

MLA Citation Guide

Revised for
MLA 7th Edition!

Research papers always contain information compiled from other sources. When you write a research paper, you must *cite the sources* of your information. In other words, you must give proper credit to the original authors of the information and let your readers know how to find the information for themselves. There are many different ways to cite the sources of our information, but this guide is designed to help you learn “MLA style,” outlined in the Modern Language Association’s *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (<http://mlahandbook.org>).

Before you start your research, you may want to print copies of the Citation Data Form from <http://andyspinks.com/mla/> and use them to collect the bibliographic information for each of your sources.

There are three main parts to MLA citation:

1. **The Information Itself** (quoting and paraphrasing properly)
2. **The In-Text Citation** (giving the source of each bit of information)
3. **The “Works Cited” Page** (creating a list of the sources you used)

Make sure to read the information at the beginning of all three sections before you begin.

Part 1: The Information Itself

All research papers contain information from other sources. When you use information that has been previously published by someone else, it is important that you avoid *plagiarism* – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own. (Plagiarism is not just cheating; it is also stealing.) There are two ways that you can include other people’s ideas and words in your paper without plagiarizing: *paraphrasing* and *quotation*.

Paraphrasing

You can include someone else’s ideas in your paper by putting those ideas into your own words. This is called *paraphrasing*. Here are a few things to remember when paraphrasing:

- Always cite the source of the paraphrased information with in-text citation (see Part 2) and list the source on your *Works Cited* page (see Part 3).
- Restate the information using your own words *and your own sentences*. Never use the same sentence structure as the original author.
- Combine information from different sources. Try not to paraphrase more than one or two sentences in a row from the same source.

Original Encyclopedia Text:

“The industrial revolution began in Great Britain for several reasons. The country had large deposits of coal and iron, the two natural resources on which early industrialization largely depended. Other industrial raw materials came from Great Britain’s Colonies.”

Paraphrase:

The abundance of natural resources in Great Britain and its colonies was one factor that allowed the industrial revolution to begin there (Lampard 10:248).

Quotation

You can also use someone else’s exact words in your paper; you just have to clearly indicate that the words are a quotation and give proper credit to the original author. This is very useful when the original author has phrased the idea in a powerful, clever, or unique way. If the quoted text is four lines or less, you should put it in quotation marks and include it in line with the rest of your paper. If the quoted text is more than four lines, you should put it in a separate paragraph (without quotation marks) and indent it by one inch. Either way, you should introduce the quotation and make sure to explain how the information relates to your paper.

Short Quotations (Up to Four Lines)

Picasso’s attraction to art came at an early age; in fact, he “was able to draw before he could speak, and he could speak long before he was able to walk” (Bernadac and Bouchet 19).

Long Quotations (More than Four Lines)

One critic adeptly summarized the mainstreaming of the punk genre:

For punk rock, the 1990s were a watershed and a nightmare. The mainstream commercial success in that decade of bands like Green Day, Rancid, and Blink 182 was unprecedented for a genre that survived the Reagan-Bush era on \$3 concerts, indie labels, and the relatively limited broadcast range of college radio. (Matula 19)

This commercialization was simultaneously the rise and fall of punk.

Part 2: The In-Text Citation

When you include information from other sources in your paper, you must include a *citation* that tells where the information came from (regardless of whether you quoted it or paraphrased it). At one time, MLA Style required that these citations be listed as footnotes at the bottom of the page. Now you can just insert a shortened citation immediately after the information you have quoted or paraphrased. (Since the citations appear in the text of your paper, they are called “in-text” citations. Since they are enclosed in parentheses, they are sometimes called “parenthetical” citations.)

The citation should direct the reader to that source’s entry on the Works Cited page of your report. For print sources, you normally only need to include the *Author* and *Page Number* in your citation. For multi-volume works like encyclopedias, include the *Author*, *Volume Number*, and *Page Number* (with a colon separating the volume and page). For internet sites and other sources without specific page numbers, just include the *Author*. If the author is not given, use the first few words of the title (in quotation marks).

