MLA Style: Beginner's Guide

Modern Language Association Style, 7th Edition (2009)

Modern Language Association (MLA) is a documentation style used for writing papers and citing sources. It is frequently used in the humanities and liberal arts.

The following information is a simplified guide to MLA style. It is based on the *Seventh Edition* of the **MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers**.

For additional resources on MLA style, see the *How to Write a Research Paper* section of the PCC library home page (http://www.pima.edu/library/).

Part A   In-Text Citations (Parenthetical Citations)

In-text citations (or parenthetical citations) point your reader to specific entries on the Works Cited or References page. These are located throughout the body of your paper, and are used whenever you quote, paraphrase, or summarize information from a source listed on your Works Cited page.The in-text citation is generally located at the end of the sentence, or as close as possible to the text in which you quote, paraphrase, or summarize information from a source.

You MUST cite a source whenever you quote from it, paraphrase it, or discuss it. **If you don't** cite the source, then it's **plagiarism**.

In-text citations include:
- Last name(s) of the author(s) – see the examples below for how to handle citations for different situations, such as different number of authors.
- Page number of the article or book you are citing – always in parentheses.

You can cite references either within the text, or at the end of a sentence using parentheses:
- Author name as part of a narrative: `Smith and Jones dispute the Committee's conclusion (10).`
- Citation within parentheses: `Some researchers strongly dispute the Committee's conclusion (Smith and Jones 10).`
- Source cited within an article   `Clark's study (as found in Smith & Jones, 10), indicates that…`(In this situation, your Works Cited page will contain the article by Smith & Jones. Clark is merely credited in the text of your paper.)

Examples:

One, two, or three authors: `(Jones 7), (Dunn and Diaz 44), (Lott, Bok, and Till 9)`
Four or more authors: `(Phipps et al. 45)` OR `(Phipps, Jones, Soto, and Blake 45)`
No author (for an article):   `("Economy Perks Up" 11)`   **use first few words of the Title (in quotes)
No page number: `(Jones)` OR `"Jones states that…"`

Part B   Formatting a Works Cited Page

The *Works Cited* or *References* page is an alphabetical list of all the sources you cite in your paper. Every source you want to use in your paper must be listed on the works cited page.

Here are some basic rules to follow when making your Works Cited page:

- The Works Cited page should be placed at the **end of your paper**.
- The Works Cited page should begin on a **new page**.
- The Works Cited page should be **double spaced** and the second line of each entry should be a **hanging indent** (see example on right). To get this in MS Word:
  - Select all text, and then right-click it.
  - From the pop-up menu, select *Paragraph.*
  - To **double-space** the text, under Spacing, Line Spacing, select *Double*.
  - To add a **hanging indent**, under Indentation, Special, select *Hanging.* This indents the lower lines of each entry 0.5" from the left.
- **Alphabetize** each entry/reference on your Works Cited page by author's last name, or if the author's name is not given, by the title of the first work.

Next, create individual entries/references for each of your sources according to the proper MLA citation format…

Example:

Works Cited

Cervantes, Miguel de. *Don Quixote*. Trans. Edith Grossman. New York: Ecco, 2003. Print.

Muir, John. The Cruise of the Corwin. Santa …..

0.5"

Part C   Create Individual References for Your Sources

This section briefly explains how to cite the most commonly used resources as part of an MLA Works Cited page. For more information, contact a PCC Librarian, or find the **MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th ed.) at your PCC campus library.**

General rules
- If your source lacks one of the ingredients in the recipe, you can **ignore that ingredient** and continue. For instance, if your book doesn't list an *author*, you can skip it and go on to the *title.*
- Pay close attention to *italicized* and *capitalized* text.
  - o Books Titles (as well as journal, magazine, newspaper, encyclopedia, and database titles) should be *italicized and capitalized.*
  - o Article titles should be in **"quotation marks"**.
- For correct information, such as the book title, cities, and publisher, consult the **title page of the book** (not the book's cover). The copyright date is found on the next page, next to the © symbol, for example, © 2009

Medium of Publication
In the recipes below, you will also notice a place for the "Format" of your source. The "Format" is the **medium of publication**. For more on formats, see MLA 5.7. Here are the most common formats you would use:

Print – any printed book, magazine, journal, encyclopedia, etc.
Web – websites, scholarly articles from online databases, online newspaper and magazine articles.

HINT: Many library databases have citations tools that automatically generate citations that you can **copy and paste** into your paper.

