

Reference 80B: Outline Information

First, an outline has a TITLE.

- At first, your outline title should be the same or similar to your narrowed topic. This will help you stay focused on the main idea of your report. If you decide to change the title for your final paper, you must remember to change your outline title.
- Capitalizing rules for titles are the same for outlines as for final papers: Capitalize the first word, the last word, and all the important words in between them. Conjunctions, articles, and prepositions with fewer than five letters are not usually capitalized unless they are the first or last word. Titles for reports are not underlined or placed in quotation marks unless the title is a quotation.

Second, an outline has Roman numerals, called MAIN TOPICS.

- There must always be two or more Roman numerals. There can never be just one. For each Roman numeral, there is a paragraph. (Three Roman numerals - three paragraphs.)
- The information following a Roman numeral is called the main topic and gives the main idea, or main point, of each paragraph. It will be used to form the topic sentence of the paragraph.
- Every first word in a main topic is always capitalized.
- The periods after the Roman numerals must be lined up under each other.

Third, an outline has capital letters denoting SUBTOPICS.

- There must always be two or more capital letters. If you only have one, do not put it in the outline. Each capital letter is indented under the first word of the main topic.
- The information beside a capital letter is called the subtopic and gives details that support the main topic, or main point of the paragraph.
- Every first word in a subtopic is always capitalized.
- The periods after the capital letters must be lined up under each other.

Fourth, an outline sometimes has Arabic numerals, called DETAILS.

- There must always be two or more Arabic numerals. If you only have one, do not put it on the outline. Each Arabic numeral is indented under the first word of the subtopic.
- The information beside an Arabic numeral is called a detail and tells specific information about the subtopic of the paragraph.
- Every first word in a detail is always capitalized.
- The periods after the Arabic numerals must be lined up under each other.