

MLA Style Quick Reference

8th edition

Formatting an MLA Paper

See Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (OWL)

Elements:

- **First Page:** Do not make a title page unless specifically requested. In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date. Double space your text.
- **Title:** Center the title. Do not underline, italicize, or place your title in quotation marks. Write the title in Title Case (standard capitalization), not in all capital letters.
- **Body:** Double space between the title and the first line of the text.
- **Header:** Create a header in the upper right-hand corner that includes your last name, followed by a space with a page number; number all pages consecutively with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.), one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin.

Sample Paper (Please note that Microsoft Office products provide a template for MLA):

Name 1
First Last
Professor
Course Name Number
Date
Title of Paper
Body of paper.

Name 2
Works Cited

In Text Citations: The Basics

See pp. 54-58 of the MLA Handbook

- The goals of the in-text are brevity and clarity, guiding the reader as unobtrusively as possible to the corresponding entry in the Works Cited list.
- 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 or paraphrase is taken must appear in the text. A corresponding entry must be on the Works Cited page.
- There is not comma between the last name of the author and the page number in a parenthetical citation.
- The author's name may appear either in the sentence or in parentheses following the quotation or paraphrase.
 - According to Naomi Baron, reading is "just half of literacy. The other half is writing" (194). One might even suggest that reading is never complete without writing.
 - Reading is "just half of literacy. The other half is writing" (Baron 194). One might even suggest that reading is never complete without writing.
- Works written by one author must have the author listed in the citation.
 - (Baron 194)
- Works written by two authors must have both authors represented in the in-text citation, connected by *and*.
 - (Dorris and Erdich 23)
- Works written by three or more authors must have the first author listed followed by *et. al.*
 - (Wadsworth *et. al.* 423)
- When the works-cited entry begins with the title of the work (because no author is listed), your in-text citation contains the title of the work.
 - *Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America* notes that despite an apparent decline in reading during the same period, "the number of people doing creative writing-of any genre, not exclusively literary works-increased substantially between 1982 and 2002" (3).
 - Despite an apparent decline in reading during the same period, "the number of people doing creative writing-of any genre, not exclusively literary works-increased substantially between 1982 and 2002" (*Reading* 3).
- When a source has no page numbers or any other kind of part number, no number should be given in a parenthetical citation. Use "par." Only if the source uses explicit paragraph numbers.

Works Cited Page: The Basics

See pp. 20-53 of the MLA Handbook

- The list titled “Works Cited,” centered, not bolded, quoted, or underlined.
- Core elements of a works cited citation include:
 - Author. Title of source. Title of container, other contributors, version, number, publisher, publication date, location.
 - Each element is followed by the punctuation mark shown unless it is the final element, which should end with a period.
- The Works Cited list should be double spaced, arranged alphabetically by author, and utilize the hanging indent.
- Begin each entry with the author’s last name, followed by a comma and the rest of the name, as presented in the work.
 - Baron, Naomi S.
- Multiple authors should be listed in the order they are presented in the work. For a source with two authors, reverse the first of the names as described above, then follow it with a comma and *and*, and give the second name in normal order.
 - Dorris, Michael, and Louise Erdrich.
- When a source has three or more authors, reverse the order of the names as described above, and follow it with a comma and *et al.*
 - Burdick, Anne, et al.
- If the term “author” does not represent the role of the person creating the work’s main content, follow the name with a label that describes the role.
 - Nunberg, Geoffrey, editor.
 - Baron, Sabrina A., et al., editors.
 - Pevear, Richard, and Rubert Hart-Davis, translators.
- A work may be written by a corporate author which is defined as an institution, an association, a government agency, or another kind of organization. When a work is published by an organization that is also its author, begin the entry with the title, skipping the author element, and list the organization only as publisher.
 - United Nations. *Consequences of Rapid Population Growth in Developing Countries*.
 - *Reading at Risk: A Survey of Literary Reading in America*. National Endowment of the Arts, June 2004.

Citing Books

See pp. 20-53 of the MLA Handbook

Basic Format for an Entire Print Book Citation

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

Last, First, editor. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Date.

Example: Entire Edited Print Book

Nunberg, Geoffry, editor. *The Future of the Book*. U of California P, 1996.

Example: Entire eBook

Gikandi, Simon. *Ngugi wa Thiong'o*. Cambridge UP, 2000. *E-Book Central*, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/bristolcc/detail.action?docID=5508400>.

