

Citation Style Language (CSL) Editor: Making Citation Easier

Author

Enago Academy

Post Url

<https://www.enago.com/academy/citation-style-language-csl-editor-making-citation-easier/>



It is a well-known fact in scholarly communication that there is a specific journal format for in-text citations and bibliography. Editing a citation style can be quite tedious and hence the development of citation tools is essential. The Citation Style Language (CSL) is an [XML based language](#) that simplifies citing references. [The CSL Editor](#) is an interface that allows you to find and modify citation styles that are appropriate for your document. You can find your desired citation style by searching for a journal's name (that particular journal citation format will appear), searching by inputting an example of what the desired style looks like, or searching using the citation style name. If the style you need isn't available, you can choose the one that's closest to what you need and edit it. Once you have found your style or edited a style to match your needs, you can click "Install" in the case of a search result, or "Save" in the case of a style you've edited, to use it in your reference manager.

CSL is an open source piece of software, which means that the community can contribute new formats. As a result, more than 8,500 citation styles exist in the CSL Editor Tool. This tool for bibliographic styles has proved quite valuable with more than [4,500 unique visitors](#) to the CSL Editor site every month. As a result of its usefulness and open source nature, the CSL has also been used in many popular reference managers such as Mendeley, ReadCube, Zotero, and Papers.

Using the CSL Editor Tool

As previously stated, the CSL Editor tool makes the formatting of citations and bibliographies significantly easier. From the CSL Editor page, searching by style name or finding the required journal citation format by searching for the journal name is fairly straightforward. In order to search by CSL citation styles, you need to edit a sample citation to fit the style that you would like to use. There are many different types of references, for example, how to cite a book with one author, how to cite a book with many authors, how to cite a journal article, how to cite a newspaper article, how to cite a report, or how to cite a book chapter to name a few. Currently, the CSL Editor allows you to search using one type at a time. If you highlight text in the inline citation or bibliography, you can format the text according to your desired style.

Once you have completed the formatting and started the search, the search results are listed in order of how closely they match your desired citation style. At this point, you can choose to install a citation style, edit it in the Visual Editor, or simply view information about it and its underlying code. [Using the CSL Visual Editor](#) is relatively simple. Once you have identified a style that you would like to change, you can click on “Edit”. You can click on an item that you wish to edit, which will change its color and will show the properties of the item in the bottom window of this bibliographic style editor. You can then make the changes in this bottom window. Any changes you make will be immediately reflected in the sample citation.

Clicking on the “Example Citations” menu will reveal additional types of citations that you can alter as needed. The CSL Visual Editor even lets you change the author names in the bibliography to small caps. Various options are available to edit the names in the desired format—bold, italics, underline, subscript, superscript, and small caps. Clicking on “Small Caps” will change the formatting of the author names to that option. More advanced users may also choose to [directly edit](#) the XML code.

Editor for Bibliographic Styles

CSL has many uses in scholarly communication, particularly with reference to formatting bibliographies and citations. The CSL Editor makes it incredibly easy to find a citation style or create the one you need by editing an existing citation style. Once you have used the CSL Editor tool to identify or edit your citation style of choice, it can be installed or saved to your reference manager for ease of use. The CSL Editor can simplify the way you comply with journal citation formats—try it!

Cite this article

Enago Academy, Citation Style Language (CSL) Editor: Making Citation Easier. Enago Academy. 2017/07/27. <https://www.enago.com/academy/citation-style-language-csl-editor-making-citation-easier/>