Book or Signed Article

Encouraged by the government, tourism is one of the largest industries in Greece (Arnold 45-46).

Book or Signed Article (Author Mentioned in Text)

Arnold states that tourism, encouraged by the government, is one of Greece’s largest industries (45-46).

Book or Signed Article (Two Authors)

Picasso’s attraction to art came at an early age; in fact, he “was able to draw before he could speak, and he could speak long before he was able to walk” (Bernadac and Bouchet 19).

Article in a Multi-Volume Reference Book

The abundance of natural resource in Great Britain and its colonies was one factor that allowed the industrial revolution to begin there (Lampard 10:248).

Article in a Multi-Volume Reference Book (No Author)

Globally, no other infectious disease kills more people than tuberculosis (“Tuberculosis” 3:875).

Online Source (No Page Numbers)

Hinduism and its mythology are a mixture, resulting from centuries of cross-cultural integration (Naylor).

Online Source (No Author or Page Numbers)

Available as a free download, OpenOffice is a popular open source alternative to Microsoft Office (“OpenOffice 3.0”).

Part 3: The "Works Cited" Page

The final part of MLA citation is a list of the works cited. The list should include *all* of the sources cited in the text of the paper and *only* those cited in the paper. (See Part 2: The In-Text Citation)

Creating and Formatting a Works Cited Page

Creating a *Works Cited* page is easy: Begin by creating a new document or inserting a "page break" at the end of your paper. At the top of the new page, type the words "Works Cited" and center them. Below this title, type a list of the sources you referred to in your report, in alphabetical order. Enter each source in its own separate paragraph, each one formatted with a ½ inch hanging indent. (A "hanging indent" means that the first line of the paragraph starts at the left margin, but all other lines are indented.) Also, your list should be double-spaced, but with no extra spaces in between. (Check the help file of your word processor for more information on page breaks, hanging indents, and double-spacing.)

Creating and Formatting Works Cited Entries

The *Works Cited* entry for each source should include enough information to allow readers to look up the original source and to distinguish it from other sources with the same author and/or title.

Authors/Contributors: Begin each entry with the author or primary contributor, if known. When citing one person's specific contribution to the work (the illustrator's work in a graphic novel, for example), list that person first, before the title. If a source has several major contributors (names listed on the title page or front cover) include them after the title.

Titles/Publication Information: Each entry should also include the title(s) of the source and the relevant information about its publication. Include the year of publication for all sources (for magazines and newspapers, also give the month and if known, the day.) For web pages, include the date of the most recent update. If necessary, you can use the abbreviation "n.d." for "no date given" and/or "n.p." for "no publisher given."

Access Information: MLA style no longer requires a URL for online sources, but it does now require that you include the format (i.e., Print, DVD, MP3) for every source. For all online sources, MLA style also requires that you list the title of the database or website and the date you accessed the information. (The media format for all online sources and databases is "Web" – even if the source is a PDF or JPEG file.)

Use the following examples to help format entries for specific sources. If you have questions, consult the *MLA Handbook* or ask your teacher or library media specialist for help.

Book (Print)

Author. *Title of Book*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year. Format.

Arnold, Francis. *Greece*. Austin: Steck-Vaughn, 1992. Print.

Bernadac, Marie-Laure, and Paule Bouchet. *Picasso: Master of the New Idea*. New York: Abrams, 1993. Print.

eBook (from a database)

Author. *Title of Book*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year. *Database Title*. Format. Date of Access.

Katz, Mark. *Capturing Sound: How Technology Has Changed Music*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2004. *netLibrary*. Web. 15 Feb. 2006.

Article in a Reference Book or Edited Collection (Print)

Author. "Title of Article." *Title of Book*. Editor. Volume. City of Publication: Publisher, Year. Pages. Format.