Helpful abbreviations:
No date = **n. d.**
No place of publication = **n. p.**
No publisher = **n. p.**
No pagination = **n. pag.**

1. FORMATTING FOR AUTHOR NAMES

When listing the author(s) of a source, a number of general rules should be followed **across all publication formats.** In general, author last names are listed, followed by their first name, and middle initial. Use name(s) on title page of book or article.

Refer to the adjacent examples for different author conditions.

One Author	Lopez, Maria.
Two Authors	Lopez, Maria, and John Fox.
Three Authors	Lopez, Maria, John Fox, and Amy Moran.
Four or More Authors	Lopez, Maria, et al. ("et al." means "and others.")
Organization as Author	Pima Community College.
No Author	<skip the author and begin with title>

2. BOOKS

PRINTED BOOKS

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Author(s). Title of the Book: Subtitle of the Book. Place of Publication: Publisher,
     Year of publication. Print.
```

🖥 ELECTRONIC BOOKS (E-BOOKS)

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Author(s). Title of the Book: Subtitle of the Book. Place of Publication: Publisher,
     Year of publication. Source. Web. Date you accessed it.
```

✓ The *Source* is the name of the database where the e-Book is located, and should be *italicized.*

Type of Book	Examples
One Author (most commonly used for books)	Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. New York: Scholastic, 2002. Print.
Book with editors instead of authors	Kennedy, X. J., Dorothy M. Kennedy, and Jane E. Aaron, eds. *The Brief Bedford Reader*. 9th ed. Boston: Bedford-St. Martin's, 2006. Print. ✓ An edited book is a collection of articles or chapters, often written by various authors. It has an editor instead of an author. ✓ Use the example above if you are citing the book as a whole. To cite one of the *articles* in the book, see section 2, "Article or Chapter in a Book."

Book published in 2nd or subsequent edition	Tortora, Gerard J., Berdell R. Funke, and Christine L. Case. *Microbiology: An Introduction*. 8th ed. San Francisco: Benjamin-Pearson, 2004. Print.
Translator	Cervantes, Miguel de. *Don Quixote*. Trans. Edith Grossman. New York: Ecco, 2003. Print.
No place of publication; no publisher; no date	McBride, Sara. *Is Fluoridated Water Actually Harmful?* N.p.: n.p., n.d. Print.
🖥 Electronic Book (E-Book)	Bennis, Warren G. *Managing People Is Like Herding Cats*. Provo, UT: Executive Excellence, 1997. *NetLibrary*. Web. 1 Apr. 2007
	✓ Notice that the format has been changed to "Web", and there is now a Source (name of database).

3. ARTICLE OR CHAPTER IN A BOOK (Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, and Anthologies)

WIDELY-USED, PRINTED REFERENCE BOOKS:

Author(s). "Title of the Article." *Encyclopedia/Dictionary Title.* Edition. Year. Print.

SPECIALIZED REFERENCE BOOKS OR ARTICLES IN ANTHOLOGIES:

Author(s). "Title of the Article." *Encyclopedia/Dictionary Title.* Edition. City: Publisher. Year. Page range. Print.

🖥 **ELECTRONIC REFERENCE BOOKS AND ANTHOLOGIES (found in library databases):**

Author(s). "Title of the Article." *Title of Overall Website,* Edition. Publisher or Sponsor. Date of publication. Web. Date you accessed it.

Type of Article	Example
Article in a specialized reference work or anthology*	Staples, Brent. "Black Men and Public Space." *The Brief Bedford Reader*. Ed. X. J. Kennedy, Dorothy M. Kennedy, and Jane E. Aaron. 9th ed. Boston: Bedford-St. Martin's, 2006. 181-83. Print.
	✓ For reference works in encyclopedias and dictionaries, omit the page numbers if articles are in alphabetical order.
Article in a widely used encyclopedia or dictionary	Doyle, Jeffrey Scott. "Handgun." *World Book Encyclopedia*. 2007 ed. Print.
	✓ Widely used reference books have a simplified format.
🖥 Electronic encyclopedia or dictionary article from a library database	"de Kooning, Willem." *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Encyclopedia Britannica, 2009. Web. 20 July 2009.
	✓ Publication date is same as edition, in some cases. If no specific date is given, look for the copyright year at the bottom of the page.

* For articles in the Gale Literary Criticism Series (e.g. *Contemporary Literary Criticism (CLC)* and *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism (TCLC)*), see our handout titled *MLA STYLE: GALE LITERARY CRITICISM SERIES* for guidelines on formatting references in either print or electronic format.

