

MLA Citation Style

From the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed., 2009.

MLA citation style refers to the rules created by the Modern Language Association for formatting research papers and giving credit to (or acknowledging) sources of information used in those papers.

FORMATTING: GENERAL GUIDELINES AND THE FIRST PAGE OF YOUR PAPER

- Type your paper on a computer and print it on standard white 8.5 x 11- inch paper.
- Double-space the text -- use a clear legible font. Ex. Times Roman. Font size: 12 pt.
- Margins: 1 inch on all sides.
- Indent the first line of each paragraph one half-inch from the left margin.
- Leave only one space after a period and other punctuation marks unless directed otherwise by your instructor.
- Create a header that numbers ALL the pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. After the header, double space and in the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date. Use double-spaced text. Double space again and center the title. Type your title, do not use all capital letters. Double space again. And on the left margin, indent and begin your essay.
- DO NOT make a title page unless specifically requested.
- Use *italics* for titles in your essay.
- Always follow your instructor's guidelines.
- Do not include URLs in works cited unless directed to do so by your instructor.
- Include the medium of publication (print, Web, DVD, film, etc.) in each work cited entry.

In-Text Citations: Basics

- MLA uses short parenthetical citations in the text of the paper to acknowledge sources of information. The parenthetical citation information will match the source information on the Works Cited page.
- **The parenthetical usually includes the author's last name (if there is no author of the work, the first one or two words of the title, (but do not use A, An, or The, if they are the first words of the title), and the page number where the information was found.**
- Leave the author's name out of the parenthetical if it is clearly stated in your sentence.
- When the Works Cited list includes more than one work by an author, the parenthetical should include part of the title, i.e., (Smith *Leadership* 336) and (Smith Management 246).
- If an entire work is being acknowledged, or there is no page or paragraph number (as is the case for many online sources), incorporate the author's name into the sentence instead of using a parenthetical.
- MLA does not use a comma between the name and page number.

You should always provide parenthetical citations for the following:

- Direct quotes
- paraphrases (putting information into your own words)
- Summarized material
- words specific or unique to the author
- use of an author's argument or line of thinking (ideas or theories)
- historical, statistical, or scientific facts
- articles or studies you refer to in your text

See below for examples of in-text citations and sources listed on the Work Cited page.

EXAMPLES

Type of Entry	Works Cited List	Citation in Text
Book: single author	Smith, Jane. <i>Leadership and Women</i> . Boston: Free Press, 1996. Print.	(Smith 336)
Book: more than one author	Hill, Mike and Susan Hall. <i>Woman in the Car</i> . New York: Yale Press, 1986. Print.	(Hill and Hall 15)
<u>Work</u> in an anthology (a collection of individual works)	Thomas, Jon. "A Time to Sow." <i>The Early Americans</i> . Ed. Ann Snow. New York: Free Press, 1986. 159-78. Print.	(Thomas 164)
Anthology or collection (the entire collection)	Snow, Ann., ed. <i>The Early Americans</i> . New York: Free Press, 1986. Print.	(Snow 378)
Author Unknown (list and alphabetize by title)	<i>Encyclopedia of Art</i> . New York: Free Press, 2007. Print.	(Encyclopedia of Art 124)
An Edition of a Book	Crane, Susan. <i>Songs for Children</i> . 4 th ed. Mobile: Free Press, 2006. Print.	(Crane 568)
A Work prepared by Editor	Head, J.W. <i>Green Poems</i> . Ed. Lynn Gilchrist. New York: Free Press, 1998. Print.	(Head 65)
Poem or Short Story	Burns, Robert. "Red, Red Rose." <i>100 Best-Loved Poems</i> . Ed. Philip Smith. New York: Dover, 1995. 26. Print.	(Burns 26)
Article in reference book	"Child Abuse." <i>The American Culture Dictionary</i> . 5 th ed. 2003. Print.	(Child Abuse 33)
Newspaper article (unsigned)	"Mardi Gras, Again." <i>Mobile Press Register</i> 28 Feb. 2007: A5. Print.	("Mardi" A5)
Newspaper article from Online database	Green, James. "Start Fresh with Education." <i>Mobile Press Register</i> 6 April 1987: G9. GALILEO. Web. 6 June 2007.	In your text mention: "Green reports..."
<i>When citing an online source, include the publication date and the date you accessed the site.</i>		See MLA Handbook For more information
Magazine article	Jones, Wesley. "I'd Rather Travel." <i>Time</i> 26 June 1998: 70-72. Print.	(Jones 70)
Journal article (continuous pagination)	Huff, Sue. "The Ins and Outs of Education." <i>JSE</i> 78.1 (1990): 45-68. Print.	(Huff 46)