Example: Short Story in an eBook Collection

Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Masque of the Red Death." *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by James A. Harrison, vol. 4, Thomas Y. Crowell, 1902, pp. 250-258. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924079574368;view=1up;seq=266.

Example: Collection of Essays, Stories, or Poems

Baron, Sabrina Alcorn, et al., editors. *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*. U of Massachusetts P / Center for the Book, Library of Congress, 2007.

Example: Chapter, Essay, Story, or Play in a Larger Collection

Dewar, James A., and Peng Hwa Ang. "The Cultural Consequences of Printing and the Internet." *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, edited by Sabrina Alcorn Baron et al., U of Massachusetts P / Center for the Book, Library of Congress, 2007, pp. 365-77.

Example: A Stand-Alone Work that Appears in a Collection

Euripides. *The Trojan Women. Ten Plays*, translated by Paul Roche, New American Library, 1998, pp. 457-512.

Example: Issue of a Comic Book or Graphic Novel

Saga. By Brian K. Vaughan, illustrated by Fiona Staples, vol. 9, Image Comics, 2018.

Example: Material from a Course Pack

Jackson, Shirley. "The Lottery." Course pack for ENG102: Writing About Literature, compiled by Michael Geary, Summer 2019, Bristol C C.

Example: Book with a Subtitle

Lovell, Mary S. *The Sisters: The Saga of the Mitford Family*. W. W. Norton & Co., 2003.

Citing Periodicals

See pp. 20-53 of the MLA Handbook

Basic Format for an Article Citation

Last, First. "Title of Source." *Title of Container (Journal)*, vol. #, no. #, Year, pp. #-#. Database, URL.

Example: Article found in Print

Baron, Naomi S. "Redefining Reading: The Impact of Digital Communication Media." *PMLA*, vol. 128, no. 1, Jan. 2013, pp. 193-200.

Example: Article found in a Database with a DOI

Chan, Evans. "Postmodernism and Hong Kong Cinema." *Postmodern Culture*, vol. 10, no. 3, May 2000. *Project Muse*, doi:10.1353.pmc.2000.0021

Example: Article found in a Database

Goldman, Anne. "Questions of Transport: Reading Primo Levi Reading Dante." *The Georgia Review*, vol. 64, no. 1, 2010, pp. 69-88. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/41403188

Example: Article found on a Website

Hollmichel, Stefanie. "The Reading Brain: Differences between Digital and Print." *So Many Books*, 25 April 2013, somanycbooksblog.com/2013.04/25/the-reading-brain-differences-between-digital-and-print/.

Other Common Sources

See pp. 20-53 of the MLA Handbook

Example: Unnamed Physical Object

Mackintosh, Charles Rennie. Chair of stained oak. 1897-1900, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Example: Email Message

Boyle, Anthony T. "Re: Utopia." Received by Daniel J. Cahill, 21 June 1997.

Example: Tweet, or Other Online Untitled Posting

@persiankiwi. "We have report of large street battles in east & west of Tehran now - #Iraelection." *Twitter*, 23 June 2009, 11:15 a.m., twitter.com/persiankiwi/status/2298106072

Example: Episode of a Television Series on a Streaming Network

"Under the Gun." *Pretty Little Liars*, season 4, episode 6, ABC Family, 16 July 2013. *Hulu*, www.hulu.com/watch/511318.

Example: Piece of Art Experienced Firsthand

Bearden, Romare. *The Train*. 1975, Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Example: Entire Website

Eaves, Morris, et al., editors. *The William Blake Archive*. 1996-2014, www.blakearchive.org/blake.

Tips for Proper MLA Format

See pp. 20-53 of the MLA Handbook

- The title of **whole book** is set in *italics*.
- An entire **collection of essays, stories, or powens** is set in *italics*.
- The title of **an essay, a story, or a poem** within a collection, as a part of a larger whole, is set in “quotation marks.”
- The title of a **periodical** (journal, magazine, or newspaper) is set in *italics*.
- The title of an **article** within a periodcal is set in “quotation marks.”
- The title of a **television series** is set in *italics*.
- The title of an **episode** of a television series is set in “quotation marks.”
- The title of a **website** is set in *italics*.
- The title of an **article or posting** on a website is set in “quotation marks.”