What is MLA Style?

Modern Language Association (MLA) style is one of several styles for academic citations. It is used in the humanities, especially English. The examples in this guide cover the more common sources only. For more detailed information, refer to the *MLA Handbook*, 8th ed. available in the library at call number LB 2369.G53 2016.

The following pages explain how to acknowledge the sources you use when writing essays. There are two places in the essay where citations of sources are required.

1. In the body of the essay, you acknowledge your source at the end of the sentence containing the quotation or reference to another author's works. We refer to these end-of-sentence citations as in-text citations.
2. At the end of the essay, after the last page, create a list of all of the sources mentioned in the essay. When using MLA Style, this list is entitled Works Cited. Do not put quotation marks around this phrase, and do not underline or italicize it. See last page of this handout for a sample Works Cited.
3. See MLA web site at style.mla.org for instructions on formatting research papers.

Works Cited

- Double-space the Works Cited.
- Use hanging indentation format. With this format, the first line of each entry starts at the left margin, but the second and any subsequent lines in each entry are indented one-half inch from left margin. In MS Word (PC) use Page Layout > Paragraph > Special > Hanging (*MLA Handbook* 112).
- Alphabetize entries by the author’s last name or, if there is no author, by title, ignoring initial articles such as A, An, or The (*MLA Handbook* 115).
- Reverse the author’s name for alphabetizing, but otherwise give the author’s name as it appears in the source.
- If there are two or more entries by the same author(s), give the name(s) in the first entry, and then use three hyphens in place of the name(s) in the following entry or entries; alphabetize the entries by title (*MLA Handbook* 113).
- Capitalize the first, the last and all significant words of a title and subtitle regardless of how they are capitalized in your source (*MLA Handbook* 67).
- Italicize titles and subtitles for works published independently such as books or journals; use quotation marks for works published only as part of another work, e.g. essay in a book or article in a journal (*MLA Handbook* 68).
• When giving a URL, copy it in full from your Web browser, but omit http://. When possible, cite a DOI (digital object identifier) instead of a URL. If DOI is unavailable, try to find a stable URL or Permalink number (MLA Handbook 110).

• If two or more publishers are named in the source and they seem equally responsible for the work, cite each of them, separating the names with a forward slash (/) (MLA Handbook 40).

In-Text Citations (also known as Parenthetical Citations)

1. When you incorporate another’s words, facts or ideas, whether in a direct quotation or by paraphrasing, you need to insert a brief parenthetical acknowledgement. Give the author’s last name and page(s) of the source. If the author’s name appears in the sentence, you may omit it from the in-text citation. For the first mention of the author, use the full name. Use just the last name in subsequent references.

   Regarding the knowledge of skills of the medication profession in the last eighteenth century, George Grinnell observes that “disease often outpaced the expertise and medical techniques in the period (MLA Handbook 32).

   Paraphrase – with and without author’s name in sentence.

   In the late eighteenth century, there was a lack of knowledge about the illnesses that physicians were called upon to treat (Grinnell 32).

   Grinnell notes that doctors of the time were unaware of the causes and treatments of many diseased that affected their patients (32).

   Place the in-text citation “when possible, where there is a natural pause in the text. A parenthetical citation that directly follows a quotation is placed after the closing quotation mark” (MLA Handbook 54).

2. For web resources, unless the pages or paragraphs are numbered, use only the author’s last name. If no author is indicated, use the first word of the title (56).

3. “If you borrow more than once from the same source within a single paragraph and no another source intervenes, you may give a single parenthetical reference after the last borrowing” (MLA Handbook 124).

4. In citing classic verse, plays and poems, omit page numbers and cite by division (act, scene, canto, book, part) and line, with periods separating various numbers. Titles of famous works are often abbreviated such as (Ham. 1.5.35-37).
MLA’s system of citing allows you to cite any source you use during your research assignment.

Each entry in the Works Cited is made up of some elements, such as author, title, and publication details, given in a certain order. There are optional elements that may be included in the Works Cited entry depending on what information is provided by the resource being used. This may include volume and issue numbers for journal articles or the URL for a web site.

When the source forms part of a larger whole, the larger whole can be thought of as a container that holds the source. Examples of containers include a book that is a collection of essays, a periodical which holds articles, or a website that contains articles and postings.

A container may be nested in a second container such as a Database that contains journal holdings or Netflix which contains a television series.

Elements appear in the order shown by the template below. Not all of the template boxes need to be filled. Elements are omitted if not relevant to work being documented. Elements are followed by the punctuation mark shown. End the citation with a period.

