Introduction to MLA 8th Edition

In MLA style, you acknowledge your outside sources in two ways:

In-Text Citations

Brief in-text citations give a visual cue to your reader that the information comes from an outside source. Typically, in-text citations include the last name of the author and the page number (if available) on which the information was found. If there is no page number, leave it out. If there is no author, use the title instead. Place the citation where there is a natural pause in the text, such as at the end of a sentence:

Example:

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, America’s colleges remained quite small; in 1710, Harvard enrolled just 123 students (Lucas 109).

Works Cited List

Your list of works cited goes at the end of your paper and provides an alphabetized list of every source you cited in the text. Each entry must include certain key pieces of information, such as the author, title, and publisher, so that your readers can find your sources:

In-Text Citations

In-text citations usually consist of the author’s last name and the page number(s) on which you found the information. However, you will sometimes need to vary from this, such as when there is no author or page numbers:

**One Author (or Editor)**
(Author’s Last Name Page Number)
(Garcia 178)

**Two Authors**
(Khoury and Takeda 56)

**Three or More Authors**
(Silverstein et al. 304)

**No Author**
(“Title of Entry” Page Number)
(“Polar Bears” 125)

OK to shorten the title if it’s long

**No Page Numbers**
(Author’s Last Name)
(Nguyen)

**No Author or Page Numbers**
(“Title of Entry”)
(“Climate Change Impacts”)

**Time-based source** (Ex: video or TV show)
Give the hour, minutes, and seconds that contain the quote or information
(“The Story of India” 00:09:25-36)

**Source Quoted in another Source**
Murillo sees this approach as “altogether contrary to the public interest” (qtd. in Berkshire 52).

Direct Quotations
If you use a direct quotation, it means you’re using someone’s exact words. Direct quotations should always go in quotation marks. Place the in-text citation after the closing quotation mark.

**Examples:**

- Austen contends that “happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance” (207).

- In a 2002 Department of Defense briefing, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld famously defended the Bush administration’s invasion of Iraq despite a lack of evidence that the Iraqi government had supplied terrorists with weapons of mass destruction by suggesting the evidence fell into a category of “unknown unknowns – the ones we don’t know we don’t know.”

- One study found that regular meditation was “effective in enhancing [practitioners] psychological well-being by storing up high [emotional intelligence] and maintaining a positive attitude towards perceived stress” (Chu 177).
From the outset, Poe evokes a foreboding landscape:

   During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds
   hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly
   dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within
   view of the melancholy House of Usher (199).
Works Cited List

MLA Citation Template
In the current version of MLA, citations for all types of sources follow one template:

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of Source.” Title of Container, Other Contributors, Version, Number, Publisher, Publication Date, Location.

Follow the order, format, and punctuation outlined in the example above and the chart below, but use only the elements that apply to your specific source – for example, if your source has no author, no specific version, and there are no “other contributors” you wish to include, just leave those elements out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>What to Include</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Author.</td>
<td>Name(s) of the person(s) who wrote, created, or edited the source. No author: Begin the entry with the title One author or editor: García, Mercedes L. / Sokolov, Antonin, editor. Two authors or editors: Nguyen, Lilly L., and John P. McDowell. Three or more authors or editors: Gupta, Sanjay et al. / Ell, Kate et al., editors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Title of Source.</td>
<td>The title of the source. Titles of self-contained sources, such as films and books, should be italicized. Sources that are part of a larger whole, such as one chapter of an edited book, should be put in quotation marks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Title of container,</td>
<td>Include the “container” element when a source is part of a larger whole. For example, an episode of a TV series, or an article in a magazine – the TV series and magazine are “containers.” Titles of containers should be italicized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Other contributors,</td>
<td>You may list other contributors who are important to how you’re using the source. Examples: directed by, illustrated by, introduction by, performance by, translated by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Version,</td>
<td>If the source is a specific version or edition, list it here. Examples: 7th edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Number,</td>
<td>If the source is part of a numbered sequence, list the number here. Examples: vol. 112, no. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Publisher,</td>
<td>List the organization primarily responsible for creating the source. For example, a book publisher or sponsoring organization of a website. For websites, you do not need to list a publisher if its name is essentially the same as the title.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Publication date,</td>
<td>Date format depends on information available; use Day Month Year format when all three are known. Abbreviate all months except May, June, &amp; July. Examples: 28 Oct. 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Location.</td>
<td>Where the information can be found. Examples: page numbers of an article or the URL of a website. Use DOIs, “permalink” or stable URLs when available. Some sources, such as print books, do not require locations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second Container
Repeat elements 3-9 as applicable. Sometimes sources are “nested” within more than one container. For example, an article may be published in a journal, which is itself housed in a library database such as JSTOR.
Both the journal and the database are containers. If there is a second container, list elements 3-9 as applicable, following the same order, punctuation, and instructions as the elements above.

