Constructing an Outline

An outline should:

* Be organized
* Be logical
* Help you organize your thoughts
* Have more than one item per heading
  + If you have a I, you should also have a II
  + If you have an A, you should also have a B
  + If you have a 1, you should also have a 2
* Be specific
  + Don’t just say “Elaborate here.”
  + Include citations with quoted/paraphrased material (this helps when you’re actually writing the paper – all the information is already there!)
* Be parallel
  + The significance of info in A should be equally as important as the info in B.
  + Same with subheadings and subordinate information
  + Broadest information in first heading, narrow with each subsequent heading
* Make sense for YOU
  + The sample outline is not set in stone
  + Add more elaboration or details if necessary

**Reminders**

1. **Detailed list of information that will most likely be in your paper**
2. **Include your complete quotes or paraphrases/facts from the quote collection sheet**
3. **Your in-text citations should be included with the quotes or paraphrases/facts**
4. **Thesis and topic sentences should be in complete sentences**
5. **Use correct MLA formatting**
6. **Highlight the outline portion (not the heading) and change the spacing to ZERO so there is no space between lines**
7. **Include completed/updated Works Cited page at the end**

**Format:**

**I.**

**A.**

**1.**

**a.**

Sample Research Outline

1. Introduction
2. Hook/opening comments
3. Thesis
4. Background/Context of Problem
5. Detail:
   * + 1. Elaboration
       2. Elaboration
6. Detail:
   * + 1. Elaboration
       2. Elaboration
7. Main Point 1 (Topic Sentence):
8. Detail (Quote/Paraphrase/Partial Paraphrase):
9. Elaboration
10. Elaboration
11. Detail (Quote/Paraphrase/Partial Paraphrase):
12. Elaboration
13. Elaboration
14. Main Point 2 (Topic Sentence):
15. Detail (Quote/Paraphrase/Partial Paraphrase):
16. Elaboration
17. Elaboration
18. Detail
19. Elaboration
20. Elaboration
21. Main Point 3 (Topic Sentence):
22. Detail (Quote/.Paraphrase/Partial Paraphrase):
23. Elaboration
24. Elaboration
25. Detail
26. Elaboration
27. Elaboration
28. Detail
29. Main Point 4 or Summary of Main points 1-3
30. Detail (Quote/.Paraphrase/Partial Paraphrase):
31. Elaboration
32. Elaboration
33. Detail
34. Elaboration
35. Elaboration
36. Counterargument (Another feasible solution to the problem)
37. Detail (Quote/.Paraphrase/Partial Paraphrase):
38. Elaboration
39. Elaboration
40. Detail
    * + 1. Elaboration
        2. Elaboration
41. Refutation (Why your solution is still best “Yes, but” argument)
42. Detail (Quote/.Paraphrase/Partial Paraphrase):
    * + 1. Elaboration
        2. Elaboration
43. Detail

1. Elaboration

2. Elaboration

1. Conclusion
2. Return to thesis but do NOT repeat it
3. Summarize main points
4. Call to action