

## Modern Language Association (MLA) Documentation Style

### Introduction

Modern Language Association (MLA) documentation style is used primarily when writing papers in the fields of liberal arts and the humanities. This guide is based on the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (8<sup>th</sup> edition).

MLA requires that sources be briefly cited in the text of the paper using author-page format. Complete citations should be given on a works cited page at the end of the paper. The following examples demonstrate how to cite sources within the text, as well as on the works cited page. If none of these examples seems appropriate, consult the *MLA Handbook*, available in the Missouri S&T Writing Center, 113 CSF.

### In-Text Citations

In-text citations appear in the text of a paper following a direct quotation or paraphrase of another's work, or when relying on or referring to another's work. These citations direct the reader to a corresponding entry in a list of works cited where full bibliographic information is provided. The in-text citation appears in parentheses immediately after the quotation, paraphrase, or reference and generally includes the author's last name and the page number, if available. If the author's name is mentioned explicitly in the sentence containing the reference, the citation should include only the title or short title, if necessary, and the page number. In this case, if no page number is available, no in-text citation is provided as long as the reference to the source is clear enough that the reader can locate the source in the list of works cited.

#### Books (or Journal Articles) with One Author

Examples:

*Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* begins with a description of the characters' location, stating that they "were somewhere around Barstow, on the edge of the desert" (Thompson 1).

Thompson writes, "we were somewhere around Barstow, on the edge of the desert, when the drugs began to take hold" (1).

#### Books (or Journal Articles) with Two Authors

Example:

"...to fetch a pail of water" (Smith and Jones 1).

**Multiple Citations:** When citing multiple sources simultaneously, separate the citations with a semi-colon:

Example:

...and has been discussed elsewhere (Burke 3; Dewey 21).

**Multiple Works by the Same Author:** If the Works Cited list includes multiple works by the same author, differentiate among those works by including the source title in the citation. Begin the citation with the author's name, followed by a comma, the title of the work, and the page number. If the title is long, use a shortened version of the title, but be sure the first word of the shortened version is the same as the word under which the work is alphabetized in the works cited list.

Examples:

The prisoner's testimony was angry, incoherent, and rambling (Powers, *Tom and Huck*, 301).

Lightener has argued that computers are not useful tools for small children ("Too Soon" 38), though he has acknowledged elsewhere that early exposure to computer games does lead to better small motor skill development in a child's second and third year ("Hand-Eye Development" 17).

**Anonymous Works/Author Unknown:** If an author's name is unknown, use a shortened title instead. For information on shortened titles, see the section above on multiple works by the same author.

Example:

An anonymous critic once argued that Wordsworth's poems were too emotional ("Wordsworth Is a Loser" 100).

**Indirect Sources:** When citing an indirect source (i.e., a source within a source), "qtd. in" is used to indicate the source actually consulted.

Example:

Ravitch argues that high schools are pressured to act as "social service centers, and they don't do that well" (qtd. in Weisman 259).

## Works Cited List

The works cited list is located on a separate page at the end of the paper; each entry corresponds to an in-text citation. Double space both within and between citations. The first line of each entry should be flush with the left margin; subsequent lines should be indented 5 spaces or 1/2 inch.

Entries should be alphabetized by last name of first author or, if the author is unknown, by title. When alphabetizing by title, ignore the words *a*, *an*, or *the* at the beginning of the title.

Italicize titles of books, periodicals, plays, Web sites, online databases, films, CDs, and works of visual art. Place quotation marks around book chapters, articles or essays within a book or periodical, Web pages, songs, and poems.

### BOOKS

#### Books with One Author:

Basic Format:

Author. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year.

Example:

Thompson, Hunter S. *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. Penguin Books, 1971.

#### Books with More Than One Author:

Basic Format:

Author and Author. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year.

Example:

Gillespie, Paula, and Neal Lerner. *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring*. Allyn and Bacon, 2000.

**Two or More Books by the Same Author:** After the first listing of the author's name, three hyphens and a period are used in the following listings instead of the author's name.

Basic Format:

Author. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year.

---. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year.

Example:

Palmer, William J. *Dickens and New Historicism*. St. Martin's, 1997.

---. *The Films of the Eighties: A Social History*. Southern Illinois UP, 1993.

**Books with No Author:** If a source has no author, list and alphabetize the source by its title (disregarding *a*, *and*, and *the*).

Basic Format:

*Title of Book*. Publisher, Year.

Example:

*Encyclopedia of Indiana*. Somerset, 1993.

**Anthologies or Collections:** When citing an anthology or collection, list and alphabetize the source by the editor (s), followed by *editor* or *editors* (no italics).

Basic Format:

Editor and Editor, editors. *Title of the work*. Publisher, Year.

Example:

Hill, Charles A. and Marguerite Helmers, editors. *Defining Visual Rhetorics*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004.

**Parts of a Book:** A part of a book includes sources such as an essay within a collection or anthology, or a chapter of a book.

Basic Format:

Author. "Title of the Essay." *Title of Collection*, edited by Editor's Name(s), Publisher, Year, pages.

Example:

Harris, Muriel. "Talk to Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers." *A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers One to One*, edited by Ben Rafoth, Heinmann, 2000, pp. 24-34.

**Government Publications:** If an author is identified, cite him/her followed by the government agency, and any subdivision.

Basic Format:

Name of the Government, Organizational Unit, Agency. *Title of the Document*. Publisher, Year. Number of the Congress, session number of Congress, SuDoc number.

Example:

United States, Congress, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary. *Hearing on the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1998*. Government Printing Office, 1999. 105th Congress, 2nd session, Senate Joint Resolution 1529.

## PERIODICALS

### Magazine or Newspaper Articles:

Basic Format:

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical*, Day Month Year, pages.

