**MLA Format: How to Document Your Sources**

Sources are the articles, books, etc. from which you obtain information on your topic.

Follow the steps below to create your source cards. When you complete your research, you will type up these cards to make your Works Cited pages.

Things to note:

* Start on the left side of the card and write until you get to the end of the line on the card.
* Indent when you begin the second line and any line after the first line of a source card.
* For Internet sources, put **n.d.** if there is no date of publication or update. Put **N.p.** if no web site sponsor or publisher is listed.
* If a source has no author, then begin the citation with the article or book title, punctuated correctly. Italicize book titles and titles of longer works of fiction/nonfiction. Put quotation marks around article titles.
* The above rules also apply when you are typing up your Works Cited page.
* Remember that your Works Cited page is also double spaced like the rest of your paper.

**Primary Source MLA Citation Format (must have 1 primary source):**

**Interview:**

Person’s Last Name, First Name. Personal interview. Day Month Year of Interview.

Person’s Last Name, First Name. Telephone interview. Day Month Year of Interview.

Person’s Last Name, First Name. E-mail interview. Day Month Year of Interview.

**Print Sources MLA Citation Format (minimum of 2):**

**Book with one Author (Paper Copy):**

Author’s Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book.* City of Publication: Publishing Company,

Copyright Year. Print.

**Book with Two or More authors (Paper Copy):**

Reverse the name order of only the first author.

Jackson, Frank, Meredythe Campell, and Judy Collins. *Life at Dachau.* New York: Bantam Publishing,

2001.

**When a work has four or more authors, either name all of the authors or name the first author in the citation followed by “et al.” (Latin for “and others”).**

**Anthology/Book with Articles by Separate Authors:**

Author of Article’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of the Book.* Ed. Name of Editor. City

of Publication: Publishing Company, Copyright Date. Pages. Print.

**Periodical (Paper Copy of Magazine Article):**

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Magazine* Day Month Year of Publication:

Page Numbers. Print.

**Periodical (Paper Copy of Daily Newspaper Article):**

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Newspaper* Day Month Year or Publication: Page.

Print.

**Journal Article (Paper Copy):**

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of the Article.” *Name of the Journal* Volume Number.Issue Number

(Year): page numbers. Print.

**Online Print Sources (usually re-published online, but they still count as print sources):**

**Online Book:**

*If no original print publication information is available for the online book, follow the format below:*

Author’s Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book. Title of Web Site.* Sponsor or Publisher of Web Site,

Day Month Year the Page was Copyrighted or Last Updated. Web. Day Month Year of Access.

*If print publication information is available for the online book, follow the format below:*

Author’s Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book.* Ed. Name of Book Editor. Publishing City, Copyright Date.

*Title of the Web Site.* Web. Day Month Year of your access.

**Online Periodical (Online Magazine or Newspaper Article):**

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of the Article.” *Title of the Magazine/Newspaper*. Sponsor or

Publisher of the Site, Day Month Year of Publication or Last Update. Web. Day Month Year of access.

**Work from an Online Database (SIRS, Academic Search Premier, Mediline Plus, etc.):**

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of the Article.” *Name of the Original Publication* Vol.Issue (Date of

Original Publication): page numbers. *Name of Online Database*. Web.Day Month Year of access.

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of the Article.” *Name of the Original Publication* Day Month Year

of Original Publication: page numbers. *Name of Online Database.* Web. Day Month Year of access.

**If you use SIRS, the MLA citation is provided at the bottom of the article. To get to SIRS, you can go to the “Resources” tab. Other databases include citations for articles, too.**

**Internet Sources MLA Citation Format (minimum of 2):**

**Internet Article:**

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Website.* Sponsor or Publisher of Web Site, Day

Month Year the Page was Copyrighted or Last Updated. Web. Day Month Year of Access.

If you use another online database, please see an MLA style manual for directions on how to write a correctly formatted source citation.

