Citation Guide: MLA 8ᵗʰ Edition

This is a brief overview of the Modern Language Association (MLA) citation style, 8ᵗʰ edition. In academic writing, when you borrow the words, facts, or ideas of others, you must "cite," or give credit to, those outside sources.

Cite your sources every time you are:

-- **quoting** (enclosing someone's exact words in quotation marks)

-- **paraphrasing** (putting the words/facts/ideas of others into your own words and sentence structure)

-- **summarizing** (using your own words to write a concise overview of an outside source's main points).

Contents:

> *BASIC RULE:*
> *Always follow your instructor's guidelines.*
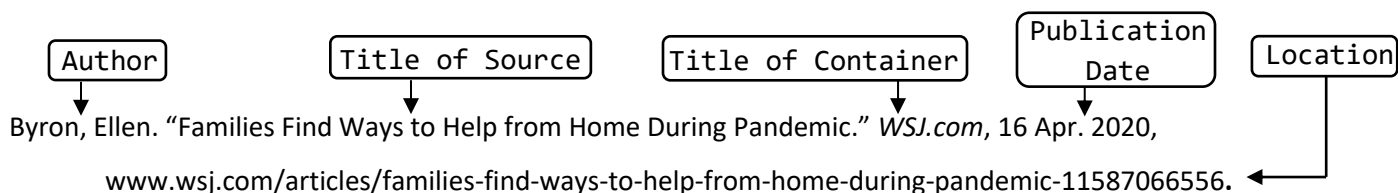
Cite Your Sources in Two Places:

⟹ On the **Works Cited** page, where you give complete citations. This is on a separate page after your essay.

⟹ In the **body of your paper**, where you place brief **in-text citations** (see pp. 3-4 of this guide).

Core Elements for an MLA Citation (for citations on the Works Cited page):

Aim to locate all 9 core elements. Use punctuation mark shown after each element. **If an element is not provided, skip it**.

1. **Author.**	Last name, first name, middle initial. **For multiple authors or no author**, see p. 2 of this guide.
2. **Title of Source.**	**Italicize** titles of stand-alone sources (books, websites, magazines, journals, newspapers, etc.). **Put title in quotation marks** if source is part of a larger work (chapters, short stories, a web page, articles, etc.).
3. **Title of Container,**	When a source is "nested" in a larger whole, the larger whole is the "container." A source may have two containers: an article found in a journal (container 1) that is housed in a database (container 2). **In this case**, add elements 1-9 to your citation for the smaller 1ˢᵗ container, followed by elements 3-9 for the larger 2ⁿᵈ container. If a source has even more containers, continue to add elements 3-9 to your citation to account for each additional container. A printed book does not have a container—it is self-contained.
4. **Other Contributors,**	Precede contributor's name with "by." **Examples**: edited by, translated by, illustrated by
5. **Version,**	A specific version or edition of a source, e.g., **unabridged** or **abridged version**│ **8ᵗʰ ed.**│ **expanded ed.**
6. **Number,**	If source is part of a numbered sequence, e.g., **vol. 1, no. 4** │ **vols. 1-2**│ **season 2, episode 1**
7. **Publisher,**	Organization responsible for creating the source. For university publishers, abbreviate University as U and Press as P. Omit business abbreviations such as corp. and co. **Omit** publisher for journals, magazines and newspapers and for websites with titles that are essentially the same as the publisher's name.
8. **Publication Date,**	Spell out May, June, & July; abbreviate September as Sept.; abbreviate all other months to three letters, e.g., **2 Feb. 2019** │ **Nov.-Dec. 2018** │ **2007**. Date of Access **is optional, but include it as last element of citation if no publication date is given.** Ask your professor!
9. **Location.**	The location of a source, e.g., page numbers of an article, a DOI (digital object identifier) for an article, or a URL of a website. Page numbers format: **p. 27** │ **pp. 45-56**. Unless your instructor says otherwise, when possible cite a DOI (preceded by *doi*:) instead of a URL. If using a URL, omit the **http://** and **https://.**

Example – MLA Citation for Works Cited page – An Article or Page on a Website

Author	Title of Source	Title of Container	Publication Date	Location

Byron, Ellen. "Families Find Ways to Help from Home During Pandemic." *WSJ.com*, 16 Apr. 2020,

www.wsj.com/articles/families-find-ways-to-help-from-home-during-pandemic-11587066556**.**

Examples—MLA Citations for the Works Cited Page

Elements of an MLA Citation

Citations should be double-spaced (examples below are not). All lines of a citation after the first line are indented 1/2 inch (0.5") from the left margin.

