

MLA Format

All Grades

A decorative graphic consisting of several horizontal lines of varying lengths and colors (teal, light blue, white) extending from the right side of the slide.

Best MLA Website

- Information about MLA format and Works Cited Pages can be found at the OWL (Online Writing Lab) at Purdue website:
- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
- Other than using the actual MLA Handbook, this is your BEST resource for MLA

General MLA Format



General Format Rules

- 1 inch margins on all sides
- Double space but NO extra spaces anywhere
- 12 point serif font - Times New Roman is the best
 - Must show difference between *italics* & regular text
- Indent 1st line of all paragraphs 1 Tab space
- If you need to have different section headings within your essay, check the MLA handbook/website for section heading guidelines

General Format Rules

- **Header** has your last name, a space, & consecutive page #s in the top right margin of each page
- **Heading** starts at the top left of page (1st-4th lines):
 - Student's name
 - Instructor's name
 - Class name
 - Date (Day Month Year)
- Title of paper is centered on the next line (5th line) if there is a title, which is not always required

Essay 1st Page Example

Jones 1

Jane Jones

Dr. John Smith

English 101

4 January 2022

Title of Paper

The writing of the paper starts here. Each line of the entire essay is double spaced.

The next paragraph starts like this. There are no extra spaces, not even between paragraphs.

Other General Format Rules

- Use *italics* for the names of longer works (books, websites, periodicals)
 - Don't use italics for any other reason than the above
- Put quote marks “” around titles of shorter works (articles, chapters, pages on websites, poems)
- EXAMPLE: The article “Eat More Fruit” in the November *Health* magazine was an interesting read.

In-Text Citations

A “citation” is all the important information about a source you are referencing formatted in a special order. There are two types: Attributive tags & parenthetical citations.

Attributive Tags

- Attributive tags are when you introduce a quote or paraphrase with the name of the author (or the title of the source when there is no author) in the sentences of your assignment:
 - According to the article “Happy People”...
 - The *Happy People* website states...
 - Author John Smith claims...
 - The *Happy Times* newspaper explains...

Parenthetical Citations

- Parenthetical citations are when you put the author's last name (or the title of the source when there is no author) & page number of source in parenthesis after sharing information from a source.
- If you do not give enough information in an attributive tag, put the rest in parenthesis at the end of the quote or paraphrased information.
- Punctuation goes after the parenthesis.

Parenthetical Citations Examples

- The article explains, “The situation became an unreal and horrible nightmare.” (Smith 43)!
- Many onlookers wondered, “How did this happen?” (Smith 43).
- Readers must ask themselves how a disaster of “such epic proportions” happened (Smith 43)?
- According to Smith, the situation was bad (43).

Parenthetical Citations Examples

- If there is no author, put the first two or three words of the source's title and the page number. **If the source is in italics on the Works Cited page, keep it in italics! If it was in quote marks, keep it in quote marks!**
- One article states, "Smoking can cause several types of cancer" ("Dangers of Smoking" 17).
- The website *Dangers of Smoking* states, "Smoking can cause several types of cancer" (17).

Works Cited/Bibliography

A Works Cited page is where you list all the sources you actually referenced in your writing either by sharing a direct quote or paraphrased information.

A Bibliography is where you list all the sources you read/looked at to learn about your topic, even if you did not directly reference those sources in your writing.

Works Cited/Bibliography Rules

- Starts on its own new page at the end of the essay with the title Works Cited or Bibliography centered on the 1st line
- Follows the same formatting rules as the rest of the essay EXCEPT it uses a **hanging indent** (1st line starts at the left margin & following lines are indented 1 Tab space)
- Put all citation entries in alphabetical order by 1st word
- Capitalize all major words in titles whether originally capitalized or not (not articles, prepositions, conjunctions)
- Write dates in the Day Month Year format with months longer than 4 letters abbreviated down to 3 letters followed by a period
 - Example: 1 May 2011 18 Aug. 2009

Works Cited Example

Jones 3

Works Cited

"How to Cite Books." MLA Website, 5 May 2000,
mlacitations.com. Accessed 6 Jan. 2017.

Johnson, Lucy, et al. "An Interesting Article." *Scholar's
Journal*, vol. 53, no. 7, 3 June 2007, pp. 50-75.
ProQuest, doi:10.1345/654489962654. Accessed 1 May
2017.

Jones, Emily, and John Smith. *The Best Book Ever*. Edited
by Mark Jones, 2nd ed., Bridgestone UP, 2013.

Smile, Joe. "The Best Article in the World." *New York
Times*, 1 Aug. 2017, pp. 21-26.

