What are MLA, APA, and Chicago/Turabian Styles?

Style, or documentation, refers to the method you use to cite your sources when writing a research-based paper. The three most common academic styles are MLA, APA, and Chicago/Turabian.

This appendix is a quick reference to these documentation styles with a few Internet links. It is not meant to be comprehensive. Ask your instructor which style to use, and use the style guide(s) your instructor recommends. If you have any questions about citing sources, always ask your instructor!

Modern Language Association (MLA) Style

MLA is used when writing in humanities classes (composition, literature, music, theatre, etc.). It uses in-text citations with the author’s name and a page number.

Links courtesy of Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab (OWL)

Using Modern Language Association (MLA) Format

Sample MLA Paper

American Psychological Association (APA) Style

APA is used for writing in the social sciences, such as psychology. It uses in-text citations with the author’s name and the year.

Links courtesy of Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab (OWL)

Using American Psychological Association (APA) Format

Sample APA Paper

Chicago/Turabian Style

Chicago/Turabian is used when writing in history. It uses footnotes (on the bottom of the page) or end notes (at the end of the paper). Ask your instructor which method to use.

Links courtesy of Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab (OWL)

Using Chicago/Turabian Format

Sample Chicago Paper
Why We Document Sources

Avoid plagiarism

Establish credibility

Leave a trail for others to follow back to the source

Honor/respect the work of others

Show respect for your own work

Show that you are part of the community that cites sources

Participate in a standard

Recognize the academic context

Establish relationships among texts

Show our expertise by our knowledge of experts

Show evidence for claims

Align self with smart thinkers

Take protection from authority

Give credit where credit is due

Call attention to an overlooked source

Help publicize a source

Suggest our debt to another

Create a trail of how we came to think something
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What’s New in MLA 8th ed. (2016)

When documenting sources, find out if your professor wants Modern Language Association (MLA) format or American Psychological Association (APA) format. MLA is used in the humanities and is what your English professors will usually require. The best source for documenting MLA sources is the *MLA, 8th ed.* (Make sure you get the 8th ed. © 2016.) However, several reference books, like one that may be required or recommended for your section, contain MLA and APA documentation information. What follows will help you begin to use MLA Style documentation.

With the recent release of *MLA Handbook* (8th edition), Works Cited style entries now have noticeable differences from the 7th edition guidelines you may be more familiar with. However, this is not to inform you that everything you know about proper MLA citation format is now wrong. Instead, you should be aware of the following major changes:

**Simplified punctuation!** MLA now uses only commas and periods to separate elements in a works cited entry.

**Simplified citations!** Only the most common elements of each source are included in the works cited entry for each source. Here are the common elements for print sources, in order of inclusion, needed for each source. Each element is followed by its punctuation mark:

1. Author.
2. Title of source.
3. Title of container, 
4. Other contributors, 
5. Version, 
6. Number, 
7. Publisher, 
8. Publication date, 
9. Location.
Print sources *that are accessed electronically* (such as periodical articles in a database, books on a web site, ebooks, etc.) need a second container and location to show where the digital version can be accessed:

**MLA Practice Template**

1. Author.
2. Title of source.

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

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


You can download this practice template at [https://style.mla.org/files/2016/04/practice-template.pdf](https://style.mla.org/files/2016/04/practice-template.pdf)
Citing Sources

Complete List of What’s New in The 8th Edition
https://style.mla.org/whats-new/

All page numbers refer to MLA Handbook 8th ed.

Abbreviations

Common terms in the works-cited list like editor, edited by, translator, and review of are no longer abbreviated. The eighth edition provides a shorter list of recommended abbreviations (96–97).

Authors

When a source has three or more authors, only the first one shown in the source is normally given. It is followed by et al. (22). (Previously, the omission of coauthors was limited to sources with four or more authors and was presented as an option.)

Books and Other Printed Works

Page numbers in the works-cited list (but not in in-text citations) are now preceded by p. or pp. (46).

For books, the city of publication is no longer given, except in special situations [e.g., include if the book was printed before 1900] (51).