Elements are in order of placement in citation. If an element is not provided, skip it. **Follow each element with the punctuation mark shown**.

1 Author.
2 Title of source.
3 Title of container,
4 Other contributors,
5 Version,
6 Number,
7 Publisher,
8 Publication date,
9 Location.

Image: style.mla.org

Print Book, One Author (see note below for multiple or no authors)

Westover, Tara. *Educated: A Memoir*. Random House, 2018.

For multiple authors or no author (any source)

For Two Authors: Kitchell, Susan, and Charles S. Mayer
For Three or More Authors: Burdick, Anne, et al. (List first author, then add "et al.")
For No Author: Begin citation with title of source.

An Entry or Article in a Print Encyclopedia, Reference Book, or Dictionary

"Earthling." *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary,* 9th ed., Merriam-Webster, 1998, p.392.

A Print Work in an Edited Collection or Anthology (e.g., an essay, chapter, poem or short story)

Copeland, Edward. "Money." *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, edited by Copeland and Juliet McMaster,

Cambridge UP, 1997, pp. 131-48.

E-Book Found in an MCC Library Database (Two Authors)

Donahue, Tim, and Jim Patterson. *Theater Careers: A Realistic Guide*. U of South Carolina P, 2012, *EBSCOhost,*

search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=613071&site=ehost-live.

Article Found in an MCC Library Database (Has DOI – "digital object identifier")

Chun, Elaine W. "How to Drop a Name: Hybridity, Purity, and the K-Pop Fan." *Language in Society*, vol. 46, no. 1,

2017, pp. 57-76. *ProQuest,* doi:10.1017/S0047404516000828.

Article Found in an MCC Library Database (no DOI but has a URL)   Note: When including a URL, omit http:// and https://

Newbould, Brian. "On Mozart 3: When Space Is Music." *Musical Times*, vol. 160, no. 1949, Winter 2019, pp. 25-

36. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=140208278&site=ehost-live.

Article or Page on a Website (No Author)   Note: If a source has no author, begin citation with title of source.

"Exercising During Covid-19 Pandemic: You Have Options*." Scripps.org*, Scripps Health, 10 Apr. 2020,

www.scripps.org/news_items/6936-exercising-during-covid-19-pandemic-you-have-options.

Article or Page on a Website (Government agency)

United States, Environmental Protection Agency. "Snow and Ice." *United States Environmental Protection Agency*,

6 Nov. 2018, www.epa.gov/natural-disasters/snow-and-ice.

Photograph from a Website

Nowitz, Richard. *Stonehenge. National Geographic*, www.nationalgeographic.com/archaeology-and-

history/archaeology/stonehenge/. Photograph. Accessed 21 Feb. 2019.

Online Video (such as YouTube, TED Talk, etc.)

Cain, Susan. "Susan Cain: The Power of Introverts." *TED: Ideas Worth Spreading*, Feb. 2012,

www.ted.com/talks/susan_cain_the_power_of_introverts?language=en.

In-Text Citations: | Information and Examples

In-text citations are brief acknowledgments of your sources that you place within the text of your paper wherever you borrow others' words, facts or ideas. Use in-text citations when you are **quoting** (enclosing someone's exact words in quotation marks); **paraphrasing** (putting the ideas of others into your own words and recreating the sentence structure of the original source); or **summarizing** a source. MLA in-text citations usually contain the author's name and the source's page number (see exceptions <u>underlined</u> below).

Each short in-text citation should have the same first word as its longer corresponding citation on the Works Cited list, which is on a separate page after the last page of your essay. This system provides your readers with a link to your complete citation information. See pp. 1-2 of this guide for information about citations for the Works Cited list.

MLA In-Text Citation Basics:

- The author's name may appear in the sentence itself or, alternatively, in parentheses following the quotation, paraphrase or summary. Within the parentheses, the author's last name goes before the page number. **Example:** (Shakespeare 58).
- **If no author is provided**, use a shortened version of the title of the source within the parentheses **or**, alternatively, the complete title of the source within the text of your paper. The first word of the *shortened title* must be the same as the first main word (not *A*, *An*, or *The*) of the source's *complete* title in the Works Cited list. *For shortened titles*, use the first or first few words of the complete title, ignoring the words *A*, *An*, *The*.
- Page numbers are placed in the parentheses, not within a sentence. **If page numbers are not provided**, as often occurs with web sources, do not include them. PDF articles may have page numbers, so use them if available.

