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Reference Worksheets

Digital Research Skills for Media Studies

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Reference Worksheets

Digital Research Skills for Media Studies

bit.ly/msrw-index

Department of Media Studies
University of Amsterdam

Index Reference Worksheets

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1. Introduction

1.1. Reference Worksheets

This document provides links to learning and training resources for essential digital research skills and is intended for students, researchers, and lecturers at the [Department of Media Studies, University of Amsterdam](#). All learning and training resources are offered in English to cater to international Bachelor's, Master's and Research Master's students, researchers, and lecturers. They are also tailored so that they may be integrated and used in the context of specific courses in our Bachelor's, Master's, and Research Master's programmes. Moreover, these resources help facilitate blended forms of learning where online digital media are combined traditional classroom methods. The included reference worksheets address essential digital research skills required to conduct, manage, organise, and present research involving different types of sources and data. Common examples include: film databases or directories, collections of movie titles, second screen data, collections of television shows, audience data, social media data, and web data. Learning to work with these data and materials enables students to independently develop (digital) humanities projects.

1.2. Format

All learning and training resources are created in [Google Docs](#). You can bookmark the link to each reference worksheet to retrieve them later, or you can go to 'File' > 'Download as' and select your preferred file format. If you are already using [Google Drive](#), you can simply sign in to your Google Account and add the reference worksheets to your own Drive ('Add to My Drive').

The material is written in clear, easily understandable language and no special knowledge or training is required to use the reference worksheets. Extensive cross-referencing is used throughout. Tables and summaries are included to familiarise the reader with the overall subject as well as the specifics. Some sample exercises are included so that students can test their knowledge and skill on the subject, and so that instructors may use these extensively illustrated reference worksheets in class. Furthermore, each worksheet is extensively sourced and provides further resources.

Further reading

- <https://support.google.com/drive/answer/2375057>

1.3. Feedback

Please help improve the Media Studies Reference Worksheets. Sending your feedback is very easy using our custom [Google Form](#). If you are looking to give feedback, please click 'General feedback', or if you need help with a specific issue, please click 'Something isn't working'.

2. Data Management

Estimated Reading Time:	2 hours, 45 minutes
Difficulty:	Level 1
Prerequisites:	None (no prior knowledge required)
Shortlink:	http://bit.ly/msrw-1

In this worksheet you learn

- To organise, analyse, store, and present data using spreadsheets.
- To share, collaborate on, and publish data sets using Google Sheets.
- To use essential functions to filter and transform your data.
- To understand the purposes and utility of tabulating data in academic research.
- To understand the role and use of spreadsheet software in the research workflow.
- To use Google Sheets to prepare data for subsequent analysis, visualisation, and presentation with other software.

Contents

This worksheet introduces online and collaborative data management with spreadsheets software using [Google Sheets](#). Google Sheets is a powerful software for creating and sharing useful spreadsheets. It enables you to create, edit, and collaborate on your research projects wherever you are. This worksheet helps you to set up Google Sheets and to integrate spreadsheets and tabulation into your research and data workflows, which is an essential skill for many contemporary research practices involving data and visualisations. Google Sheets is free of charge and by using spreadsheet software throughout your studies, you will develop best practices for organising, analysing, storing, and presenting your data and personal research. This sheet introduces students to the basic skills of working with spreadsheet software, such as storing, organizing, cleaning, and filtering data. Skills trained in this worksheet are transferable to many other spreadsheet software tools, including [Microsoft Excel](#) and [LibreOffice Calc](#).

3. Reference Management

Estimated Reading Time:	1 hour, 35 minutes
Difficulty:	Level 1
Prerequisites:	None (no prior knowledge required)
Shortlink:	http://bit.ly/msrw-2

In this worksheet you learn

- To collect, organise, and store references using Zotero.
- To collect, organise, and store references in collaborative groups using Zotero Groups.
- To share references in collaborative groups using Zotero Groups.
- To understand the purposes and styles of referencing in academic writing.
- To understand the role and use of reference managers in the research and writing workflows.
- Using Zotero to automatically generate citations and bibliographies directly from within your word processor.

Contents

This worksheet introduces online and collaborative reference management software using [Zotero](#). Zotero is ‘a powerful, easy-to-use research tool that helps you gather, organise, and analyze sources and then share the results of your research’. It is an open source reference manager that enables both personal and collaborative reference management for your research projects. This worksheet helps you to set up Zotero and to integrate the application into your research workflow. Zotero is free of charge and by using the application throughout your studies, you will build up an extensive library for your personal research. Additionally, Zotero enables you to collaboratively create and organise reading lists on particular topics (e.g. related to a course or a topical paper) or for particular courses, which may or may not be shared with other students or Zotero users.

4. Data Visualisation

Estimated Reading Time:	3 hours, 55 minutes
Difficulty:	Level 2
Prerequisites:	Reference Worksheet I: Data Management [→ 2.]
Shortlink:	http://bit.ly/msrw-3

In this worksheet you learn

- To explore and explain research data and insights using visualisation software tools.
- To use visualisation software tools for both exploratory and explanatory or communicative purposes.
- To reason about appropriate visualisations or chart types for a given purpose, and to understand the affordances and limitations of common visualisations or chart types.
- To understand the purposes and utility of visualisations in academic research.
- To understand the role and use of visualisations in the research workflow.

Contents

This worksheet introduces data visualisation and challenges students to think about the role of visualisations in the research process. Several software tools for data exploration, analysis, and visualisation are introduced, including [RAWGraphs](#) ('the missing link between spreadsheets and data visualization'), [Tableau Public](#), and [Gephi](#) ('the open graph viz platform'). This worksheet helps you set up each software tool and to integrate visual data exploration, analysis, and presentation into your research and data workflows, which is an essential skill for many contemporary research practices involving data and visualisations. RAWGraphs, Tableau Public, and Gephi are all available free of charge, and by using such software tools throughout your studies, you will develop and train an intuitive understanding of both exploratory and explanatory data visualisations. This worksheet also introduces a number of explanatory visualisation strategies based on the affordances and limitations of common visualisations and chart types (including line and area charts, column and bar charts, pie charts, geographical and network diagrams). In a more general sense, the sheet introduces students to basic skills needed to move from data management and spreadsheets to the effective visual communication of research insights. Skills trained in this worksheet are transferable to many other visualisation software tools.

5. Linked Reference Worksheets

There are also third-party adaptations of the Media Studies Reference Worksheets. Please find some of them listed in the table below. Please do get in touch if you also created an adaptation of these worksheets!

Series	Title	(Short)link
Digital Practices Worksheets	Capturing Data	https://tinyurl.com/y3pjcm2t
ASI Reference Worksheets	App Store Data Scraping	http://bit.ly/asirw-1
	Instagram Data Scraping	http://bit.ly/asirw-2
	APK Analysis	http://bit.ly/asirw-3
	Mapping Data Flows in Mobile Apps	http://bit.ly/asirw-4
King's College London	Tracking the Trackers in Digital Journalism	http://bit.ly/digital-journalism-trackers
King's College London	Digital Methods: Tools, Tutorials and Resources	http://bit.ly/digital-methods-links

Further resources:

- <http://recipes.publicdatalab.org/>