

# MLA Citations (8<sup>th</sup> Edition)

## What are citations and when do we use them?

Citations are a way to state information such as the name of an author and the title of a source of information we are using in our writing. A citation is there to let the reader know where that information came from. Citations in your paper are necessary to provide credit to the proper sources; failure to cite properly could result in plagiarism. We use citations any time we are using the ideas of another person. You will credit a source in **each sentence** that references material from a source.

## Where do you put the information about where you found the ideas?

There are **two** places where you must put information about where the ideas came from:

1. Within the paper itself at the end of the sentence that uses a quotation from the source or paraphrases/summarizes the source. These are called **In-text Citations**.
2. At the end of the paper in a **Works Cited** page.

## In-text Citations

### Citing Sources in Your Paper

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, paraphrase or summary 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, paraphrase or summary, but the page number(s) should always appear in the parentheses, not in the text of your sentence. For example:

You can cite both the information source and the page number(s) in a parenthetical reference at the end of the paraphrase or quotation, before the end punctuation.

We demand images of youth because “sagging flesh is almost the ultimate signifier of decay and disorder” (Bordo 176).

In your text, you can mention the source in a phrase that introduces the quotation and place the relevant page number(s) in a parenthetical reference at the end of the paraphrase or quotation, before the end punctuation:

In “Hunger as Ideology,” Susan Bordo claims that women are inundated with advertisements in which “food is constructed as a sexual object of desire and eating is legitimated as much more than a purely nutritive activity” (150).

If a source has two authors, use both last names in the parenthetical reference. Keep the names of the authors in the order they are listed on the source.

In the end of *The Gold Rush*, the main character George was able to find his wife even though she was swept away by the current (Benson and Mumford 26).

If a source has three or more authors, use the last name of the first author followed by “et al.” (et al. means “and others” in Latin).  
(Huang et al. 10).

If a source has no identified author, give the title of the work in your parenthetical reference. You may use a shortened version of the title as long as it directs the reader to the correct entry in the works cited page. This example cites information from *The Longman Guide to the Web*:  
(*Longman Guide* 137).

If the quotation is more than four lines, start a block quotation on a new line and indent it one inch (two tabs) from the left margin. Do not add quotation marks. The end punctuation is placed before the parenthetical reference.

Pratt explains how interactions are viewed through the lens of power:

When linguistic (or literate) interaction is described in terms of orderliness, games, moves, or scripts, usually only legitimate moves are actually names as part of the system, where legitimacy is defined from the point of view of the party in authority—regardless of what other parties might see themselves as doing. (508)

**For poetry**, there are some additional guidelines:

When using part or all of a single line of poetry, put it in quotation marks within your text. Two or three lines may be incorporated using a forward slash with a space on each side ( / ) to indicate to your reader where the line breaks fall. If a stanza break occurs in the quotation, mark it with two forward slashes ( // ).

Reflecting on the "Incident" in Baltimore, Cullen concludes, "Of all the things that happened there / That's all that I remember" (11-12).

Poetry/Verse quotations of more than three lines should be set off from your text as a block.

Elizabeth Bishop's "In the Waiting Room" is rich in evocative detail:

It was winter. It got dark  
early. The waiting room  
was full of grown-up people,  
arctics and overcoats,  
lamps and magazines. (6-10)

When quoting poetry, these numbers refer to line numbers, not page numbers.

For information on quoting and in-text citations for **drama**, please see the *MLA Handbook* page 80.

# Works Cited Page

According to MLA style, you must have a Works Cited page at the end of your research paper. All entries in the Works Cited page must correspond to the works cited in your main text.

## Basic rules

- Begin your Works Cited page on a separate page at the end of your research paper. It should have the same one-inch margins and last name, page number header as the rest of your paper.
- Label the page Works Cited (do not italicize the words Works Cited or put them in quotation marks) and center the words Works Cited at the top of the page.
- Double space all citations, but do not skip spaces between entries.
- Indent the second and subsequent lines of citations by 0.5 inches to create a hanging indent.
- List page numbers of sources efficiently, when needed. If you refer to a journal article that appeared on pages 225 through 250, list the page numbers on your Works Cited page as 225-50. Note that MLA style uses a hyphen in a span of pages.