Reminders:

* When you type in MLA format, please remember to italicize instead of underlining. However, when you write on your source cards use underlining.
* Remember to begin the first line of each source citation at the left margin, and then indent/tab each subsequent line.
* You may look up sites on the Internet to help you with MLA formatting, such as searching for [Purdue OWL: MLA Formatting and Style Guide](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/).
* Your source cards, placed in alphabetical order, will form your Works Cited. It is very important that you document each source that you use correctly.
* Each source should be given a number that is recorded in the upper right hand corner of the source card. This number also should be recorded in the upper right hand corner of all note cards taken from this source. This process will help you to correctly complete your MLA parenthetical in-text citations.
* If there is no author, you begin will the book or article title. Remember to italicize book titles and to put quotation marks around article titles.
* In an online or Internet citation if there is no sponsor or publisher information, put n.p.
* In an online or Internet citation if there is no copyright or last update date, then put n.d.

**Your source cards will look like these samples:**

Parenthetical in-text citation as it will appear in the paper

MLA formatted source citation

Type of Source

Source Number

Each line after the first line of a source citation is indented once

Internet Article with no author 1

“Senior Fitness.” *U.S. News and World Report.* US

News.com. U.S. News and World Report, 20 May

2002. Web. 1 April 2003.

(“Senior” )

Periodical Print 2

Lahr, John. “The Ties That Bind.” *The New Yorker*

3 November 2003: 94-95. Print.

(Lahr)

Interview 3

Clifton, Louise. Personal interview. 3 November

2011.

(Clifton)

**Note Cards**

Online Book 7

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost: Book I. Poetryfoundation.*

*org.* Poetry Foundation, 2008. Web.14 Dec.

2008.(Milton)

Internet Article with Author 6

Shiva, Vandana. “Bioethics: A Third World Issue. *Native*

*Web.org.* NativeWeb, n.d. Web. 22 Jan. 2009.

(Shiva)

Book (no author) 5

*Making Our Lives Green.* New York: Enviro Publishing,

2001. Print.

(*Making Our*)

Book 4

Holden, Anthony. *William Shakespeare: An Illustrated*

*Biography.* London: Little, Brown, and Co., 2002.

Print.

(Holden)

Note cards are divided into subtopics, which are recorded on the top line of the card beginning at the left margin. These subtopics are main ideas that support your thesis statement. The notes you record on each subtopic come from your sources and will compose the body of your paper.

* When you read a fact that you think is interesting or relevant, copy it word for word onto a 4X6” lined index card. Put quotation marks around the whole passage. As you write your paper, you can then decide if the quote needs to be used as a direct quote for emphasis or whether you should paraphrase the information into your own words, using no more than three words in a row from the direct quotation.
* You should record only one fact, or note, on each note card. This makes it easier to organize your note cards before writing your first draft.
* You will need approximately 50 note cards for a well-supported paper.
* At the top of each note card put the subheading/subtopic that the fact covers.
* MLA recommends numbering all **source cards** and placing the number that corresponds to the source used on the note card in the upper right-hand corner of the note card. Some students also write the author or title of the source and even the page number in parentheses at the bottom of the note card to help them with parenthetical in-text citations in the paper later.
* The page number where the information was found is placed to the left of the information.
* Once you have written down all of the helpful facts from this source, you are ready to move on to the next source on your list and start the process all over again.

**Sample Note Cards**

Source Number

Note-taking Subtopic

s

Atkins – Why Fewer Carbs are Better 1

34 - “When you eat too many carbohydrates (carbs), your body burns some of

those carbs for energy and stores the excess carbs as fat. When you eat

fewer carbs – especially white flour and sugar, your body begins burning

fat as its primary fuel source.”

(“Dieting’s Benefits” 34)

Page Number if available

MLA Parenthetical

In-text citation—no author was available, so the first two words of the article title were used

Copy the direct quote from source (word-for-word); you will decide whether to use a direct quote, summary, or paraphrase later when you write your first draft.

MLA Parenthetical In-text citation—author and pg. number were available

Acai Berry – Benefits of Antioxidants 3

78 - “The acai berry is promoted primarily for its antioxidant effects, which

exceed that of other foods that are high in antioxidants such as

blueberries and red wine. Advocates of the acai berry diet claim that

these antioxidants will enhance general well-being and vitality which will

support weight loss.”

(Smith 78)