You have the flexibility to emphasize the elements that are important to how you’re using a source. For example, you could choose to cite an entire film, or to cite a specific actor’s performance, or to cite the work of the cinematographer. Therefore, there could be more than one correct way to cite any given source.

Print Sources

Basic Format for a Print Book
Author(s). *Title of Book*. Other contributors, Version, Number, Publisher, Publication date.

Book with One Author

Book with One Editor

Book with Two Authors

Book with Three Authors

Basic Format for a Work in an Edited Collection or Anthology
Author(s). “Title of Chapter or Article.” *Title of Container (Title of Collection or Anthology)*, edited by Editor’s name, version (if applicable), volume number (if applicable), Publisher, year, page numbers for the chapter or work.

Article in a Print Encyclopedia

Chapter in an Opposing Viewpoints Book

Work in an Anthology

Gale Literary Criticism Series (Print)
Articles found in a Gale Literary Criticism series, such as *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism*, are often reprinted from earlier publications. This means they have two containers – the original source and the Gale volume in which the article is reprinted. Include complete citation information for both.

Basic Format for a Print Periodical
Author(s). “Title of the Article.” Name of Periodical, number (if applicable), publication date, page numbers of the article.

Scholarly Journal Article

Magazine Article

Newspaper Article

Research Databases
Articles found in library database often have two containers: the periodical in which the article was originally published, and the research database in which you found the article.

The location of the research database will usually be a URL. If available, cite the stable URL, permalink, or Digital Object Identifier (DOI). DOIs most commonly apply to scholarly journal articles.

Scholarly Journal Article Found in a Database

Magazine Article Found in a Database

Newspaper Article Found in a Database

Ebook

CQ Researcher Article
Opposing Viewpoints in Context Article

Gale Virtual Reference Library Article

Films on Demand

Web Sources
Basic Format for a Webpage
Author(s). “Title of Page or Article.” *Title of Website*, Version (if applicable), Number (if applicable), Publisher (omit if identical or nearly identical to title of website), Publication date (if applicable), URL (aka “location”). Date of access (optional but recommended, especially if there is no publication date).

Webpage with an Author

Webpage with no Author

Online Video (e.g. YouTube, TED Talk, etc.)
Simard, Suzanne. How Trees Talk to Each Other. TED, June 2016.

Film & Television
There are multiple ways to cite a film or TV show depending on whose contributions (if any) you wish to focus on:

Basic Format for a Film
Creator or contributor you wish to feature. *Title of Film*. Other contributors, Production company or distributor, Year of release.

Basic Format for a TV Show
Creator or contributor you wish to feature. “Title of Episode.” *Title of TV Show*, Other contributors, season, episode, Production company or distributor, Air date.
Film or TV Show as a Whole

*Do The Right Thing*. Written and created by Spike Lee, Forty Acres and a Mule Filmworks, 1989.

Film or TV Show Watched on a Streaming Service Such as Netflix, Hulu, etc.
Formatting Guidelines

Annotated Bibliographies
Annotated bibliographies include citation information as well as brief descriptions, or “annotations,” for each source. Annotations should:

Summarize
- What is the source about?
- What main points does the author make?

Evaluate
- How useful is the source?
- Is the information reliable?

Annotated bibliographies should be formatted like a list of works cited, with double spacing and hanging indentation. Begin each annotation immediately after the period at the end of each citation:

suzanne_simard_how_trees_talk_to_each_other. In this TED talk, Dr. Simard discusses the ways in which trees are biologically interconnected, and how they share information about things like soil nutrients, water availability, and more. I can use this information in my paper as an example of nature’s...

