Works Cited vs. References vs. Bibliography

Knowing the proper term for your paper's list of citations can be confusing. Do I call it a works cited page? Should it be called a bibliography? How is it different from a reference list? In this article, we explain what these three terms mean and how they are different or related to one another.

To begin, each citation style has its own way of naming the list of sources you used in your paper. Here we break down the differences in these list types, so that you can better understand which option works best for your work.

Works Cited

A "Works Cited" list is an alphabetical list of works cited, or sources you specifically called out while composing your paper. **All works that you have quoted or paraphrased** should be included. Works Cited is generally used when citing sources using MLA format (Modern Language Association) style, and sources should be listed in alphabetical order by author's last name.

Example Works Cited entry:

Middlekauff, Robert. *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution*. Oxford UP, 2007.

References or "Reference List"

A "Reference List" is very similar to a Works Cited list, and is a term used when citing sources using APA format (American Psychological Association) style. The page should be titled "References," and is arranged alphabetically by author last name.

Example References entry:

Middlekauff, R. (2007). *The glorious cause: The American Revolution*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Bibliography

Bibliographies, on the other hand, differ greatly from Works Cited and References lists. In Works Cited and References, you only list items you have referred to and cited in your paper. **A Bibliography, meanwhile, lists all the material you have consulted in preparing your essay, whether you have referred to and cited the work or not.** This includes all

sources that you have used to do any research. Bibliographies are often used in Chicago and Turabian citation styles. They usually contain a long reference that has a corresponding footnote within the body of the paper.

Example Bibliography entry:

Middlekauff, Robert. *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007.

<div align="center">Reference</div>

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