



## **General Reference Sources**

REFERENCE SOURCES are print or electronic resource designed to be consulted for specific facts rather than to be read as a whole. Example: dictionaries, encyclopedias, handbooks.

Those that are in print format are shelved by Library of Congress (LC) call numbers on the first floor of the Evans Library.

It will come as no surprise to you that many reference sources are available electronically and are often PDFs of published, print books. Sometimes they are sold as individual e-books, but frequently they are part of an aggregation of reference sources available as a searchable database. Generally the Library has purchased access to that database and its use requires the TRACKS ID and password.

Librarians and others from Evans Library have also identified some free Internet reference sources that they have evaluated, described, and linked through the Library's website.

Below is a summary of traditional types of reference sources, many of which can be found in the Reference Research Guide: <http://libguides.lib.fit.edu/reference>:

### **Almanacs/Yearbooks/Annuals**

- single volume collections of data, statistics, and facts (places, people, events)
- usually published annually, updating previous year's data

### **Bibliographic (Books)**

- list books, and/ or other materials by author, title, subject, or other category

### **Biographical**

- provide profiles of the lives and accomplishments of noteworthy personalities

### **Dictionaries/Thesauri**

- provide information about words, especially, but not limited to, definitions

### **Directories**

- list people, businesses, institutions, etc.
- provide descriptive as well as contact information (URLs, addresses, phone numbers)

### **Encyclopedias**

- provide summaries of knowledge in long and short article form
- contributions are often written and signed by experts in the field
- often include references at the end of articles for further research
- can provide general background, especially valuable when beginning research

### **Guides, Handbooks, Manuals**

- provide background information in specific subject areas