MLA Format in Microsoft Word
The entire paper should have 1-inch margins (this will probably be the default setting), should be double-spaced, and typed in a standard, readable font size. MLA recommends Times New Roman, 12pt.

You can control the font-type, font-size and spacing by using the Font and Paragraph tools in Microsoft Word. For examples, continue to page 11.

Header
Double-click the header section of your document. From the **Insert** menu, choose **Page Number** option number 3 to insert in the **top right**. Type your last name to the left of the page number, then click Close Header. In the top left of the **body** of the paper, type your name, your instructor’s name, the course number, and the date on separate lines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smith 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Katy Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Mateo Torres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Writing 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 February 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Title
Center the title between the heading and the text; do not underline or italicize the title; do not add extra spaces between the heading and the title or the title and the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Writing 300</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 February 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Title of Paper**
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum libero odio,
venenatis quis tortor quis, lobortis efficitur sem. Quisque efficitur sem ante, vitae finibus quam

Works Cited List
- At the end of your paper and at the top of a new page, center the title **Works Cited**.
- Arrange your references alphabetically by author’s last name. For sources with no author, use the title to determine alphabetical placement.
- Double space the entire list. Apply “hanging indentation,” which means that for each entry, every line except the first line should be indented by ½ inch. See below for instructions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smith 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Works Cited**


Simard, Suzanne. How Trees Talk to Each Other. TED, June 2016.

Microsoft Word Tips & Tricks

Alignment
Use these tools to adjust the alignment of your paper.

Spacing
Click on the Spacing tool, then select 2.0 to double space your document.

Italicize
Use the Font tools to italicize the appropriate parts of your citations. You can also highlight the appropriate text, and use Ctrl/Cmd + I to italicize the font.

Alphabetize
Highlight all citations in your References list, and then click the Sort button to alphabetize your entries.
Hanging Indent
First, highlight all citations in your References list. Next, click on the Spacing tool and choose Line Spacing Options.

Next, use the Special indentation menu to select Hanging.

Click OK to save changes.
MLA Format in Google Docs

The entire paper should have 1-inch margins (this will probably be the default setting), should be double-spaced, and typed in a standard, readable font size. MLA recommends Times New Roman, 12pt.

You can control the font-type, font-size and spacing by using the Format tools in Google Docs. For examples, continue to page 15.

Header

Go to Insert, and choose Header & Page Number, then select Page Number and choose the first option.

Type your last name next to the page number, then click in the body of your document to exit the header menu.

In the top left of the body of the document, type your name, your instructor’s name, the course number, and the date on separate lines.

Smith 1

Katy Smith
Professor Mateo Torres
English Writing 300
12 February 2018
Title
Center the title between the heading and the text; do not underline or italicize the title; do not add extra spaces between the heading and the title or the title and the text.

English Writing 300

12 February 2018

Title of Paper

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum libero odio, venenatis quis tortor quis, lobortis efficitur sem. Quisque efficitur sem ante, vitae finibus quam

Works Cited List
• At the end of your paper and at the top of a new page, center the title **Works Cited**.
• Arrange your references alphabetically by author’s last name. For sources with no author, use the title to determine alphabetical placement.
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Smith 7

Works Cited


Simard, Suzanne. How Trees Talk to Each Other. TED, June 2016.

Google Docs Tips & Tricks

Alignment
Use these tools to adjust the alignment of your paper.

Spacing
Click on the Spacing tool, then select Double to double space your document. Alternatively, in the Format menu, choose Line Spacing and select Double.

Italicize
Use the Format tools to italicize the appropriate parts of your citations. You can also highlight the appropriate text, and use Ctrl/Cmd + I to italicize the font.

Alphabetize
To alphabetize your entries, go to the Add-ons menu and search for Sorted Paragraphs. Follow the instructions for installing the Add-On. Now, highlight all citations in your Works Cited list, and then select Add-ons > Sorted Paragraphs > Sort A to Z to alphabetize your entries.
Hanging Indent
First, highlight all citations in your Works Cited list. Next, find the Left Indent (blue triangle) cursor in the document ruler and slide to the 0.5 inch mark. Then select the First Line Indent (blue rectangle) cursor in the document ruler and reposition at the original position of 0 inches.

Works Cited


Simard, Suzanne. How Trees Talk to Each Other. TED, June 2016.