

Taking Notes Using Note Cards

Note-taking Information

Record only one piece of information on each note card. When it comes time to write the rough draft, you will arrange all your cards, using your outline as a “sorting” guide. If you have two pieces of information on a single card and each item belongs in a different place in your paper, you will not be able to put one card into two places.

You should not use complete sentences unless writing a direct quotation. Words, phrases, and fragments are fine---just as long as you can understand later what you have written.

Three kinds of information are appropriate for note cards:

- **Facts.** Record accurately!
- **General information.** If reading through material gives you an idea, write the idea in your own words on your note.
- **Specific information.** If you read something which is worded just the way you would like it to appear on your paper, copy it exactly onto your note card. Enclose the material in quotation marks.

Review the key steps:

1. Write section of the outline you think you will use the information. (Ex. II.A)) in upper right corner. This might end up changing, but it is a guide to help organizing your note cards.
2. Write the author’s name (When available) and article title
3. Write only one main idea on a card.
4. Take notes by:
 - recording brief fact or statistic
 - quoting directly—enclose information in quotation marks
 - paraphrasing
 - summarizing
5. Write the page number at the bottom of each card.
6. Highlight the information in the printed version of your source.

"Homeschooling."

(I. Intro)

“According to a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), approximately 1.5 million students were homeschooled in the United States in 2007, up from 850,000 in 1999. With that 76 percent increase, homeschooled children now represent about 2.9 percent of the school-age population.”

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Types of Notes

Fact or Statistic:

A note card can record a brief fact or statistic that you want to remember. Do not write a complete sentence when you record such information.

Direct Quotations:

Sometimes you will find a writer's words so vivid or effective that you decide you might want to quote it in your paper. On your note card, copy the quote exactly---word for word---just as the writer wrote it, and enclose the quoted material in large quotation marks (large so that you remember the wording isn't yours!). **In general, direct quotes should be brief and should be used sparingly throughout the paper.**

Paraphrasing:

When you paraphrase, you restate the writer's ideas in your own words. A paraphrase briefly covers every idea in the same order as in the original. Even though you are not copying the writer's exact words, you are "kidnapping" the writer's ideas, and unless you give credit to the original writer, you are plagiarizing. You will need to cite the author and the page number in your paper if you paraphrase that author's thoughts or ideas.

Summarizing:

When you summarize something, you restate the main ideas in your own words. A summary does not give all the details---only the most important ones.