## Capitalization and punctuation

- Capitalize each word in the titles of articles, books, etc., but do not capitalize articles (the, an), prepositions, or conjunctions unless one is the first or last word of the title or subtitle: *Gone with the Wind*, *The Art of War*, *There Is Nothing Left to Lose*.
- Use italics for titles of larger works (books, magazines) and quotation marks for titles of shorter works (poems, articles).

## MLA 8th Edition: Guiding Principles

In the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook*, a separate set of citation instructions were given for each format type. The problem with this approach is that there is no way to anticipate all format types a student may encounter.

To solve this problem, the 8th edition of the *MLA Handbook* provides a "universal set of guidelines" for citing sources across all format types.

These guidelines state that, if given, these major elements should be included in the citation:

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

Sometimes, elements 3-9 will repeat again, if for example, your journal was inside a database.

## Additional basic rules new to MLA 2016

For online sources, you should include a location to show readers where you found the source. Many scholarly databases use a DOI (digital object identifier). Use a DOI in your citation if you can; otherwise use a URL. Delete "http://" from URLs. The DOI or URL is usually the last element in a citation and should be followed by a period. All works cited entries end with a period.

For the Works Cited page, entries are listed alphabetically by the author's last name (or, for entire edited collections, editor names, or, if the entry begins with a title, the first word of the title). For single authors and the first of multiple authors, author names are written last name first; middle names or middle initials follow the first name.

Below are some examples for formatting the Works Cited page:

▪ **A Book by a Single Author**

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Publication Date.

Gregory, Phillipa. *The Other Boleyn Girl: A Novel*. Simon and Schuster, 2001.

▪ **A Book by Two or More Authors**- If the book has two or more authors, list their names in the same order they appear on the title page of the book. Reverse only the name of the first author.

Last Name, First Name, and First Name Last Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Publication Date.

Witte, Stephen P., and Lester Faigley. *Evaluating College Writing Programs*. Southern Illinois UP, 1983.

▪ **An Anthology or a Compilation**

Editor's Last Name, Editor's First Name, editor. *Title of the Anthology*, Publisher, Publication Date.

Peterson, Linda H., editor. *The Norton Reader: An Anthology of Nonfiction*, W.W. Norton, 2001.

▪ **A Work in an Anthology**

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Essay." *Title of Collection*, edited by Editor's Name(s), Publisher, Year, Page range of entry.

Woolf, Virginia. "The Mark on the Wall." *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt, 9th ed., vol. F, W. W. Norton, 2012, pp. 2145-9.

▪ **An Article in a Scholarly Journal (not online)**

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

Stewart, Maria W. "Two Texts on Children and Christian Education." *PMLA* vol. 123, no.1, 2008, pp. 156-65.

▪ **An Article in an Online Database**

Last Name, First Name. "Title of the Article." *Name of the Journal*, Volume number, Issue number, Year, Page numbers. *Title of Database*, DOI.

Langhamer, Claire. "Love and Courtship in Mid-Twentieth-Century England." *Historical Journal*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2007, pp. 173-96. *ProQuest*, doi:10.1017/S0018246X06005966.

- **A Web Publication** (web sites, web pages, and articles on websites- *not scholarly articles*)  
Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). *Name of Site*. Version number, Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available), URL, DOI or permalink.

Felluga, Dino. *Guide to Literary and Critical Theory*. Purdue University, 28 Nov. 2003, [www.cla.purdue.edu/english/theory/](http://www.cla.purdue.edu/english/theory/).

- **A YouTube Video**

McGonical, Jane. "Gaming and Productivity." *YouTube*, uploaded by Big Think, 3 July 2012, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkdzy9bWW3E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkdzy9bWW3E).

The following book and websites were used to create this handout. For additional information consult the following:

Official MLA citations guide (multiple copies in LLRC):  
Modern Language Association. *MLA Handbook, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed.* New York: MLA, 2016.  
[REF LB 2369.G53 2016]

The MLA Style Center: Writing Resources from the Modern Language Association  
[style.mla.org](http://style.mla.org)

UWF Libraries LibGuides Citing Sources MLA Style, 8th Edition  
<http://libguides.uwf.edu/c.php?g=215200&p=3321453>

Owl Purdue Online Writing Lab – MLA Style  
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>