MLA Style Guide

Based on MLA Handbook (8th ed.)

Citing Sources in the Text of Your Paper

When you use the work of others in your research paper, you need to give proper credit to your sources. It is not enough to document your sources in a Works Cited list; credit must also be given throughout your paper. This applies not only to direct quotes, but also to information and ideas borrowed from others.

Identify your sources throughout your paper by using an in-text citation (brief reference to your source). MLA in-text citations refer a reader to the Works Cited list which gives complete information about the source.

- If you mention the author's name in the text of your paper, you need only include the page number (when available) in parenthesis.
  
  According to Kathryn Sorrells, essentialism is…. (299).

- Otherwise, include both the last name of the author and the page number.
  
  Essentialism is…. (Sorrells 299).

- Two authors: use both authors’ names, in order listed, connected by “and.”
  
  Global warming has an especially adverse effect on children (Zivin and Shrader 32).

- Three or more authors: use first author followed by “et al.”
  
  Mary J. Neavyn et al. “recommend that patients abstain from driving for a minimum of 8 h. after achieving a subjective ‘high’ from marijuana use” (27).

- When an author is unknown or a corporate author (group or organization), use the complete title of the source in the text of your paper or an abbreviated version in parenthesis.
  
  “Hurricanes and Climate Change” discusses why hurricanes are becoming more destructive.

  Higher sea levels cause hurricanes to intensify (“Hurricanes”).

- When the author is a government agency, list all administrative units, separated by commas, using common abbreviations.
  
  “Zika infection during pregnancy can cause a birth defect called microcephaly, as well as other severe fetal brain defects” (United States, Dept. of Health & Human Services, CDC).
• If possible, use the information from an original source. When necessary to quote an indirect source, put “qtd. in” (quoted in) before the indirect source.

According to Christian Zabriskie, “libraries are the fabric of society” (qtd. in Hu).

Works Cited

The sources you borrow from are included in a Works Cited list at the end of your paper. Entries are arranged alphabetically by author’s last name or by title where no author is available. Format the entries using hanging indentation (second and subsequent lines of each entry are indented half an inch from the left margin), and double space.

Each entry in the Works Cited list is composed of core elements in a specific order. If an element doesn’t apply to your entry, skip it.

1. **Author** (followed by a period)
   - **No author**: begin the citation with the title
   - **One author**: last name, first name
   - **Two authors**: last name, first name, and first name last name
   - **Three or more authors**: last name, first name, et al.
   - **Corporate author** (organization): when a source is published by an organization that is also its author, skip the author and begin the citation with the title
   - **Government agency**: name of government, name of agency (between these, list organization units from largest to smallest, separated by commas)
   - Omit titles and degrees (Dr., Ph.D., etc.)

2. **Title of source** (followed by a period)
   - Put in **quotation marks if part of a larger work** (essay, article, Web page)
   - Put in **italics if self-contained** (book, periodical, Web site)
   - Capitalize the first word and all principal words:
     - **nouns** (Bats, Kite, Libraries)
     - **pronouns** (It, She, Ours)
     - **verbs** (Is, Do, Can)
     - **adjectives** (Huge, Old)
     - **adverbs** (Very, Quickly)
     - **subordinating conjunctions** (After, Because, Until)
   - Capitalize the word following a colon
   - Do not capitalize:
     - **articles** (a, an, the)
     - **prepositions** (in, of, to, between)
     - **coordinating conjunctions** (and, but, or)
     - “to” in infinitives (“To Sleep, Perchance to Dream.”)
3. **Title of container** (followed by a comma)
   - A container is a larger whole that holds a source (book, periodical, Web site)
   - Italicize the container title
   - A container may be nested in a larger container (for example, an article in a journal in a **database**). *Add core elements 3-9 at the end of the entry to account for each additional container.*

4. **Other contributors** (followed by a comma)
   - When appropriate, give credit to others who contributed to the source
   - Examples:
     - edited by
     - translated by
     - illustrated by
     - directed by

5. **Version** (followed by a comma)
   - If a source has been released in more than one form, identify the version
   - Other media may also appear in different version, for example director’s cut

6. **Number** (followed by a comma)
   - For a **book** in a multi-volume set, indicate the volume number: vol. 2
   - For a **periodical**, use volume and issue numbers: vol. 128, no. 1

7. **Publisher** (followed by a comma)
   - The organization responsible for producing the source
   - For a **book**, look on the title page or copyright page
   - For a **Web site**, look for a sponsoring organization in the copyright notice at the bottom of the home page or look for an “about” link
   - **Omit** for a periodical (magazine, journal, or newspaper), a self-published work, a Web site whose title is the same as the publisher, or for a site that makes content available such as YouTube or a database

8. **Publication Date** (followed by a comma)
   - Use the full date given in the format: day month year
   - Do not abbreviate May, June, or July
   - Date may also be a season such as Spring
   - For a **book**, look for the publication date on the title page or copyright page
   - For a **periodical**, look on the cover or title page
   - For a **Web page**, look for the date posted or last modified
9. **Location** (followed by a period)

- For **print** sources, list page number preceded by p. or a range of page numbers preceded by pp.
- For **periodicals** with non-consecutive pages, list first page preceded by pp. followed by a plus sign.
- For **online** work, use the URL (omit http://)
- When possible, use a stable (permanent) URL or a DOI (digital object identifier)
- For a **database** with no DOI or stable URL, use the root of the URL (ezproxy.mcckc.edu) or the full URL.

**Optional Elements**

- Date of original publication (immediately after title)
- City of publication (before name of publisher)
- Other facts about the source (total number of volumes in a multi-volume publication, name of a book series, description of work such as transcript or interview, information about prior publication)
- Date of access

**MLA Works Cited: Basic Formats**

**Books**

**One Author**

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*, Publisher, year of publication.

**Two Authors**

Last Name, First Name, and First Name Last Name. *Title of Book*, Publisher, year of publication.

**Three or More Authors**

Last Name, First Name, et al. *Title of Book*, Publisher, year of publication.

**Work in an Anthology**

Last name, First name. “Title of Essay.” *Title of Book*, edited by First Name Last Name, Publisher, year of publication, page range.

**eBook**

Last name, First name. *Title of Book*, Publisher, year of publication. *Title of Database*, url.

**Periodicals**

**Magazine Article**

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Magazine*, day Month year, pages.

**Journal Article**

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Journal*, vol., no., year, pages.
Database Articles

**Magazine Article**

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Magazine*, day Month year, pages. *Title of Database*, doi or permalink or url.

**Journal Article**

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Journal*, vol., no., year, pages. *Title of Database*, doi or permalink or url.

Web

**Entire Site**

Name of Site, Sponsor or Publisher, date of creation or update, url.

**Web Page**

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Page.” *Name of Site*, Sponsor or Publisher, date of creation or update, url.

**Online Periodical**

Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Magazine*, publication date, url.

**Government Site**

Name of Government, Name of Agency. “Title of Page.” *Name of Site*, date of creation or update, url.

Works Cited


King, Martin Luther. “Civil Rights.” Martin Luther King Press Conference, moderated by Robert Lodge, National Archives & Records Administration, 1963, Films on Demand, ezproxy.mcckc.edu.


