Reading on screen

Print or on-screen?

Your lecturers provide many readings, but you are not expected to print them all. Using a digital device you can annotate, search documents and create a digital archive, which beats carrying reams of paper around! Readings are increasingly being only available in digital form, e.g. ebooks, so practicing the skills of reading on screen will help you engage with a wide range of resources.

Which device suits you?

Monitor	Tablet	E-ink
Desktop PC, Mac or Laptop	iPad, Kindle Fire, Nexus	Basic Kindle, Kobo, Sony Reader
• Multiple document display • Advanced annotation • All file formats ✓	• Back-lit screen • Basic annotation • Most file formats ✓	• Easiest on the eye • Good for long use periods • Lightweight ✓
• Upright reading position • Large screen with distractions • Fixed location ✗	• Unable or difficult to view multiple documents at the same time • Heavy to hold in hand ✗	• Slow to flick through pages • Not all file formats work • Limited annotation • PDFs handled poorly ✗

The basics

Here are some ideas you may not have considered before. You are more likely to scan text on screen, so some of these approaches will help you focus whilst reading. On the back of this guide are some technical tips, but you can find out more online, including links to software that may help, at http://readingonscreen.wordpress.com . We encourage you to visit the site to share whether these tips have worked or not for you.

Go fullscreen
Hide distracting menus and buttons with Fullscreen modes.

Keep an archive
Online or offline: name your files to locate documents easily. Include the author's name, topic/title and publication year.

Practice digital annotation
With practice digital annotation can be a very powerful way to quickly mark up and search for key quotes.

Take breaks
You wouldn't stare at paper for hours without blinking, so make sure your take regular screen breaks to avoid eye strain. Get your eyes checked if you repeatedly have headaches.

Sit comfortably
Read the guidance provided by your device manufacturer to avoid muscle strain. Use a stand or support for your tablet.

Read aloud
There are free programs which will read text aloud to you.

Reduce brightness
For PC monitors, adjust on the monitor itself. Most are set to their brightest at the factory. On laptops or Macs, use the brightness up/down keys on your keyboard (you may need to press with the [Fn] key)

Adjust tint and font
Tablets and e-ink devices have settings to control brightness, font-size, font-type, and reverse colours (e.g. white on black background). Check your device's manual for this.

On PCs there are free programmes which add a colour tint to the whole screen, and may improve readability.

Reading long documents in web browsers (IE9, Firefox, Chrome, Safari)

Zooming in/out of pages

Use [Ctrl + plus] to zoom in. Use [Ctrl + minus] to zoom out. Use [Ctrl + 0] to reset. On the Mac use [⌘] not [Ctrl].

	IE9	Firefox	Chrome	Safari
To adjust text size only	Right click title bar, activate Menu bar, **View > Text Size**…	[Toggle option] **View > Zoom > Zoom Text Only**	**≡ Menu > Settings** Click **Show advanced settings** link at bottom **Font size** option menu	[Toggle option] **View > Zoom Text Only**

Changing the default font style

You may prefer to use a different font style than the website design uses, e.g. Times New Roman instead of Verdana. See the separate guide on how to do this here: http://bit.ly/ros-b

Hiding distracting buttons

PC: Switch to Fullscreen Mode in your browser by pressing [F11]. [Esc] to exit.

Mac: Fullscreen is not available, but you can hide the dock [⌘ + Alt + D] and hide toolbars in the **View** menu.

Mobile: Some devices offer a feature called **reader mode** or **reading view** for some websites. This is activated via a book or spectables icon (usually green) near the web address bar. Further details: http://bit.ly/ros-e

Annotating the web: Evernote and Diigo

If you are regularly using web resources (excluding PDFs/Journal Articles), you may wish to keep track of items you have read and annotate (highlight, comment) directly onto the web page. To find out more see: http://bit.ly/ros-a

PDFs on PCs: Adobe Reader XI

Adobe Reader XI is your basic PDF reader and annotation software on the PC. Key features:
- Two-page view for a more natural 'book' display **View > Page Display > Two Page View**
- Rotate pages **View > Rotate View** or use [Shift + Ctrl + plus] or [Shift + Ctrl + minus]
- Hide comment popups **View > Read Mode** [Ctrl + H]
- Black out rest of the screen allowing you to focus on the text **View > Full Screen Mode** [Ctrl + L]. [Esc] to exit.
- Annotation tools via the **Comment** button top right, or **View > Comment > Annotations**
- Save your PDF to store your comments and annotations.

PDFs on Macs: Preview

Preview is your basic PDF reader and annotation software on the Mac which comes with OS X. Key features:
- Two-page view for a more natural 'book' display **View > PDF Display > Two Pages**
- Rotate pages **Tools > Rotate Left** or **Rotate Right** or use [⌘ + L] or [⌘ + R]
- Hide comment popups **View > Hide Notes**
- Black out rest of the screen allowing you to focus on the text **View > Slideshow**. [Esc] to exit.
- Annotation tools **View > Show Annotations Toolbar**. Toolbar appears at the bottom of the screen.

PDFs on Tablets: Adobe Reader App

The free **Adobe Reader App** lets you see annotations you've made on your PC or Mac on your tablet. You can also make new annotations, including 'freehand' scribbles. The App also offers **night mode** to reverse colours and 'text reflow' which allows resizing of text for compatible PDF files. Find out more online: http://bit.ly/ros-d