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).

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p. 2: Citation Examples for the Works Cited page
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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

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.

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

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

**Article Found in an MCC Library Database** (Has DOI – “digital object identifier”)  

**Article Found in an MCC Library Database** (no DOI but has a URL)  

**Article or Page on a Website (No Author)**  

**Article or Page on a Website (Government agency)**  

**Photograph from a Website**  

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


Paraphrase, Author in sentence

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

Paraphrase, Author in parentheses

Until the mid-19\textsuperscript{th} 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.

More in-text citation examples on page 4
In-Text Citation Examples: (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Citation Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrase, No author</td>
<td>Fathers participating in a weekly program of reading to their children said that the activity improved their parenting skills (“Engaging Fathers” 27).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrase, No page number</td>
<td>One study found that reading to young children benefits not only their language skills, but also their psychological growth (Klass).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrase, two authors</td>
<td>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).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quote, indirect source</td>
<td>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).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. **Do not enclose the block quote in quotation marks.** See below:

**Block Quote Example:**

Nick describes his impression of Gatsby at their first meeting:

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)

**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

Margins = 1” all around

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

Microsoft Word

Google Docs

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.

Hanging Indents (all lines of a Works Cited citation after the first line have a ¼” indentation)

Microsoft Word

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 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 ¼ 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 ¼ 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.
We Should Read Online Reviews with a Critical Eye

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. 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...

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

Title of Your Essay

In-text citation with page numbers

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

We Should Read Online Reviews with a Critical Eye

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Works Cited


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

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

Works Cited


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