Core Elements: Works Cited Entry

1. Author.
 2. Title of source.
 3. *Title of container*,
 4. Other contributors,
 5. Version,
 6. Number,
 7. Publisher,
 8. Publication date,
 9. Location.
 0. Date accessed.
- Lastname, Firstname.
 - *Italics*=long & “quotes” = short
 - Larger source work found in
 - Editors, translators, etc.
 - Edition or version of the work
 - Volume or issue numbers, etc.
 - Who distributed the work?
 - Date source published
 - Page #s, URL, DOI, etc.
 - Accessed + day month year

Core Elements: Works Cited Entry

- You **MUST** consult the MLA Handbook/ Website to see how to apply the core elements of a citation for different types of sources like books, websites, articles, etc.
- This is too much information to memorize or know off the top of your head; the important skill is to learn how to use MLA resources to help create your Works Cited page.

Important Works Cited Page Abbreviations

p. page

pp. pages

par. paragraph

pars. paragraphs

ch. chapter

ed. edition

vol. volume

no. issue number

sec. section

rev. revised

U University

P Press

qtd. in quoted in

et al. Used after 1st name when there are 3 or more authors

--- Use for author's name in 2nd entry of work by author already listed

Special Circumstances



In Text Citations with Multiple Authors

- **For a source with up to three authors, list the authors' last names in the text or in the parenthetical citation:**
 - Smith, Yang, and Moore argue that tougher gun control is not needed in the United States (76).
 - The authors state: "Tighter gun control in the United States erodes Second Amendment rights" (Smith, Yang, and Moore 76).
- **Use the abbreviation "et al." after the 1st author's name for 3 or more authors:**
 - Legal experts counter Smith, Yang, and Moore's argument by noting that the current spike in gun violence in America compels law-makers to adjust gun laws (Jones et al. 4).

Multiple Sources in One Citation

- **To cite multiple sources in the same parenthetical reference, separate the citations with semi-colons:**
- ... as has been discussed elsewhere (Burke 3; Dewey 21).

Quotes within Quotes

- **When using a direct quote that contains a direct quote, use single quote marks ‘ ’ inside the direct quote and double quote marks “ ” around the whole direct quote. You can mention the original author of the quote in an attributive tag if you like, but site the source where YOU got the information in parenthesis:**
- According to Iuliano, “Excuses such as ‘The Dog ate my homework!’ are never acceptable in the classroom” (*Teaching 101* 13).
- “Excuses such as ‘The Dog ate my homework!’ are never acceptable in the classroom” (Qtd. in *Teaching 101* 13).

Block Quotations

- Use block quotations when the material you are quoting spills past 4 lines of text
- Start a block quote on a new line, but keep double spacing consistent
- Indent all lines of the block quote equally 1 inch from the left margin
- Do not put quote marks around block quotes
- Keep punctuation **before** in text citation
- **Only ONE** block quote per assignment allowed!

Block Quote Example

In *Reading is Awesome*, Bethany Iuliano shares why some students dislike reading so much:

This is a really long quote about reading. This is a really long quote about reading. This is a really long quote about reading.

This is a really long quote about reading. This is a really long quote about reading. This is a really long quote about reading.

This is a really long quote about reading. (214)

Some of these reasons do not apply to all students.

Punctuation to Introduce Quotes

- Use commas after attributive tags or to introduce a quote with an incomplete idea.
 - According to Smith, “Texting and driving is dangerous” (22).
 - Research shows, “Texting and driving is dangerous” (Smith 22).
- Use a colon to introduce a quote with a complete idea.
 - The evidence is clear: “Texting and driving is dangerous” (Smith 22).
- Don’t use commas where they are not needed!
 - Some say that “Texting and driving is dangerous” (Smith 22).

Annotated Bibliographies

Use an annotated bibliography to explore sources you will use for a paper or explain sources you used for a non-written assignment/presentation

Annotated Bibliography

- For each of the sources on your annotated bibliography, create citation entries just like you would for an MLA Works Cited/Bibliography page
- After each citation write 100-200 words that address the following:
 - What was the author's argument/claims?
 - What evidence did the author use to back up their claims?
 - How will you use the information from this source?
 - Optional: How well did the author argue their claims? Would this source be considered a quality source?

Sources for This Presentation

Glenn, Cheryl, and Loretta Gray. *The Hodges Harbrace*

Handbook. 17th ed., Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2010.

MLA Handbook. 8th ed., Modern Language Association of

America, 2016.

The Purdue OWL. Purdue U Writing Lab, 2016.