

YORKWAC Infobase

Types of Sources

Sources are where you get the evidence (published data or expert opinion) to support the claims you make in your research paper or other writing assignment.

FUN FACT: *source* comes from the Latin verb *surgere*, **to rise up from below**. The source is where information comes from, like water comes from a fountain.

For a research paper or other writing assignment, the types of sources you are most likely to use include

1. *Periodicals*

Periodicals include any regularly published print or online publication, such as newspapers, magazines, or academic journals. Periodicals often contain the most timely and topical information in articles that focus on a narrow topic.

2. *Books*

Books usually have a broader focus than periodicals and contain information that is less timely, but they can explore a topic in greater depth than an article in a periodical.

3. *Statistical databases*

Many statistical databases provide free, online access to the public. Data are often in the form of tables and graphs but may be accompanied by explanatory notes to help put the data in context.

4. *Websites*

Websites can be valuable sources, but you need to evaluate them carefully to determine whether or not they are reliable. Just as with newspapers, magazines, and scholarly journals, some websites are more reputable than others.

Sources must be properly *cited*, both so that the source is credited and so that the reader can locate it for further reference.

The **YORKWAC Infobase** includes many other Infosheets that can help you with your writing assignment.

If you want more information on crafting your argument, you might want to try:

Infosheet #13, Making Claims

Infosheet #14, Using Evidence

Infosheet #16, Citing Sources