Example:

Poniewozik, Paul. "TV Makes a Too-Close Call." *Time*, 20 Nov. 2000, pp. 70-71.

### Journal Articles:

Basic Format:

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, Volume, Issue, Year, pages.

Example:

Bagchi, Alaknanda. "Conflicting Nationalisms: The Voice of the Subaltern in Mahasweta Devis' *Bashai Tudu*." *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1996, pp. 41-50.

## ELECTRONIC SOURCES

The *MLA Handbook* recommends including URLs of web sources within the citation. If your source offers a stable URL, sometimes called a permalink, that should be used in your citation. Some publishers assign DOIs, or digital object identifiers, to their publications. A DOI remains linked to a source even if the URL changes. If a source has an attached DOI, using the DOI is preferable to using the URL.

**Website:** Citation of Web sites or pages within a site can be difficult because the types of publication information available for such sites vary significantly. The example below includes all the elements that would ideally be included in an entry for such a source. If some of these elements are unavailable, you may have to improvise, including what information you have that might be helpful to the reader who wishes to locate the source.

Basic Format:

Author (or compiler, editor, translator, etc). "Title of Page (if part of a larger site)." *Name of Site*. Publisher or sponsor of the site, date of publication, URL, DOI or permalink. Date of access.

Examples:

Eaves, Morris, et. al., editors. *The William Blake Archive*. 1996-2014, [www.blakearchive.org/blake/](http://www.blakearchive.org/blake/).

Ross, David. "Geoffrey Chaucer." *Britain Express*. 1996-2016, [www.britainexpress.com/History/bio/chaucer.htm](http://www.britainexpress.com/History/bio/chaucer.htm). Accessed 28 Feb. 2011.

### Journal Articles:

Basic Format:

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Online Scholarly Journal*, Volume Number, Issue Number, Date, page number(s). URL, DOI, or permalink. Date of Access.

Example:

Wheleis, Mark. "Investigating Disease Outbreaks Under a Protocol to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention." *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2000, pp. 595-600, [wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/6/6/00-0607\\_article](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/6/6/00-0607_article). Accessed 8 Feb. 2009.

#### **Article in an Online Database:**

Basic Format:

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, Volume Number, Issue Number, Date, page number(s). Online database, DOI or URL. Date of Access.

Example:

Goldman, Anne. "Questions of Transport: Reading Primo Levi Reading Dante." *The Georgia Review*, vol.64, no. 1, 2010, pp. 69-88. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/41403188](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41403188). Accessed 8 May 2012.

#### **Images (including paintings, sculptures, photographs, etc.):**

Basic Format:

Artist. *Title of Piece*. Date of creation. *Title of Website*, Institution that houses the work (if applicable), city of institution, URL. Date of access.

Example:

Harris, Charles "Teenie." *Woman in Paisley Shirt behind Counter in Record Store*. 1937. *Teenie Harris Archive*, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, [teenie.cmoa.org/interactive/index.html#date08](http://teenie.cmoa.org/interactive/index.html#date08). Accessed 2 May 2012.

#### **E-mail or Other Personal Communications:**

Basic Format:

Author. "Title of the message (if any)." Received by person's name, date of the message.

Example:

Costello, Thomas. "Re: St. Pat's Bar Night." Received by Joe Lancaster, 10 Nov. 2006.

#### **A Tweet:**

Basic Format:

User's Twitter handle. "Tweet in its entirety." *Twitter*, date of posting, time of posting, URL.

Example:

@persiankiwi. "We have report of large street battles in east & west of Tehran now—#Iralection." *Twitter*, 23 June 2009, 11:15 a.m., [twitter.com/persiankiwi/status/2298106072](https://twitter.com/persiankiwi/status/2298106072).

## OTHER NON-PRINT SOURCES

### Lectures or Speeches:

Basic Format:

Speaker name. "Title of Speech (if any)." Title of conference/meeting. Name of sponsoring organization, Date, Location (venue), City. Type of presentation (address, lecture, keynote speech, etc.).

Example:

Atwood, Margaret. "Silencing the Scream." Boundaries of the Imagination Forum. MLA Annual Convention, 29 Dec. 1993, Royal York Hotel, Toronto. Address.

### Broadcast Television or Radio Programs:

Basic Format:

"Name of the Episode." *Name of the Series*. Network, Station, City, Date of Broadcast.

Example:

"Fashion of the Christ." *Weeds*. Showtime, WXIA, Atlanta, 29 Aug. 2005.

### Netflix, Hulu, and Other Streaming Services

Basic Format:

"Name of the Episode." *Name of the Series*, season #, episode #, Network, Broadcast Date. *Streaming Service*, URL.

Example:

"Under the Gun." *Pretty Little Liars*, season 4, episode 6, ABC Family, 16 July 2013. *Hulu*, [www.hulu.com/watch/511318](http://www.hulu.com/watch/511318).

### Individual Songs:

Basic Format:

Artist. "Title of Song." *Album Title*, Label, Year of Release, URL (if online).

Examples:

Nirvana. "Smells Like Teen Spirit." *Nevermind*, Geffen, 1991.

Beyonce. "Pretty Hurts." *Beyonce*, Parkwood Entertainment, 2013, [www.beyonce.com/album/beyonce/?media\\_view=songs](http://www.beyonce.com/album/beyonce/?media_view=songs).

### Films:

Basic Format:

*Title of Film*. Director, Performer Names (if relevant), Film Studio, Year of Release.

Example:

*The Usual Suspects*. Directed by Bryan Singer, performances by Kevin Spacey, Gabriel Byrne, Chazz Palminteri, Stephen Baldwin, and Benicio del Toro, Polygram, 1995.