Sample In-Text Citations for the Works Cited **citation example below:**

Linford, Jenny. *The Seven Culinary Wonders of the World: A History of Honey, Salt, Chile, Pork, Rice, Cacao, and Tomato*. Illustrated by Alice Pattullo, Smithsonian Books, 2018.

> Signal phrases "signal" that borrowed information is coming.

Paraphrase, Author in sentence

Food writer Jenny Linford points out that chocolate was enjoyed only in liquid form prior to the mid-19th century (174).

> Page number

Paraphrase, Author in parentheses

Until the mid-19th century, chocolate was enjoyed only in liquid form (Linford 174).

Quote, Author in sentence

According to Linford, "Recent findings show that raw honey can kill more than 250 strains of bacteria, including the so-called superbug MRSA" (62).

Paraphrase followed by quote; Author in parentheses

Salt is considered a pantry staple, yet "only 6 percent of the salt produced in the world today is used for food purposes" (Linford 79).

> **Note:** The closing period goes **after** the parentheses.

In-Text Citation Examples: *(continued)*

Paraphrase, No author	Fathers participating in a weekly program of reading to their children said that the activity improved their parenting skills ("Engaging Fathers" 27).

Title of source

Page number

Paraphrase, No page number	One study found that reading to young children benefits not only their language skills, but also their psychological growth (Klass).

Author

Paraphrase, two authors	Researchers assert that marketing campaigns for e-cigarettes and other electronic nicotine devices should not be something that youths regularly see in the world around them or online (Kamat and Van Dyke 75).

Quote, indirect source	With her art, Carrie Mae Weems addresses social change and what she refers to as the "*ism* brothers" – racism, sexism and classism (qtd. in Watts 55-56).	**Example**

In-text Citation for an Indirect Source

A source that paraphrases or quotes another source is called an indirect source. **Example**: an article by Linda S. Watts includes a quote by Carrie Mae Weems, and you would like to use the Weems quote in your paper. When possible, the best practice is to find and cite the original source of the quote (the source containing the quote by Weems). But if the original source can't be located, cite the source that you are looking at (the article by Watts).

To cite Weems **within the text of your paper:**

1. Name the original source of the information—Weems—in the text of your paper immediately before you quote or paraphrase the source.
2. Cite the indirect source, Watts, in the parenthetical citation following Weems' words.
   Example: (qtd. in Watts 55-56).
3. Be sure to cite Watts in the Works Cited list at the end of your paper (but not Weems).

Block Quotes (for Long Quotations)

If a quote runs more than four lines of your text (or more than three lines for verse/poetry): Block the quote off from the rest of the text by indenting the entire quote ½ inch (one tab) from the left margin. The introductory phrase you place before your long quotation usually ends with a colon. <u>Do not enclose the block quote in quotation marks</u>. See below:

Block Quote Example:

Nick describes his impression of Gatsby at their first meeting:

Phrase introducing quote

> He smiled understandingly—much more than understandingly. It was one of
> those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come
> across four or five times in life. It faced—or seemed to face—the whole external
> world for an instant, then concentrated on you with an irresistible prejudice in
> your favor. (Fitzgerald 48)

Quote

Author and page number

Note: For block quotes, the closing period goes ***before*** the parentheses (not after, as in a regular quote).
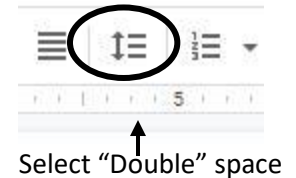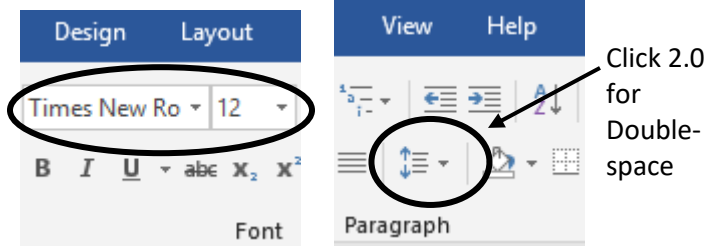
FORMATTING YOUR MLA-STYLE PAPER

Microsoft Word

Google Docs

Font = Times New Roman 12 pt.
Double Space

Design   Layout

Times New Ro ▾ | 12

B *I* U ▾ abe x₂ x²

Font

View   Help

Click 2.0 for Double-space

Paragraph

Times New... ▾ | 12

Select Font

Select "Double" space

Margins = 1" all around

Microsoft Word

Word automatically sets margins at 1 inch all around. To check, click: *Layout > Margins >* make sure it's "Normal."

