Helpful Hints for Writers
Using Citation Tools Effectively

Learning to format your bibliography can be a frustrating endeavor. The emergence of online citation development tools has certainly made the process easier, but these services may not always be completely reliable. This handout will help you learn how to use these tools effectively.

Learning to create a citation in a standard format is an important skill for college students to master. The major formats used for academic papers, including MLA and APA, all call for a Works Cited or References page at the end of the paper that lists all of the sources referenced and/or used in the paper.

Most textbooks provide numerous examples of citations by type (from a book, web site, periodical, etc.). You can use these examples to create your own citations, but if you are struggling with formatting citations, using one of the citation tools described here may help you with the process. Just remember that it is always important to recheck your citations for accuracy when using EasyBib or another citation generator to format your citation.

EASYBIB
The easiest place to start is the Tri-C library’s home page. Click on the library tab on my Tri-C space. Under “library services,” click on “reference tools”; then choose “style manuals and writing guides.” Select “EasyBib.” Follow the prompts to create your citation by inputting the information about title, publisher, date, etc. After a citation is created, you can import it into the Works Cited page of your paper, placing the sources in alphabetical order.

NOODLETOOLS
This is another citation generator, like EasyBib, but the main version of NoodleTools that you find by Googling is a paid service. By clicking on NoodleTools Express, you will find a free citation generator. There is no need to use the paid Noodle Tools. After a citation is generated here, you must copy and paste it into your Works Cited page; you cannot export it to a word processing program.

MICROSOFT OFFICE REFERENCES TOOL
Be careful when using the citation generators provided by Microsoft. Unless you are working with the most current and up-to-date version of the software, citations generated through here will most likely be incorrect. This is because the rules for formatting change often as new types of media become available. Outdated software will inevitably produce results that are not in line with current guidelines.

Remember, citation tools are a shortcut that can save time, but they don’t replace learning the requirements for citations. When used correctly, citation tools can help you prepare a paper in less time. However, to be effective, they require the user to put the right information into the right field in order to generate a correct citation. If not, the shortcut you thought you were taking could end up being the long route. You are responsible for making sure your citation is formatted correctly!