

# Oral Citation Guide

Spch 102/105 | University of Mississippi

When delivering a speech, your audience most likely will not have your bibliography in front of them. Citing your sources out loud will build your credibility and ensure you are being ethical.

This guide presents commonly agreed-upon standards; however, there is no one way to cite a source out loud. Ask your instructor if they have requirements beyond what is listed in this guide.

Also, consider oral citations need to be comprehended by listeners. Balance citation content with conversational phrasing. You'll likely need to take some pauses between citation elements in delivery. Shorter pauses are conveyed by comas. Longer pauses are conveyed by colons, semicolons, periods, and em dashes (—).

## What goes into an oral citation?

Oral citations should demonstrate the reliability of your information. As you cite, convey the types of sources you are using to demonstrate the breadth and depth of your research.

Instructors and experts generally agree you should include three areas of information in your citation.

1. **The Author.** Whether the author is a person or an organization, the audience should know who generated the information. If your audience is not familiar with the author, then establish the source's credibility.

*Example oral book citation with name and credibility: Chris Anderson, the curator for TED, wrote TED Talks in 2017, which is the official guide to public speaking on the TED stage. In the book, Anderson says the idea you are conveying is the most important aspect of a talk.*

2. **The Title.** Where did you find the information? Cite the source title. For periodicals, the source is the title of the journal, newspaper, or magazine. If you have used multiple articles from the same source, you may also want to cite both the source and article title.

*Example oral periodical citation: A Wallstreet Journal article, updated July 14, 2022, reported Hilcorp, Exxon, and Conoco are the biggest emitters of methane gases—and that environmentalists are concerned because methane traps approximately 85% more planet-warming heat than carbon dioxide.*

*Example oral periodical citation with both source & article titles: The Wall Street Journal article—Hilcorp, Exxon and Conoco Top Greenhouse Gas Emitters, Environmental Groups Say—explains the three companies have the highest methane emissions based on government data. The article goes on to report methane produces roughly 85% more planet-warming heat than carbon dioxide.*

3. **The Date.** How recent or historical is the information? Keep in mind the recency of information is critical when conveying research (unless you are giving historical perspective).

*Example oral data citation: Data.gov's Consumer Price Index from June 24, 2022, showed a 10% increase in food costs from May last year to May this year.*

## Need more examples by source type?

### Academic Journal

Academic Journals often have a long list of names. For “author,” convey only the last name(s). If there are more than three, state only the lead author’s name “and others.” Use the name of the journal for “title.” State the volume number and/or issue along with year for “date.”

*Example: An article in the 2018 May/June issue of the American Journal of Medical Quality by Zhang and others, predicts a deficit of 510 thousand nurses by 2030—which indicates a 50% improvement from prior predictions.*

### Blog

State the name of the blogger with their credibility for “author.” Use the blog host for “title,” and convey the full “date” (month, day, and year).

*Example: According to a July 7, 2022, blog post on The Verge—by one of its editors, Chris Welch—Netflix is rolling out spatial audio for some of its original programming.*

### Dictionary/Reference

Cite the publisher for “author,” the term for “title,” and publication year for “date.”

*Example: The Merriam-Webster online dictionary updated 2022 defines Bombinate as a buzz or drone; for example, you might want to avoid vocally bombinating when delivering a speech.*

### Dissertation/Thesis

For “author,” state the person and the university/college. For the “title,” state the academic area and whether the document is an undergraduate thesis, graduate thesis, or dissertation. The year should be sufficient for the “date.”

*Example: In his 2016, University of Kansas, thesis—submitted for a master’s in communication—Jacob W. Justice concluded that positive, visual messaging appeared to be better for generating smoker’s interest in in quitting.*

### Film

Use the director’s name for “author,” the film’s title for “title,” and the year released for “date.”

*Example: The 2018 documentary film, Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story—directed by Alexandra Dean—revealed the famous actress was also a ground-breaking scientist, who developed the frequency-hopping technology later used in Bluetooth and wi-fi.*

## Personal Interview

An interview is a meeting with a specific person (or persons) in a specific place at a specific time. All should be conveyed in the citation.

*Example: In my telephone interview with Aramark’s Marketing Manager, Amy Anderson, on March 5, 2022, I learned students can make climate-friendly food choices by looking for Cool Foods Meals.*

## Podcast

Use the Podcast title and episode number for “title,” the distributor, host and/or interviewee(s) for “author,” and the full “date” (month, day, and year).

*Example: The 241st episode of the podcast—Where Accountants Go, released October 19, 2021, on Apple—presents an interview between host Mark Golden and Lee Frederiksen, who is the managing partner of Hinge, a professional service provider. Frederiksen noted in the interview, “If every single person who worked in the accounting field took a position tomorrow, there would still be close to a half a million vacant positions.”*

## Report

You may use the publishing organization for “author,” the title of the report for “title,” and the year or full date for “date.” Because many reports are quite long, conveying the page number can be helpful for people wanting to verify your source.

*Example: Page 20 of the World Health Organization’s 2015 report on the State of Inequality for reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health stated: “contraceptive use averted 55 million unplanned births, 138 million abortions, 25 million miscarriages and 118 000 maternal deaths.”*

## Statista/Slides

When using a slide from Statista or another data visualizing service, orally cite the data source used by the service.

*Example: This slide from Statista is based on data from the US Census Bureau’s Historical Timetables, last updated in 2022; it shows a significant increase in college graduates from nearly 8 percent in 1960 to over 37 percent in 2020.*

## TED, YouTube, Vimeo, etc.

Cite the distributor and creator for “author,” the title of the video for “title,” and the date created or posted.

*Example: Nobel Laureate John C. Mather’s 2022 TED Talk—How the James Webb Space Telescope will Unfold the Universe—outlines three essential steps to making complicated launches successful: first “practice, practice, practice,” meaning rehearse, test, and fix; second, “have two of everything, if you possibly can”; and third, “have arguments with all of your friends to say, is this really right/can you think of any mistakes we’re making?”*

## Textbook

Use the last names of the writers or the editors for “author,” the title of the textbook and chapter number for “title,” and the edition or year published for “date.”

*Example: In Chapter 9 of the sixth edition of A Pocket Guide to Public Speaking—authors O’Hair, Rubenstein, and Stewart explain the ethical use of statistics require numbers to be reliable, presented in context, avoid a one-sided approach and steer clear of absolute representations.*

## Website

Sometimes finding a date for information posted to websites can be tricky. If websites do not identify a date, convey the date the site was last updated or the date you accessed.

*Example article on a website: An article—posted to the webmd.com’s Health News on July 14, 2022—reports scientists at UCLA have created an artificial muscle from stretchy polymers, and it is stronger than human muscle.*

*Example webpage with no date: The American Heart Association’s website, ama.org—last reviewed February 2, 2017—provides some ways to sneak vegetables into your diet—such as replacing half of the ground beef in your hamburger with chopped mushrooms—or mixing your grated cheese with grated squash or carrots.*

## Still unsure?

Ask your instructor or make an appointment with the [Speaking Center – University of Mississippi | Ole Miss](#) for help.