Bewley, Marius. "The True Heir of the American Dream." *Readings on The Great Gatsby*. Ed. Katie de Koster. San Diego: Greenhaven, 1998. 96-103. Print.

Lampard, Eric Edwin. "Industrial Revolution." *World Book Encyclopedia*. Vol. 10. Chicago: World Book, 2000. 246-255. Print.

"Tuberculosis." *Human Diseases and Conditions*. Ed. Neil Izenberg. Vol. 3. New York: Scribner's, 2000. 875-880. Print.

Reference or Encyclopedia Article (from a database)

Author. "Title of Article." *Title of Book*. Editor. Volume. City of Publication: Publisher, Year. *Database Title*. Format. Date of Access.

Rickards, Joseph. "Photorealism." *Encyclopedia Americana*. 2009. *Grolier Online*. Web. 21 Oct. 2009.

Henningfeld, Diane. "Overview of The Bluest Eye." *EXPLORING Novels*. Detroit: Gale, 2003. *Student Resource Center – Gold*. Web. 21 Oct. 2009.

Magazine or Newspaper Article (Print)

Author. "Title of Article." *Magazine or Newspaper* Date: Pages. Format.

Johnston, Richard. "Martin History Revisited." *Acoustic Guitar* July 2009: 60-69. Print.

Magazine or Newspaper Article (from a database)

Author. "Title of Article." *Magazine or Newspaper* Date: Pages. *Database Title*. Format. Date of Access.

Faure, Gaele. "Managing Your Online Afterlife." *Time* 14 Sep. 2009: 51-52. *MAS Ultra - School Edition*. Web. 21 Oct. 2009.

Academic Journal Article (from a database)

Author. "Title of Article." *Journal Title* Volume.Issue (Year): Pages. *Database Title*. Format. Date of Access.

Matula, Theodore. "Pow! to the People: The Make-Up's Reorganization of Punk Rhetoric." *Popular Music & Society* 30.1 (2007): 19-38. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 27 Oct. 2009.

Web Page

Author. "Title of Page." *Title of Web Site*. Publisher or Sponsor, Date of Publication. Format. Date of Access.

"Adderall." *PDRhealth*. PDR Network, 2009. Web. 21 Oct. 2009.

Naylor, Stephen. "Hindu Mythology." *Encyclopedia Mythica*. N.p., 8 Apr. 2006. Web. 21 Oct. 2009.

"OpenOffice 3.0." *Osalt.com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 6 Nov. 2009.

Online Photograph, Illustration, or Image

Artist. *Image Title*. Date of Publication. Collection or Institution. *Website or database*. Format. Date of Access.

Adams, Ansel. *Guayle Field, Manzanar Relocation Center*. 1943. Library of Congress. *American Memory*. Web. 27 Oct. 2009.

Song or Sound Recording (from a CD or MP3)

Specific Contributor. "Song Title." Other Major Contributors. *Album Title*. Publisher, Year. Format.

Copeland, Aaron. "Fanfare for the Common Man." Perf. New York Philharmonic. Cond. Leonard Bernstein. *Sing America*. Warner Bros., 1999. CD.

Jimi Hendrix Experience. "All Along the Watchtower." By Bob Dylan. *Electric Ladyland*. MCA, 1968. MP3.

Video or Movie (on DVD or VHS)

Specific Contributor. *Title*. Other Major Contributors. Distributor, Year. Format.

Brando, Marlon, perf. *A Streetcar Named Desire*. By Tennessee Williams. Dir. Elia Kazan. Warner Bros., 2006. DVD.

Video or Movie (Online)

Specific Contributor. *Title*. Other Major Contributors. Publisher or Distributor, Year. *Website or database*. Format. Date of Access.

Ivers, Louise, narr. *Haiti: Malnutrition*. Harvard University, 2009. *YouTube*. Web. 27 Oct. 2009.