4. ARTICLE IN A JOURNAL, MAGAZINE, OR NEWSPAPER

🖥 **ELECTRONIC ARTICLES (found in library databases):**

Author(s). "Title of the Article." *Title of the Journal* volume#.issue# (Year published): Page range. *Name of the Database*. Web. Date you accessed it.

   ✓ Use the PDF version of the article (if available) to get the correct page range.
   ✓ If page information is unavailable, use the abbreviation "n. pag."

PRINTED ARTICLES:

Author(s). "Title of the Article." *Title of the Journal* Volume#.issue# (Year published): Page range. Print.

Type	Example
🖥 Electronic **Journal Article** (from a library database)	Griffin, James. "What Do Happiness Studies Study?" *Journal of Happiness Studies* 8.1 (2007): 139-148. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 1 Apr. 2009.
🖥 Electronic **Magazine Article** (from a library database)	Beatty, J. Kelly. "Double Trouble among Near-Earth Asteroids." *Sky and Telescope* July 2002: 23. *MasterFILE Premier*. Web. 1 Apr. 2009. ✓ Magazines generally have no volume or issue, so just include the Day, Month, and Year of publication, without parentheses. For magazines published monthly or quarterly, you only need to include the Month and Year.
🖥 Electronic **Newspaper Article** (from a library database)	Battersby, John. "Nelson Mandela's Moral Legacy." *Christian Science Monitor* 10 May 1999: N.pag. *ProQuest Newspapers*. Web. 1 Apr. 2009. ✓ For local newspapers, include the city and state in [brackets] after the title of the newspaper.

5. WEB SITES

🖥 WEB SITES:

Author(s). "Title of the Page." *Title of the Web Site*. Publisher or Sponsor. Date of publication. Web. Date you accessed it.

   ✓ You can skip any elements (above) that your web site lacks. Exceptions: If there is no date, write **n.d.** If there is no Publisher or Place of publication, write **n.p.** Otherwise, skip the element.
   ✓ MLA no longer requires use of URLs in citations. At your option, you may choose to include a URL for the page by enclosing them in <angle brackets> at the end of the citation along with a period. Example: **7 May 2009 <http:www.mla.org>.**
   ✓ If a URL must be divided between two lines, break it only after a slash. Do not add a hyphen.

Type	Example
🖥 Web site	Strong, Michael. "Forget the World Bank, Try Wal-Mart." *TCS Daily*. Tech Central Station. 22 Aug. 2006. Web. 1 Apr. 2009.
🖥 Web site with URL included	Garber, Steve. "Introduction." *NASA Apollo 11 30ᵗʰ Anniversary*. National Aeronautics and Space Administration. 20 Sept. 2002. Web. 20 July 2009. < http://history.nasa.gov/ap11ann/introduction.htm>.

6. OTHER COMMON FORMATS

The table below has some other common formats you may come across. If your source isn't listed, refer to MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers for additional examples for things like performances, works of art, maps, legal sources, government documents, etc.

Type	Example
Film (in **DVD** format)	*Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. Dir. Mike Newell. Perf. Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint, Emma Watson, Robbie Coltrane. Warner Home Video, 2006. DVD. ✓ For films, include the *Title of the film*, director, main performers (optional), distributor of the DVD, year of publication, and format. ✓ If you are referring to a movie in the theaters, use "Film" for the format. For a VHS video, use "Videocassette". ✓ At your option, you may provide the year the film was originally released. Place it before the distributor. Close with a period.
Interview published in a daily newspaper	Spears, Britney. "Pop's Baddest Good Girl." *Hollywood Reporter*. 2 Dec. 2002: S6. Print. ✓ Begin with the person being interviewed, then the title of the interview, or if untitled, use the label Interview. Provide the interviewer's name if pertinent to your paper. ✓ Remaining format is based on where the interview is published (e.g. magazine, newspaper, web site). For each medium, follow the standard formats for that medium to include the volume, issue, date, and format.
Interview that you conducted in person	Olsen, Lute. Personal interview. 23 Feb. 2007. ✓ If interview was done over the phone, replace *Personal Interview* with *Telephone Interview*.
TV or radio broadcast	"The Phantom of Corleone." Narr. Steve Kroft. *Sixty Minutes*. CBS. WCBS, New York, 10 Dec. 2006. Television. ✓ For television broadcasts, after the title of the program (italicized), identify the narrator, name of the network (if any), call letters and city of local station, broadcast date, and format. ✓ Radio broadcasts have the same structure; just replace the format, *Television,* with *Radio.*