Journals

Issues of scholarly journals are now identified with, for instance, “vol. 64, no. 1” rather than “64.1” (39–40).

If an issue of a scholarly journal is dated with a month or season, the month or season is now always cited along with the year (45).

Online Works

The URL (without http:// or https://) is now normally given for a Web source. Angle brackets are not used around it (48, 110).

The citing of DOIs (digital object identifiers) is encouraged (110).

Citing the date when an online work was consulted is now optional (53).
Placeholders for unknown information like *n.d.* (“no date”) are no longer used. If facts missing from a work are available in a reliable external resource, they are cited in square brackets (2.6.1). Otherwise, they are simply omitted.

**Publishers**

Publishers’ names are now given in full, except that business words like *Company (Co.*) are dropped and, for academic presses, the abbreviations *U, P*, and *UP* are still used (97).

A forward slash (/) now separates the names of copublishers (108).

The kinds of publications that don’t require a publisher’s name are defined (42).

When an organization is both author and publisher of a work, the organization’s name is now given only once, usually as the publisher (25). No author is stated.

**Miscellaneous**

Full publication information is now given for widely used reference works. Page-number spans are given for articles in alphabetically arranged reference books in print. In other words, reference works are treated like other works and are no longer subject to exceptions.

The medium of publication is no longer stated, except when it is needed for clarity (52).

**In-Text Citations**

The principles behind in-text citations in MLA style are unchanged. A few details have been added or clarified, though:

For time-based media like video, times are now cited in the text (57). The use of *my trans.* to identify the writer’s translation of a non-English quotation is described (90–91).

How to shorten long titles when they have to be included in a parenthetical citation is clarified (117–18).

The common practice of documenting borrowings from Greek, Roman, and medieval works with part numbers, not page numbers alone, is described (122).

The punctuation used when various items are combined in one parenthetical citation is summarized (126–27).
Ways of formatting citations in research projects other than traditional papers are suggested (127–28).

*Given the recent implementation of these changes (among others), it is recommended that you contact your instructor about his or her specific MLA requirements.*

**Keys to MLA Works Cited: Documenting Sources at the End of the Essay**

A Works Cited page (and IT IS ALWAYS CALLED WORKS CITED EVEN IF IT LISTS ONLY ONE SOURCE) lists all the sources that you use in a given piece of writing. The Works Cited page should start on the page after your text ends (at the end of your text, add a PAGE BREAK and begin your Works Cited). The Works Cited page should appear with the words Works Cited CENTERED at the top of the page. Items should be listed in ALPHABETICAL ORDER BASED ON WHATEVER NAME OR WORD IS AT THE START OF YOUR PROPERLY FORMATTED WORKS CITED ENTRY. The Works Cited page should be formatted DOUBLE SPACE using a HANGING INDENT (so that the start of each entry is flush with the left margin but the subsequent lines of a given entry are indented--like a reverse paragraph tab).

- **To build a Works Cited page and to build in-text citations (brief acknowledgements of a source within your text--SEE KEYS TO MLA IN-TEXT CITATIONS), you need to create a WORKS CITED ENTRY for each source used.** A Works Cited entry helps other readers understand exactly what source you used and provide enough information for another person to find the source.
- **Works Cited entries follow a standard format.** MLA uses one TEMPLATE to help you build Works Cited entries for any source (insert link to template). People who expect MLA Style are familiar with the template and expect to see entries properly formatted using the template.
- **Even though the new MLA formatting uses a standard template for creating a citation, understanding what specific type of source you are citing (book, magazine, online article, etc.) can be helpful as it may help you determine which type of information the template will require.** For example, journal articles typically use a volume and issue number for the “number” line on the template.
- **The PARTS of the template are important, but so is the PUNCTUATION.** The template parts and punctuation signal things to those familiar with MLA Style about specifics of your source.
- **SOME FORMATTING HINTS:**
  - It is important to look at the template to see if a period of a comma follows a particular part of the formula and to remember that THERE WILL ALWAYS BE
A PERIOD AFTER THE FINAL ITEM IN THE TEMPLATE.

