As you gather information

1. Keep your sources organized
   - Use a separate project box or shelf for the books/folders, etc.
   - Use a file, pocket folder or loose leaf for articles/printouts
   - Create files with logical folder and filenames on your own computer not the library’s computers
   - Label disks with a logical project name
   - Backup your information on computer disks or other storage devices

2. Keep paper records of your research
   - Keep your notes, photocopies, and printouts until your paper or project has been graded and returned to you
   - Keep the drafts or versions of your paper separate. To prevent confusing the different drafts or versions of your paper, number & date them

3. Keep works cited information
   - Make note cards or files for each of your sources
   - As you find sources, record information in the appropriate style e.g. MLA, APA, etc.
   - File note cards alphabetically by the author’s last name or the title

4. Organize your notes
   - Attach articles or notes to the note cards for easy reference
   - Cross out irrelevant parts of your printed articles
   - Highlight or underline important ideas
   - In your own words, make notes in the margins of the articles or on the note cards
   - Write down quotes or paraphrases you intend to use along with the source of the information
   - Look for patterns and trends in the information
   - As needed, make flow charts and/or diagrams of information & ideas

5. When you get your assignment, make a timeline
   - List tasks needed to be done
   - Schedule a specific time for each task
   - Project the amount of time each task will require
   - Note tasks and due dates in your calendar
   - Revise your schedule as needed

6. Check with your instructor
   - Get approval for your chosen topic
   - Make sure your research is on track
   - Make sure your timeline is the same as your instructor’s
   - When possible turn in a rough draft of your paper or project for instructor comments and suggestions
For More Information and Explanation:

**Hartnell College Courses**

- Counseling 21 – Student Skills for Success: Orientation
- Library Instruction 2 – Introduction to Using the Academic Library
- Library Instruction 5, 6, or 7 – Research Methods

**Books**

- Get Organized
  - LB1049 F735 2005
- MLA Handbook
  - LB2369 G53 2009
- Sin Boldly! : Dr. Dave’s Guide to Writing the College Paper
  - PE1408 W589 2004
- Student’s Guide to Writing College Papers
  - LB2369 T82 2010
- Ten Skills You Really Need to Succeed in College
  - LB2395 L3745 2003
- What Is “College-Level” Writing
  - PE1408 W564 2006
- Yale Daily News Guide to Writing College Papers
  - LB2369 C595 2000

**Web Sites**

- Purdue University. Writing A Research Paper. [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/658/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/658/01/)