INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

ISO 690

Fourth edition
2021-06

Information and documentation — Guidelines for bibliographic references and citations to information resources

Information et documentation — Principes directeurs pour la rédaction des références bibliographiques et des citations des ressources d'information

Reference number
ISO 690:2021(E)

ISO copyright office
CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
Email: copyright@iso.org
Website: www.iso.org

Published in Switzerland

Contents

Page

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted, This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 9, *Identification and description*.

This fourth edition cancels and replaces the third edition (ISO 690:2010), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

— guidelines for citing electronic resources have been substantially extended;

— guidelines for using persistent identifiers, permalinks and Web archives are included;

— the document has been restructured to improve its readability.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

Citations enable the identification and location of information resources. More importantly, citations are used to link new and derivative knowledge to existing knowledge sources, and therefore play an important role in transmission and retainment of knowledge — a process which forms the basis for the advancement of culture and science in human civilization.

In an age of democratized computing and network resources, it is increasingly important to have a consistent mechanism for citing information resources — a set of guidelines for citations that cover the proliferation of new information resource types, to enable the referencing of information resources of the past, of the present and of the future. This new edition of ISO 690 aims to address that while formalizing traditional practices.

This document describes a set of principles and practical guidelines for the creation of references and requirements for the citation of information resources. Information resources that can be cited are of diverse types, such as printed and electronic documents, from monographs to serials, cartographic to audiovisual resources, software to datasets, patents to reports and websites.

Specifically, this document provides a system for citing information resources that renders deterministic output. A citation generated by this system can be uniquely mapped back to the originally defined set of source elements. This system is intended to be applicable across all natural languages.

The citation system is built on a set of common metadata elements for information resources accompanied by a set of rendering rules. For information resource types that require additional details, for instance, audiovisual material, art and graphics as well as online resources, the system provides supplementary rules and data elements in order to handle those information resources in a tailored manner, according to established practices in these fields.

The citation system described in this document can be considered as a configurable framework for building citation styles. For example, the delimitations and context separator symbols and rules used in the citation rendering mechanism can be substituted with other methods or typographical features. It is possible to adopt partial guidance of this document and apply it to any citation style, such as to citation guidelines published by scientific periodicals or universities. This document uses an exemplar citation style, but does not indicate preference for one citation style over another.

While this document does not mandate a reference listing system, Annex A does provide definitions for a number of such systems. In this document, the numeric citation system (see A.3) is used for displaying references. Annex B specifies practices for referencing archived Web information resources.

This document does not discuss the importance of citation accuracy in detail. Citation guidelines published by universities[1)], and a Web site dedicated to the prevention of plagiarism[2)] cover this topic well. Providing the reasons for importance of citations in science is not within the scope of this document. A few examples of sources which should always be cited are given in Clause 5.

This document contains many URL-based links to Web resources. Persistence of such links cannot be guaranteed in the long term. If a resource has disappeared or if it seems that it might have changed significantly, readers are advised to retrieve the linked content from a Web archive.

1) For example https://pr.princeton.edu/pub/integrity/pages/cite/, https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/citing-your-sources/avoiding-plagiarism-cite-your-source.

2) https://www.plagiarism.org/.

Information and documentation — Guidelines for bibliographic references and citations to information resources

1 Scope

This document describes a set of principles, guidelines, and requirements for the preparation of bibliographic references and citations in works that are not themselves primarily bibliographical. It is applicable to bibliographic references and citations for all kinds of information resources, including but not limited to monographs, serials, contributions within monographs and serials, patents, cartographic materials, artworks, performances and diverse electronic resources, such as research datasets, databases, programs and applications, Web archives and social media, music, recorded sound, prints, photographs, graphic and audio-visual materials, archival sources and moving images.

This document provides a system for citing information resources that renders deterministic output, such that a citation generated by this system can be uniquely mapped back to the originally defined set of source elements. This system is intended to be applicable across multiple languages. Citations generated by this system are machine-parseable. The citation system described in this document can be used as a configurable framework for building citation styles.

This document does not specify a data model for machine-readable citations, although such specification may be provided in a separate document or added to a later edition of ISO 690.

Guidelines for legal citations, such as references to cases, statutes or treatises, are not addressed in this document, since such guidelines are usually country-specific[3]. Recommendations with regards to what kind of information resources may or may not be cited, or describing the risks involved with, for example, citing social media, are not within the scope of this document[4].

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 4, *Information and documentation — Rules for the abbreviation of title words and titles of publications*

ISO 5127, *Information and documentation — Foundation and vocabulary*

ISO 8601-1, *Date and time — Representations for information interchange — Part 1: Basic rules*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 5127 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org

3) For example, the ALWD Guide to Legal Citation, and Bluebook, are commonly used in the USA depending on jurisdiction acceptance.

4) Academic institutions or scientific publishers may not accept references for some information resources such as Wikipedia articles for research papers and other scientific documents.

3.1
application
software or program that is specific to the solution of an application problem

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 20944-1:2013, 3.6.3.1]

3.2
ARK
archival resource key
persistent identifier (3.32) to identify objects of any type

Note 1 to entry: The ARK identifier was implemented by the California Digital Library for custodians of archived digital objects. It emphasises the principle of stewardship of resources and their naming schemes over time.