- You may find that you do not have or need information for an item in the template. If that is the case, just skip the item. The point is to make sure that there are enough parts of the template in the Works Cited entry so that your source could be easily identified and located.
- Note that in citing sources you will put the last name (LN) of the author first followed by a comma and then the first name (FN), so LN, FN. If there are two authors, only the first author is listed by last name first: LN, FN and FN LN.
- "Article Titles" are put in quotation marks while Book or Magazine Titles are italicized. The idea is that a "Smaller Thing" is part of a Bigger Thing.
- MLA style uses TITLE CASE which means that you capitalize all main words of the Title, regardless of how the title is capitalized in the source.
Keys to MLA In-Text Citations: Documenting Sources Within An Essay

- **In-text citations** are indicators placed in parentheses inside your essay signaling *every* place you have quoted, summarized, paraphrased or otherwise used outside source material in your writing.
- Each time you quote, paraphrase, summarize or use a source, you must indicate so at the end of the sentence. You do so by putting the **citation information in parenthesis BEFORE THE PERIOD**.
- So you don’t clutter your text, you only need to put in parenthesis enough information so that it is evident what source from your Works Cited you have used. In-text citations are quick notations that link to the Works Cited.
- **Generally**, the *in-text citation will include the last name of the author of the source you are using (or the first word of an entry if author is unknown) and the page number on which the information you are using can be found:** (Roach 12) or (“MLA” 4).
  - Note that using the author’s last name means that a reader could immediately find out more about that source by looking at your Works Cited where the source would be listed by the author’s last name.
  - If you have used the author’s name in your sentence—just list the page number: (12).
  - If your source does not list its author and is therefore not listed by the author’s last name in your Works Cited, use the first word of the Works Cited entry in your in-text citation: (“Style” 12).
  - If a source has two authors, include both authors’ names in the in-text citation (Roach and Anderson 12).
  - If a source has more than two authors, use the first author’s last name followed by “et al.” (a Latin abbreviation meaning “and others”); be sure to include the period after the second word (Roach et al. 12).
  - Because web pages don’t have fixed page numbers, you won't include a page number in the parenthetical citation. However, when a web page you are citing has explicitly numbered paragraphs, use the paragraph number to identify a specific location. Put the abbreviation “par.” for paragraph or “pars.” for paragraphs between the author’s name and paragraph number, and a comma immediately after the name or title: (Harris, par. 5) or (*Victorian*, pars. 2-3). The section or chapter number can also be used (when available) to identify a specific location: (Roth sec. 6) or Roth, ch.1). In audio and video recordings, you should cite the relevant time (00:03:16-17).
  - Some e-readers don’t show page numbers but do show locations. In this case use “loc.” for location and followed by the location number shown on your e-reader. For example, a citation of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* read on a Kindle would look like this (Stoker Chapter 12).
  - If you find an article in pdf format, cite the article page numbers as you would any other article (Roach 12). If you use an article in html format, cite it as you would any other web page, using the paragraph number (Harris, par. 5).
If there are multiple works by the same author, you need to help the reader determine which one you are citing by using both the author’s name, a comma, and a word from the appropriate title: (Roach, “MLA” 5).

The idea is that the in-text citation is a quick index to the additional information a reader could find in your Works Cited. Your in-text citation should send the reader directly to one Works Cited entry.

With the page number a reader looking at one of your sources could easily find the exact portion of the source you used in your essay (particularly important if you were using one page of a 600 page book). Keep track of the exact page you are quoting from or referring to. *Making up page numbers is a form of academic misconduct.*

If you are borrowing from the same source in succession in the same paragraph, and no other source is used, you may give a full in-text citation after the last time you use the source. However, be careful. Avoid this technique if it creates any confusion about what source you use when. Make sure it is clear when you start and stop using the source. Introducing a source when you begin using it (such as by noting a name or publication title) is often essential for clarity. See pages 124-126 in the *MLA Handbook* for more examples on how to handle repeated use of a source.
Citing Sources

