

MLA: A Quick and Easy Guide

Formatting:

Margins: 1 inch
Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt
Paragraphs: Double-space
Alignment: Left
Header: Last Name and page numbers

Headings: *(example below of formatting)*

Student's first and last name

Professor's name

Course and section number

Date (day month year)

In-Text Citations:

(Information below provided by Purdue OWL)

In MLA style, referring to the works of others in your text is done by using what is known as **parenthetical citation**. This method involves placing relevant source information in parentheses after a quote or a paraphrase.

General Guidelines

- The source information required in a parenthetical citation depends (1.) upon the source medium (e.g. Print, Web, DVD) and (2.) upon the source's entry on the Works Cited (bibliography) page.
- Any source information that you provide in-text must correspond to the source information on the Works Cited page. More specifically, whatever signal word or phrase you provide to your readers in the text, must be the first thing that appears on the left-hand margin of the corresponding entry in the Works Cited List.

In-text citations: Author-page style

MLA format follows the author-page method of in-text citation. This means that the author's last name and the page number(s) from which the quotation or paraphrase is taken must appear in the text, and a complete reference should appear on your Works Cited page. The author's name may appear either in the sentence itself or in parentheses following the quotation or paraphrase, but the page number(s) should always appear in the parentheses, not in the text of your sentence. For example:

- Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (263).
- Romantic poetry is characterized by the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth 263).
- Wordsworth extensively explored the role of emotion in the creative process (263).

Both citations in the examples above, (263) and (Wordsworth 263), tell readers that the information in the sentence can be located on page 263 of a work by an author named Wordsworth. If readers want more information about this source, they can turn to the Works Cited page, where, under the name of Wordsworth, they would find the full citation of the text, which contained the quotation.

Block Quotation:

For prose, if a quotation runs longer than four lines into the text, set it off from the text by beginning a new line, indenting one inch from the left margin, and typing it double-spaced, without adding quotation marks. The parenthetical reference for a block quotation sits at the very end in parentheses after the closing punctuation.

For poetry, if a quotation runs longer than three lines into the text, set it off from the text in the same way as a prose quotation.

Works Cited Page:

The Eighth edition of MLA has changed some of the formatting of the Works Cited page. The order in which information is listed is as follows:

**Author. Title of Source. Title of Container, Other Contributors, Version,
Number, Publisher, Publication date, Location.**

Author: the author's last name is followed by a comma and then the author's first name.

Title of Source: the title of the source is usually primarily displayed. The entry of the title should be a full representation of the piece. A colon should separate the primary title from the secondary title. The source should be in quotation marks if it is part of a larger work. The source should be in italics if it is self-contained and independent.

Title of Container: The container represents the larger whole of a source. The entry of the container is normally italicized and should be followed by a comma, since the information that comes next describes the container. (E.g., book collection title, periodical, television series, web site, comic book series, etc.)

Other Contributors: Other people may be involved in the creation of the source referenced. If their participation is important to the research conducted or to identifying

the source, name the other contributors in the entry. Precede each name with a description of the role. (E.g., adapted by, directed by, edited by, translated by, etc.)

Version: If the source indicates that it is a version of the work, identify the version in the entry. Books are commonly identified as editions instead of versions.

Number: If the source is part of a numbered sequence, include the sequence number in the entry. (E.g., vol. #, no. # / season #, episode # / etc.)

Publisher: The publisher is the organization primarily responsible for producing or making the source available to the public.

Publication date: The publication date is the one that is most meaningful or most relevant to the source.

Location: The location is specific to the medium of the source. For print media, the location is indicated by page numbers (formatted as “p.” for a single page followed by the number or “pp.” for multiple pages followed by the numerical range). The location of an online source is primarily indicated by the URL or web address. The location in a DVD set is indicated by the disc number.

Below are a few examples of the information required for the MLA reference page citations:

Book:

Last name, first of author. *Book Title*. Publisher, Year.

Film/Television:

Title of Movie. Directed by____, performance by ____, Distributor, year.

Title of Show. Created by ____, performance by ____, Production Company, years of Series.

Journal Article:

Last name, first of author. “Article Title.” *Journal Title*, vol. #, no. #, publication year, pp. #-#.

Work in Anthology:

Last name, first of author. “Chapter Title.” *Collection’s Title*, edited by____,

Publisher, year, pp. #-#.

For a more thorough examination of the Works Cited page, and information necessary for source identification, please consult the manual.