

Citing Sources

When conducting any kind of research assignment it is important to cite where you got the information. Your research may prove useful to someone else who needs to refer to the same sources — or to find the information's origin.

Recording your source material

Gather all the pertinent details you will need later on to cite your sources. Record this information through whatever means makes the most sense for you and will allow you to refer back to it at a later date. A traditional suggestion is to use a system of index cards, one for each source. Another option might be to type the information into a computer file, especially since it's likely you will be writing the final assignment with one, and your reference list will need to be included. The advantage of either of these methods is that they allow you to re-organize your sources as needed.

The basics of citing any work are relatively standard, it is the exact order that usually varies, along with whether or not the information is available (e.g. there is no author given for a newspaper or journal article):

- Author's name
- Name of the editor, translator, or compiler
- Title of the book, journal, or website
- Title of the chapter, section, or article
- Edition
- Number of volumes
- Name of the series
- Place of publication, name of the publisher, and date of publication
- Page numbers
- Date accessed, and last date site was uploaded or modified
- URL or address of website

Footnotes and endnotes

This information will eventually be gathered and organized to form your bibliography. It also may prove useful in a footnote where you must mention a source, giving its full citation. Footnotes can be included at the bottom of each page, or listed together at the end of your paper as endnotes.

Bibliography formats

Your instructor will usually require a particular format or style that you must use. Most disciplines have a preferred format to follow so the instructor is likely to expect the one that corresponds. A librarian or the writing center at your school may be able to give you further help. While the specific order and manner in which information is displayed or punctuated may differ, the actual content is essentially the same, and will be the information required to find the source again. Some of the more widely used styles include:

- MLA (Modern Language Association of America, primarily used with literature and the humanities)
- APA (American Psychological Association, usually used with social science and scientific research)
- Chicago (The Chicago Manual of Style, publishing) which has a humanities as well as an author-date system

Example of Book (as recommended by MLA):

Gordon, Karen Elizabeth. *The Well-Tempered Sentence: A Punctuation Handbook for the Innocent, the Eager, and the Doomed*. New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1983.

Example of Periodical (MLA):

Bogomolny, Laura. "Boss Your Career." *Canadian Business* 13–16 Mar. 2006: 47–49.

Example of Electronic Source (MLA):

Savill, R. Richard. "Jazz Age Biographies." *The Jazz Age Page*. 23 Oct. 2000. 12 Apr. 2006 <<http://www.btinternet.com/~dreklind/threetwo/Biograph.htm>>.