Keys to Quotation Integration

• All quotations (word for word sections taken from another source marked off by quotation marks) must be accompanied by an in-text citation with a period following. Possible sentence patterns:

  o Beginning of sentence introduces “word for word quote” (in-text citation).
  o “Quote,” speaker identified (in-text citation).
  o Discussion leads up to “selected quoted passage” that you then continue to discuss (in-text citation).
  o Sentence uses “a longer selected quoted passage with many words” and the continued sentence or a next sentence highlights “small phrase from quote” to help argument (in-text citation).
    ▪ The chairman said “abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz” (in-text citation). In referring to the issue at hand as “xyz,” the chairman goes against his original position on the issue, confirming that paraphrased abc simply isn’t true.
  o Sentence that includes paraphrase or summary (in-text citation).

• Ellipses (…) should not be used at the beginning or end of a quote. Ellipses denote that text is missing, but it is already understood that you are taking a quote from something that has text before and after. You should only use ellipses if you have omitted certain words in the middle of the quote.
  o Not: Dr. X says “. . .the important thing is that y is z” (143).
  o Not: Dr. X says “the important thing is that y is z . . .” (143).

• Quotations should be relevant to your point and accurately stated.

• Quotations should be carefully selected. Great attention should be given to where you begin and end a quotation.

• Quotations should not be overused. The essay is yours.

• Block quotes: If a quote takes up over four lines of your essay, you need to block it off by indenting the entire quote one-half inch. Because the quote is marked off in a block and is easily recognizable as material taken from another source, blocked quotes do not need quotation marks. Block quotes do need in-text citations. Block quotes, like the rest of the text remain in double space.
  o X goes on to suggest that:
    quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote (143)

• Most importantly, quotations should not stand alone. A quotation says somebody else is speaking in your essay. Make sure it is clear who is speaking and why. Also, don’t leave the interpretation of the quotation or how you are seeing the relevance/importance of the information up to your reader. It is your job to fully integrate the quotation: introduce the quotation, identify the speaker, re-present the information, show how you are thinking about it, explain the importance of your conclusions based on the new evidence, etc. Your “sandwiching” of a quotation is especially important when you include a long quotation. Your text should dominate.
• To integrate your quotations and avoid “quote bombs” consider the following techniques:

  ❖ **INTRODUCE THE QUOTATION:** Help set up that someone else is speaking and what the context is for what they have to say
    - In the article “ABC,” x argues that “quote” (in-text citation).
    - Though I have said y, x claims “quote” (in-text citation).
    - Yet, in her book *LMNOP*, x maintains “quote” (in-text citation).
    - X complicates the matter when he writes, “quote” (in-text citation).

  ❖ **IDENTIFY THE SPEAKER:** Help show who is speaking and why it is important they speak or what credentials they bring that add credibility
    - X who wrote the recent “Abcd” is convinced that “quote” (in-text citation).
    - X, writer of the famed biography about W, suggests “quote” (in-text citation).
    - As the prominent philosopher X puts it “quote” (in-text citation).

  ❖ **INTERPRET THE INFORMATION:** Help readers understand the evidence
    - In other words, x believes . . .
    - X is insisting that . . .
    - Clearly, x is making the point that . . .
    - The essence of x’s argument is . . .

  ❖ **INVESTIGATE THE CONTENT:** Help readers get deeper in the evidence and focus in on what’s important
    - X’s claim that “abcdefg” is mistaken because . . .
    - By focusing on “qr,” x overlooks the fact that . . .

  ❖ **INCORPORATE QUOTATION INTO YOUR ARGUMENT:** Help bring it back to your argument/ideas
    - X’s claim is just one more example of . . .
    - X helps prove, then, that . . .
    - Such an understanding only demonstrates further . . .

  ❖ **INTRODUCE AND IDENTIFY:**
    - According to Dr. W, the most prominent writer about Y, the Z of ABC is “efgh” (in-text citation).

  ❖ **INTERPRET AND INVESTIGATE:**
    - Basically, W is saying paraphrased efgh (in-text citation). W’s view that “ef” is important because . . . .

  ❖ **INCORPORATE:**
Furthermore, by focusing on “gh” W confirms my claim that . . .