (journal homepage or DOI).

Regular URL

Only use the regular URL in the address bar if:

1. DOI cannot be found
2. Journal homepage cannot be found or it isn't from a journal
3. Permalink cannot be found

DOI and URL Flowchart

This DOI and URL flowchart will take you through the steps to determine what you should cite.

Link to the flowchart [here](#)