



Reference Sources for VR

Introduction

There are lots of websites where you can find ready-reference links, and your own library may even have a list of them for patrons.

But it makes it even easier if you have the links yourself “at your fingertips.” You can do this by using the above-mentioned websites as sources for your own personal bookmarks. Any time you come across a site that may be a good source, bookmark it. Then when you are doing your chat shift, all those links you collected are right there on your computer when you need them. It’s a lot faster than visiting QuestionPoint’s ready reference page each time you get a question.

Uses:

- General info on the web for questions not requiring a library database or catalog.
- As an alternative to library databases, if the patron is not affiliated with one of our participating libraries, or if they do not have their login information.
- Examples:
 - Open access journals can be used instead of proprietary databases.
 - ERIC’s public page (<http://www.eric.ed.gov/>) can be used instead of the paid database version (although there is less full-text).
 - Websites like CliffsNotes (<http://www.cliffsnotes.com/>) and SparkNotes (<http://www.sparknotes.com/>) can be used for literary criticism.
 - NOVEL (<http://www.novelnewyork.org/>) can be used by any person with a New York State driver’s license or public library card, and has many databases. As long as they live in New York State, it doesn’t matter which library they are from.
 - Many books that are in the public domain can be found in full-text online.
 - The New York Times website (<http://www.nytimes.com/>) has many full-text articles online.

Sources for Bookmarks

To get started, here are some good sources that you can use to build your own collection of bookmarks:

http://delicious.com/jaclyn_mckewan/bundle:reference_sources

These are my own bookmarks on Delicious, which I’ll talk more about later. They are grouped under a bundle called “reference_sources” and then each bookmark is tagged with the type of info it provides.

I have found these tags the most useful:

- health_reference
- literature_guide
- public_database

<http://wiki.questionpoint.org/>

The QuestionPoint Wiki. See the right side of the page for “Reference Links.”

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/sections/mars/marspubs/marsbestindex.cfm>

“Best Free Reference Web Sites” by RUSA/ALA

<http://www.docuticker.com/> and <http://www.resourceshelf.com/>

Docuticker describes itself as “a daily update of new reports from government agencies, think tanks, and other groups.” Resource Shelf describes itself as “A daily newsletter with resources of interest to information professionals, educators and journalists.” You can get updates by e-mail or RSS.

<http://www.teachingtips.com/blog/2008/07/07/100-unbelievably-useful-reference-sites-youve-never-heard-of/>

“100 Unbelievably Useful Reference Sites You’ve Never Heard Of”

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/>

Library of Congress Research and Reference Services. Click on any of the topics under “General Collections.” You will see LOC resources, as well as a link titled “Internet Resources.”

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/bibguide.html>

Web Guides by the Library of Congress Digital Reference Section.

http://delicious.com/jaclyn_mckewan/open_access_journals

Open access Journals

Creating Delicious Bookmarks

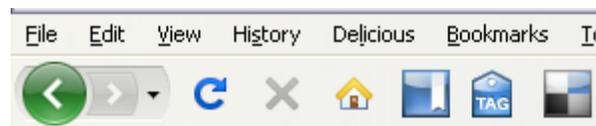
See “Social Bookmarking in Plain English” for a short video overview of Delicious (formerly called del.icio.us): <http://www.commoncraft.com/bookmarking-plain-english>

Delicious bookmarks are highly recommended as a way to organize your ready-reference links, because they aren’t tied to one computer - you can access them from the Delicious website, or from any web browser if you use Firefox with the Delicious extension.

Creating an account is free. Just go to <http://www.delicious.com> and click the “Join” button. Then fill out the form. The username you pick will be the address where your bookmarks are located, eg: <http://www.delicious.com/myusername>.

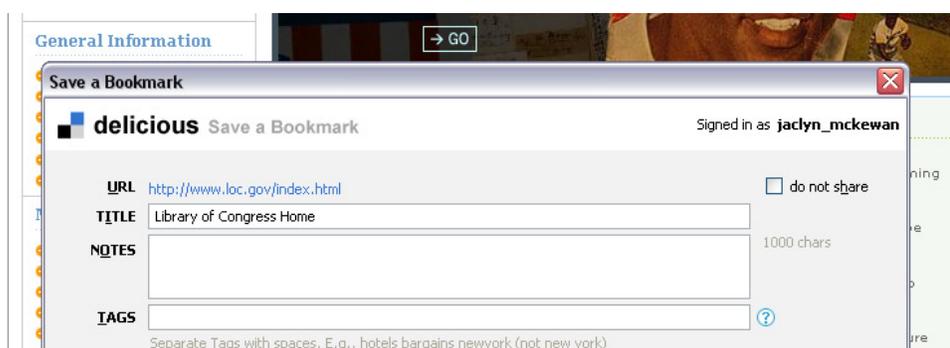
Using the Mozilla Firefox browser, download the official Delicious Bookmarks extension: <https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/3615>

When you start Firefox again, you will notice three new buttons at the top:



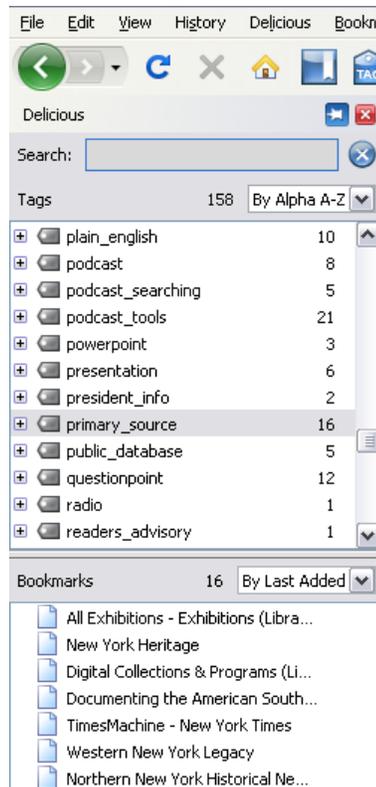
The first, which resembles a picture of a bookmark, will open your bookmarks in a sidebar in the browser. The second button, which says “tag” is what you’ll click on when you want to bookmark a new site. The multi-colored square button will take you to your bookmarks on the Delicious website.

So, to add a new bookmark, go to that page and click the “tag” button.



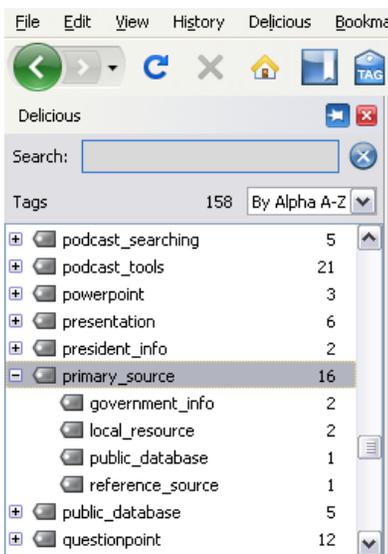
A dialog box will appear, with the URL and page title already filled in. You can add notes, if there is any descriptive information you want to include about the site. You can also add tags, which you can think of as categories or folders where your bookmarks are stored. Each site you bookmark can have multiple tags, which are separated by a space.

After you've added several bookmarks, click the bookmark button and take a look at the sidebar:



You'll see an alphabetical list of the tags you've created, and a number indicating the number of bookmarks for each. Clicking on a tag will display those bookmarks at the bottom.

In addition, you can click on the plus sign next to the tag, and it will display any other tags that those bookmarks have:



In this example, there are 16 bookmarks with the *primary_source* tag. Out of those 16, two bookmarks **also** have the tag *government_info*, two **also** have the tag *local_resource*, etc. Clicking on *local_resource* will display the bookmarks that are tagged both *local_resource* and *primary_source*.

An additional way to organize your bookmarks is in bundles. A bundle is just a group of tags. For example, I have a bundle called "reference_sources," which includes the tags I mentioned above, plus more: *health_reference*, *literature_guide*, *open_access_journals*, *public_database*.

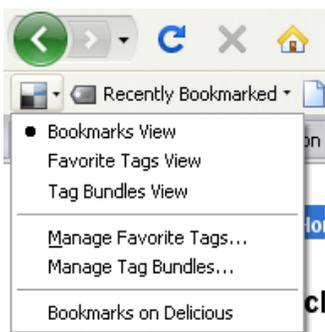
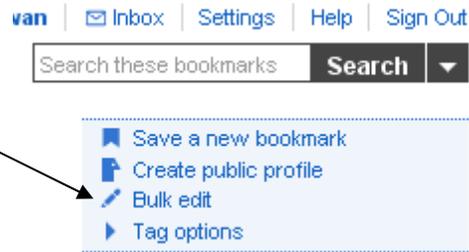
To create a bundle, click the multi-colored square button to see your bookmarks on the Delicious website. At the top right, click on "tag options."

Then click on "manage tag bundles."

Click the "create" button to create a new bundle.

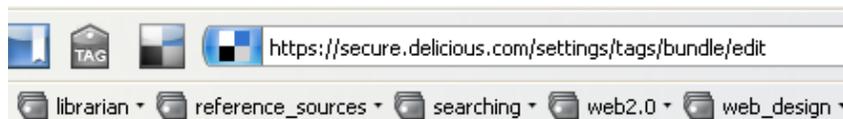
Then, all you have to do is give a name to the bundle, and select the tags that will appear under it.

Now here is where the bundles become useful. At the top of your browser, you also have a Delicious Toolbar which shows your most recently added tags:



Click on the small multi-colored square and select "Tag Bundles View."

Your toolbar now displays all your tag bundles.



Click on a bundle to view the tags, and then hover over a tag to access the bookmarks. When chatting with a patron, you can use this to more quickly find resources that you have bookmarked.

