

FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions About the Research Paper

1. How many sources will I need?

Start with at 5, but you may need more in order to gather enough evidence for your claim.

2. How many sources should be from the Internet and how many from books?

You need to find the best sources, with the best evidence, whether they are from the Internet or library. Start with SIRS and then add other strong traditional or Internet sources.

3. Will I have the same number of note cards for each source?

No, when you research you will find that some sources have a lot of evidence, while others have little. Therefore, you may make many note cards for some sources, and only a couple for others.

4. May I write my research paper from just one or two sources.

No, a research paper uses a variety of sources. It is not a summary or review of just a few sources.

5. How much information do I have to put on each note card?

That depends. You should fill up a notecard from one source if it has a lot of information. Other note cards may only have one or two facts. The important point is that you will have to have enough evidence to prove your claim when you are done taking notes.

6. Should I use the same note card if I change sources?

No, information on a note card should only come from one source.

7. Do I put a page number down on my note card if I am using a traditional source, like a book or magazine?

Yes, be sure to put down page numbers for these sources because this information is necessary for your in-text citations in the paper.

8. Which part of the source do I put on the bottom right of the note card?

Put the left part of the source. Often this is the author's last name. With sources without an author, it is often the name of the article. You will use this later for your in-text citation.

9. Should I take notes on the opposing position to my claim?

Yes, you should take some notes on the opposing position because one of your jobs will be refute the counterclaim in your paper.

10. May I change my claim after I begin researching?

Yes, you may. As you research you may find that your own position on the topic changes. In addition, even if you keep the same position, you may find that there is not a lot of information to support one of the reasons in your claim. Therefore, you may change a reason in your claim.