Locating a DOI

APA Helps – Finding the DOI (Digital Object Identifier) – Part 1

Many journal articles contain DOIs that need to be included at the end of your reference. DOI stands for Digital Object Identifier and is a unique set of letters and numbers given to an article, kind of like a Social Security Number. If a DOI has been given to a journal article, it might be found in the article's detailed record. This is the summary information about the article that you can find in Off Campus Library Services online databases. This article comes from CINAHL Plus, a nursing database. In some databases the DOI will be listed at the end of the abstract.

In other databases, the DOI will have its own area. Often this is near the bottom of the detailed page. After you have found the DOI, you can copy and paste it from the detailed record by using CTRL+C to copy and CTRL+V to paste. The DOI also might be found in the article itself on the title page. This is the PDF version of this article, we're now going to scroll down and you'll see, here, in the middle of the first page, the DOI is given.

Next, we will create a reference using the APA format for a journal or periodical article with a DOI. Example references can be found on p. 198 of the 6th edition of the APA Publication Manual or on p. 15 of the OCLS APA Succeed Guide. An APA reference for journal or periodical article begins with the author's or first author listed last name, her or his initials, and the year the article was published in parenthesis. Remember to pay attention to punctuation, especially commas and periods.

Next, give the article title. Remember to capitalize the first word in the article title, the subtitle, or any proper names like persons, cities, brand names, and so on. Now, you will want to write the journal title and put the journal title in italics. Give the volume number in italics and then put the issue number, if there is one, in parenthesis. Then, give the pages the article is found on.

Last, give the DOI. APA rules let you use two different ways of formatting the DOI. First, you can use a complete URL, or web address, like this. Remember to change the DOI so that it is in the correct 12 pt., Times New Roman font. The second way is to include just the DOI itself, without the web address. In the APA format, the letters DOI are not capitalized. Again, remember to change the font to the proper 12 pt., Times New Roman. And remember that there is no space between the DOI number, the lead 10, and the colon after the letters "DOI."

Not all journal articles have DOI information in their database records or on the articles themselves. In Part II of this video, we will take a look at how to create an APA reference for a journal or periodical title when no DOI is available.

For help with other research needs, please call Off Campus Library Services toll free at 1-800-521-1848 or email ocls@indwes.edu.