MLA FORMAT
A Guide to Preparing Note Cards and Bibliography Cards

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HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A BOOK
with one author

Last Name, First Name. Title of Book. City of publication: Name of publisher, year of publication.


HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A BOOK
with three or more authors

Last name, First Name et al. Title of Book. City of publication: Name of publisher, year of publication.


FYI: et.al. is a Latin abbreviation for “others”.

SAMPLE NOTE CARD

Facts about the Acropolis of Athens

- Means “high city”
- Built around 6th century BC originally as a temple to Athena
- It is actually a complex of several buildings
- Entrance is called the Propylaea

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THE BASICS OF NOTE-TAKING FOR RESEARCH PAPERS

1. Use a separate note card or sheet of paper for each new note. This is so later on, you can easily arrange the cards in the order that you plan to use them.

2. At the top of each note card, write a heading that tells you what the information is about.

3. At the top of each note card, write the number of the source, so you will always be able to tell exactly where you found the information. When you prepare your bib cards, you will give each one a number, and this will serve as your “code” for telling what source the notes came from.

4. Summarize the information.

5. End by writing down the page in the source that the information came from.

HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A BOOK with an editor

Last name, First Name, ed. Title of Book. City of publication: Name of publisher, year of publication.


FYI: ed. is the abbreviation for “editor.”

WHEN TAKING NOTES …

Remember the difference between paraphrasing and plagiarism.

Paraphrasing means to put something into your own words. It means to completely restate an author’s thought. Just replacing a few words isn’t enough – you need to completely make it your own.

Plagiarism is when you copy another’s words and use them as your own. It is the same thing as stealing another’s work. Copying from Web pages is definitely considered plagiarism.

For a more detailed explanation, please visit the Resources page at www.mrschristianson.com

HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A BOOK with two authors

Last Name, First Name and First Name Last Name. Title of Book. City of publication: Name of publisher, year of publication.

Note: the authors’ names should be listed alphabetically according to last name.

HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A BOOK
with two editors

It’s just like writing a bib card for a book with two authors, except you use the abbreviation for editor after the names.

Christianson, Lori and Ray Road, eds.

Note how an ‘s’ is added to make the abbreviation plural.

HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A BOOK
with more than two editors

Christianson, Lori et.al., eds.

HOW TO WRITE DATES IN MLA FORMAT

Dates are always written in military style, which means the date of the month goes first, then the month, and then the year.

27 Feb. 2007

Months are always abbreviated to three letters:

Jan.  May  Sept.

The only month that does not have a period at the end is May, because it does not need to be abbreviated.

Years always use all four digits: 1999, 2005, 1762.

HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR AN
ARTICLE FROM AN ENCYCLOPEDIA
when you don’t know the author


Note: use ordinal numbers and the abbreviation for “edition” (ed.) when writing the edition.

HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A
MAGAZINE ARTICLE

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” Name of Magazine. Date: Page Number(s).


Note the colon (:) that comes after the date and before the page number. You do not need to write the abbreviation for page (p.) or pages (pp.) before the page numbers.
HOW TO WRITE URLS

When you list a website on a bib card, make sure to write it inside of angle brackets < >. In math, these are known as the greater-than and less-than signs. They are located above the period and comma on the keyboard.

<http://www.mrschristianson.com>

Sometimes those URLs are so long that there is no way they can fit on one line. It is okay to break up an URL onto two lines. Simply divide it after a backslash:

<http://www.giftedlanguageartsclasses.com/article5693.htm>

HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” Name of Newspaper. Date: Page(s).


HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR AN ARTICLE FROM A CD-ROM

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” Name of CD-Rom. CD-ROM. Date of Publication.


HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR AN ARTICLE FROM AN ENCYCLOPEDIA when you know the author


HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A NEWSPAPER or MAGAZINE ARTICLE From the Internet

Last name, First name. “Title of the Article.” Name of Magazine. Date of original publication: page numbers. Date accessed online. <URL>.


HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR AN INDIVIDUAL PAGE ON A WEBSITE WITH NO AUTHOR

“Name of Page.” Name of site. Date of site’s last revision. Name of institution or organization affiliated with the site. Date you accessed the site. <URL>.


You’re right: it does look strange to have two dates written together. However, this is how it is done in MLA format and people familiar with this way of preparing entries know that the first date is the publication one and the second date is when you accessed the site.

HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR AN ARTICLE FROM AN ENCYCLOPEDIA on the Internet

“Title of Article.” Title of Online Encyclopedia. Date Accessed. <URL>.


HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A WEBSITE WHEN IT BELONGS TO AN INSTITUTION OR ORGANIZATION

Name of institution. “Title of site’s specific page.” Name of full site. Date of site’s last revision. Date you accessed the site. <URL>.

HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR AN ARTICLE FROM AN ONLINE DATABASE (InfoTrac, SIRS Researcher, EBSCOHost etc.)

Last name, First name. “Title of article.” Name of Magazine/Newspaper. Date of original publication: page numbers. Database name. Database Service. Name of sponsoring library or institution. Date accessed. <URL>.


HINTS ON FINDING INFORMATION ON WEBSITES

Sometimes you need to really search to find the date of last revision or to find the author’s name. Oftentimes this information is hidden at the bottom of the first page. If you can’t find it, you can also contact the webmaster and explain you need the information to properly document the source. A source that does not have this information, or which is not willing to give it out, may not be the most reliable source to cite for research purposes.

If this happens, please check with your teacher to see what s/he would like you to do. You may need to find another source.

BASIC MLA FORMAT FOR CITING WEBSITES

Use this when you can’t find information on the author. Please also ask your teacher for help!

Name of Site. Date of site’s last revision. Name of institution or organization affiliated with the site. Date you accessed the site. <URL>.


Note: you may have to dig to find a site’s date of last revision. Don’t be afraid of a little work. The citation is not complete without this!

HOW TO WRITE A BIB CARD FOR A WEBSITE WHEN YOU KNOW THE NAME OF THE AUTHOR

Last name, First name. “Title of Site’s Specific Page.” Name of full site. Date of site’s last revision. Date you accessed the site. <URL>.


Note: you may have to dig to find a site’s date of last revision. Don’t be afraid of a little work. The citation is not complete without this!