[SOURCE: ARK home page]

3.3
asset
anything that has value

Note 1 to entry: There are many types of assets, including: a) information; b) software, such as a program or application; c) physical, such as computer; d) services; e) people, and their qualifications, skills, and experience; and f) intangibles, such as reputation and image.

Note 2 to entry: See also ISO 10668:2010, 2.1; ISO/IEC TR 21000-1:2004, 2.2.

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.1.1.43, modified — The definition has been generalized by omitting the phrase "to the organization".]

3.4
call number
reference provided to enable the custodian to locate a *document* (3.13) within a repository

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.5.22, modified — In the definition, "resource" has been replaced by "document".]

3.5
citation
reference in one *information resource* (3.20) to another information resource or to part of it

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.5.8.16, modified — In the definition, "document" has been replaced by "information resource".]

3.6
collection
any set of one or more *information resources* (3.20), assembled on the basis of some common characteristic, for some purpose, or as the result of some process

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.6.1.05, modified — The definition refers only to information resources since in this document it is the umbrella term covering everything.]

3.7
component part
entity provided by a creator to form part of a host *document* (3.13) which may have several creators

EXAMPLE An article published in a serial.

Note 1 to entry: Component part can be an intellectual contribution such as an article, a photograph embedded in a *Web resource* (3.49) or a bibliographic record in a dataset.

3.8
continuing resource
publication, in any medium, that is issued over time with no predetermined conclusion and made available to the public

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.4.1.05]

3.9
creator
any entity (corporate body, family or person) that created, accumulated and/or maintained *documents* (3.13) in the conduct of personal or corporate activity

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.7.1.06, modified — In the definition, "records" has been deleted.]

3.10
database
collection (3.6) of machine-readable information organized so that it can be easily accessed, managed and updated

Note 1 to entry: Some databases, or files within a database, can also constitute a monograph or serial. In cases where it can readily be determined that a specific electronic document is a monograph or serial, those terms are preferred over the broader term "database".

[SOURCE: ISO 8459:2009, 2.22, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.11
dataset
logically meaningful *collection* (3.6) or grouping of similar or related data, usually assembled as a matter of record or for research

Note 1 to entry: A dataset is organized into some type of data structure. In a database, for example, a dataset might contain a collection of business data (names, salaries, contact information, sales figures, and so forth). The database itself can be considered a dataset, as can bodies of data within it related to a particular type of information, such as sales data for a particular corporate department (see https://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/data-set).

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.11, modified — Note 1 to entry has been replaced.]

3.12
DOI® name
standardized string within the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) system for identifying a physical, digital, or abstract object and providing persistent *resolution* (3.40) to the object or information about it

Note 1 to entry: The DOI system is specified in ISO 26324.

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.2.5.17, modified — The definition and Note 1 to entry have been clarified to the content of "Digital Object Identifier (DOI) system".]

3.13
document
recorded information or material object which can be treated as a unit in a documentation process

Note 1 to entry: In this document, as in ISO 5127:2017, information resource is the generic term which covers other kinds of resources in addition to documents.

Note 2 to entry: Documents often are the *manifestations* (3.24) of *works* (3.51). They can differ extensively in form and characteristics.

Note 3 to entry: In some professional usage, documents are sometimes referred to as "medium", "title" or "item". In library practice, the terms "publication", "resource" and "information resource" are also common.

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.1.1.38, modified — The original Notes 1 and 2 to entry have been omitted.]

3.14
digital surrogate
digital copy of an information resource

3.15
artwork
manifestation (3.24) or *work* (3.51) not primarily textual and considered to have artistic value

3.16
graphic work
two-dimensional *manifestation* (3.24) or *work* (3.51) to be understood primarily for its pictorial rather than textual content

3.17
handle system
comprehensive system for assigning, managing, and resolving *persistent identifiers* (3.32), known as handles, for digital objects and other resources on the Internet

[SOURCE: RFC 3650]

3.18
home page
landing page
Web resource (3.49) which serves as the entry point for an *information resource* (3.20) such as a research *dataset* (3.11) or *Web site* (3.50)

Note 1 to entry: A landing page surviving longer than the information resource is called a tombstone.

3.19
identifier
language-independent data string or pointer that establishes the identity of its association, alone or in combination with other elements

Note 1 to entry: This is a generalized definition of ISO 5127:2017, 3.1.12.19.

3.20
information resource
work (3.51), *manifestation* (3.24) or *item* (3.21) in physical or digital form or any other *asset* (3.3) that contributes to human knowledge

Note 1 to entry: Information resource can refer to an asset, a record, a dataset, a document or a *component part* (3.7) of a document.

3.21
item
single exemplar of a *manifestation* (3.24)

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.2.1.10]

3.22
key title
unique name established by the ISSN network for a continuing resource, and inseparably linked with its ISSN

Note 1 to entry: The key title can be the same as the title proper of the resource; or, in order to achieve uniqueness, it can be constructed by the addition of parenthetical identifying and/or qualifying elements such as name of issuing body, place of publication, edition statement, etc. Refer to the *ISSN Manual*.

[SOURCE: ISO 3297:2020, 3.1.4, modified — A reference to the ISSN Manual has been added.]