Google Docs

Google Docs automatically sets margins at 1 inch all around. To double-check, click: *File > Page Setup*.

Automatic Last Name & Page Number at Top Right of Each Page

Microsoft Word

1. Set the font and line spacing (see pictures above).
2. Click *Insert* tab at top left, then *Page Number* at right.
3. Click *Top of Page* option, then *Plain number 3* box*.*
4. Click once to the immediate left of the number **1**. Type your last name & a space, **Example:** Jones 1
5. Highlight last name & page number, click *Home* tab, and change font to Times New Roman, size 12.
6. To close header, double-click below dashed line.

Google Docs

1. Set the font and line spacing (see pictures above).
2. Click *Insert > Page Numbers.*
3. Click on the first picture box, upper left corner (it shows page numbers 1 & 2 at top right of pages).
4. Click once to the immediate left of the number **1**. Type your last name and a space, **Example**: Jones 1
5. To close header, double-click anywhere in white space below header.

Hanging Indents (all lines of a Works Cited citation *after the first line* have a ½" indentation)

Microsoft Word

1. Begin the Works Cited list on the first line of a new, separate page of your paper, after your essay.
2. Click Align Center icon Type the words Works Cited, then hit *enter* once. Click Align Left icon.
3. Set hanging indents at 0.5": click tiny arrow in lower right corner of *Paragraph* section > click *Special* pull-down menu > *Hanging* > click *OK*.
4. Type citations. Each citation should now indent its second and subsequent lines ½ inch. *If you typed your citations before you set up hanging indents,* just highlight them all and do step 3 above.
5. Alphabetize citations by first main word of citation.

Google Docs

1. Begin the Works Cited list on the first line of a new, separate page of your paper, after your essay.
2. Click "Center Align" icon Type the words Works Cited, then press *enter* once. Click "Left Align" icon
3. Set hanging indents at 0.5": click *Format > Align & Indent > Indentation Options > .* Next, under "Special Indent" select *Hanging > Apply.*
4. Type citations. Each citation should now indent its second and subsequent lines ½ inch. *If you typed your citations before you set up hanging indents,* just highlight them all and do step 3 above.
5. Alphabetize citations by first main word of citation.

SAMPLE MLA-STYLE PAPER

Jones 1

Anna Jones

Professor Williams

English 101

19 Oct. 2019

> **In Word**: Click *Insert* > *Page Number* > *Top of Page* > *Plain #3* > Click once at <u>left</u> of **1**. Type your last name and add a space. Click below header line to close header.

> Title of Your Essay

We Should Read Online Reviews with a Critical Eye

> Times New Roman 12 pt. font
>
> Double-spaced
>
> **1-inch margins all sides**

In today's digital age, consumers seeking advice before a purchase can simply go online and click "Reviews." According to a 2016 study, that's what 82 percent of U.S. adults do, with 65 percent of regular review readers judging online reviews as "generally accurate" (Smith and Anderson). Other reports detail practices of third-party "marketers" paying people for positive reviews (Botsman 146-147). Although online reviews are convenient and often beneficial, the risks of deception can't be ignored.

> In-text citation with page numbers

Positive or negative, biased reviews are rampant. TripAdvisor reported last month that it rejected 1.4 million of its 66 million online reviews in 2018 because they were fraudulent ("2019 TripAdvisor"). Research shows that negative reviews most strongly affect shoppers' buying practices (Beaton). Buyers…

----------------------**Pretend this is the Works Cited page (a separate page after your essay)**------------------------

Jones 4

Works Cited

> Alphabetize by first main word

Beaton, Caroline. "Why You Can't Really Trust Negative Online Reviews." *The New York Times*, 13 June 2018. www.nytimes.com/2018/06/13/smarter-living/trust-negative-product-reviews.html.

> ½" hanging indent (see p. 5 for help)

Botsman, Rachel. *Who Can You Trust?: How Technology Brought Us Together and Why It Might Drive Us Apart*. Public Affairs / Hachette Book Group, 2017.

Smith, Aaron, and Monica Anderson. "Online Reviews." *Pew Research Center*, 19 Dec. 2016, www.pewinternet.org/2016//12/19/online-reviews/.

> If no author is given, begin citation with title of source.

"2019 TripAdvisor Review Transparency Report." *TripAdvisor.com*, Sept. 2019, www.tripadvisor.com/TripAdvisorInsights/wpcontent/uploads/2019/09/2147_PR_Content_ Transparency_Report_6SEP19_US.pdf