Importing BibTeX citation databases into citation management tools

Jane Sandberg

October 12, 2015

BibTeX is a file format for lists of bibliographic references. It is generally used with LaTeXdocuments, but it is also used in other tools because of its relative simplicity. A list of references in a BibTeX file is known as a *database.*

These instructions show you how to import such databases (found online, provided by a colleague, or generated by Google Scholar or other online tools) into two user-friendly citation management tools.

Importing citations into the Zotero Firefox plugin

1. On the Zotero toolbar, click on the gear icon.

2. Select "Import."

3. Navigate to the .bib database you wish to import and select it.

4. The citations from the database will appear in a collection of their own. You may then move these items to other collections or use them to generate bibliographies.

Importing citations into Mendeley Standalone

1. Click the "add files" icon in the top left of your screen.

2. Navigate to the .bib database you wish to import and select it.

3. The citations from the database will appear in the "recently added" section of your Mendeley library.

Importing citations into RefWorks

1. Click "import" option in the quick access menu on the left side of your screen.

2. Choose BibTeX as the Import Filter/Data Source.

3. Choose the database from which you downloaded the BibTeX database. If it doesn't appear in the list, choose LaTeX or "multiple databases."

4. Select the file that contains your BibTeX citations.

5. Click Import.