Entire Web site	Canterbury Tales Clearing House. 2006. Jones University. Web. 6 June 2007.	Mention in your text: "The Canterbury Tales Clearing House..."
Web page within a larger Web Site.	Benson, L.D. "The Knight's Tale." <i>The Geoffrey Chaucer Page</i> . 2000. Harvard University. Web. 6 June 2007.	(Benson) If site has page, section Or paragraph numbers, use them
<i>When citing an online source, include the publication date and the date you accessed the site.</i>		
Article from encyclopedia In GALILEO	"Achebe, Chinua." <i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i> . 2007. <i>Encyclopedia Britannica Online</i> . Web. 10 June 2008.	Mention in your text: "Chinua Achebe..."
<i>When citing an online source, include the publication date and the date you accessed the site.</i>		
Article from a GALILEO database	Clarke, Judy S. "Rules for Living." <i>Today's Educator</i> 36.7 (1989): 67-69. <i>Academic Search Complete</i> . Web. 6 April 2007.	Mention in your text: "Clarke discusses..."
<i>When citing an online source, include the publication date and the date you accessed the site.</i>		
eBook from NetLibrary	Huppe, Bernard Felix. <i>A Reading of the Canterbury Tales</i> . New York. State University of New York Press, 1964. <i>NetLibrary</i> . Web. 6 June 2007.	(Huppe 156)
<i>When citing an online source, include the publication date and the date you accessed the site.</i>		

Examples of Parenthetical Citations: MLA style

Type of citation	Example
Author's name in text	Jones states that the case is closed (68).
Author's name in citation	The report has been changed and cannot be trusted (Jones 69).
Two authors' names in citation	All children have the right to the best education available (Jones and Smith 145).
Personal communication (letters, emails, telephone calls, etc.)	The plane first hit the house before coming to a stop in the field (Clarke).

Personal communication (name in text)	Clarke relates how his plane hit the house before it stopped in the field.
Reference to whole volume	In the third volume, Clarke tells of his flying adventures.
Two locations in same source	Huff discusses the plan briefly (69, 72).
Two sources cited	Several voices have been heard on this subject (Clarke 56; Smith 63)
Electronic source (with paragraph numbers)	The Greenhouse effect is widely accepted (Rodgers, par. 16).
Reference to volume and page in multivolume work.	The titles of all her novels are from ancient tales (Wild 2: 69).
Two authors with same last name	Smith admits that she has difficulty creating titles for her novels (B. Huff 69). She thinks that titles should somehow reflect the content of a novel (D. Huff 36).
No author: use the first words of title	The job force in certain areas is growing ("Jobs" 6).
Encyclopedia or Dictionary	Most plovers nest in open areas ("Birds").
Web sources	Some electronic sources do not have clear authorship and often lack page numbers, however the same basic rules that apply to print sources also apply to electronic sources.

- If the author is unknown, use the complete title in the text or a shortened form of the title in parentheses.
- If a web site is produced by a corporation, an organization, or a government agency, use the corporate entity as the author.
- If the source has numbered paragraphs, sections, or screens use the following:
"Par " for paragraphs; "sec " for sections; "screen" for screen: Ex. (Smith, par. 6).

See below for Examples of entries on a Works Cited page in MLA Style.

Examples of Works Cited page citations: MLA Style

Sources of information cited in the text of a research paper must be listed at the end of the paper in a Works Cited list. This list provides the information necessary to identify each source that specifically supports your research.

Basic format of elements in work cited list.

Author's name. Title of book. Place of publication: name of publisher, date of publication. Medium of publication.

A few tips:

- Entries are listed in alphabetical order by the author's last name, or by title for sources without an author.
- Capitalize the first word and other principle words of the title and subtitle.
- Publisher's name may be shown in a shortened format.
- When multiple publishers are listed, include all of them, placing a semicolon between each.
- When more than one city is listed for the publisher, list only the first city.
- Indentation: Align the first line of an entry flush with the left margin, and indent all subsequent lines 5-7 spaces.
- Italic should be used rather than underlining.

Type of Source

Works Cited page citation

Book: single author

Huppe, Bernard Felix. *A Reading of the Canterbury Tales*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1964. Print.

More than one work with same author: order works Alphabetically by title

---. *Doctrine and poetry: Augustine's Influence on Old English Poetry*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1959. Print.

Book: two authors

Hill, Michael, and David Huff. *The Tales of Canterbury*. New Jersey: Free Press, 1968. Print.

More than three authors or editor

Hill, Michael, et al., eds. *Teaching History*. New Jersey: Crane Press, 2005. Print.

Book: corporate author

American Society of Mechanical Engineers. *ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code*. New York: American Society of Mechanical Engineers Boiler and Pressure Vessel Committee, 2001. Print.

Multi-volume Work

Wild, Susan. *Art in America*. 3 vols. New York: Crane Press, 1999. Print.

Magazine article

Allen, John Thomas. "Running the Race." *People* 28 Feb. 1965: 64+.

Videorecording

West Side Story. Director and producer Robert Wise. United Artist. 1961. DVD.

Document from a Web Site

Benson, L.D. "The Knight's Tale." *The Geoffrey Chaucer Page*. 2000. Harvard University. Web. 6 June 2007.

Sources: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/>

Documenting Sources in MLA Style: 2009 Update.

The Writing Center @The University of Wisconsin. www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/

Research Guide. University of Georgia Libraries. www.libs.uga.edu/ref/mlastyle.html.

MLA Citation Style. Cornell University. www.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/