THE CORE ELEMENTS (TEMPLATE)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Author.</td>
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<td>Title of source.</td>
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<td>Title of container,</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Other contributors,</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Publication date,</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Location.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Journal Articles

**Core Elements:** Author. Title of Source. Title of Container, Number, Publication Date, Location. Title of 2nd container, Location.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format:</th>
<th>Last name, First name Middle name or initial. “Title of Article.” <em>Title of Journal</em>, volume number (vol.), issue number (no.), Publication Date (month as well as year if available), Pages of article. <em>Database</em>, Location (URL).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-text citation:</strong></td>
<td>(Author Last Name Page Number or Numbers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-text citation:</strong></td>
<td>(Lovesey 375)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Notes:</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- For Location, use DOI if available. If not, try to locate the stable UR (sometimes called the Permalink).
- Title of book within the article title is italicized.
- In the in-text citation, do not put a comma between author name and page number. |

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<tr>
<th>Format:</th>
<th>Last name, First name Middle name or initial. “Title of Article.” <em>Title of Journal</em>, volume number (vol.), issue number (no.), Publication Date (month as well as year if available), Location (URL)</th>
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<td><strong>In-text citation:</strong></td>
<td>(Keyes)</td>
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<th>Format:</th>
<th>Last name, First name Middle name or initial. “Title of Article.” <em>Title of Journal</em>, Publication Date (day &amp; month as well as year if available), Location (URL).</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-text citation:</strong></td>
<td>(Linden)</td>
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</table>
Journal article: Print
p. 30

Format: Last name, First name Middle name or initial. "Title of Article." Title of Journal, volume number (vol.), issue number (no.), Publication Date (month as well as year if available), Location (pages of article).

Example:

In-text citation: (Jefferess 390)

Newspaper article: Retrieved from internet p. 48

Format:
Last name, First name Middle name or initial (if available). "Title of Article." Title of Newspaper, Publication Date (day and month as well as year), Location (URL).

Example:

In-text: ("Readings")

Note:
❖ If no author, use first word or two of title for in-text citation.

Newspaper article: Print

Format:
Last name, First name Middle name or initial (if available). "Title of Article." Title of Newspaper, Publication Date (day and month as well as year), Location (pages of article).

Example:

In-text citation: (Seymour A1)

Government Publication: Retrieved from internet

Format:
Author (city or country, Dept. name). Title of Report. Publisher, Publication Date, Location (URL). Date of Access.

Example:

In text: (Kelowna Planning and Development Services Dept.)

Notes:
❖ MLA suggests including a long author name in the text rather than using an in-test citation. Example below.
❖ According to the statistics provided by Kelowna’s Planning and Development Services Dept., the city’s population was 89,465 in 1996.
**Books, Book Chapters, & Related Items**

**Core Elements:** Author. Title of Source. Publisher, Publication Date.

<table>
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<th>Format:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last name, First name Middle name or initial. <em>Title of Book</em>. Publisher,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication Date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-text citation: (Author Last Name Page Numbers)</td>
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<td><strong>Example:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>In-text citation: (Grinnell 32)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Author Last Name, First Name or Initial, and Author First Name or Initial Last Name. <em>Title</em>. Publisher, Publication Date.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>In-text citation: (Chambers and Gattrell 52-53)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Note:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>❖ Arrange the authors in the order in which they are presented in the work.</td>
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</table>

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<th>Format:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Last name, First name Middle name or initial, et al. <em>Title of Book</em>. Publisher,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication Date.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-text citation: (Gillis et al. 27)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Note:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>❖ Only the first author’s name is included. Et al. takes the place of the rest of the authors’ names.</td>
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<th>Format:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author Last Name, First Name or Initial. “Title of Chapter.” <em>Title of Book</em>, Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributor (editor), Version, Publisher, Publication Date, Location (pages of chapter), <em>Internet Site</em>, Location (URL).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong></td>
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</table>

In-text citation: (Clarke 28)

Electronic book from a database

**Format:**

Author Last Name, First Name or Initial. *Title*. Publisher, Publication Date, *Title of Container* (Database), Location (URL).

**Example:**


In-text citation: (Lawrence 53)

**Note:**

◆ UP is abbreviation for University Press.

Edited book/ Editor as Author (This examples has multiple editors)

**Format:**

Editor Last Name, First Name or Initial, editor (or editors). *Title*. Publisher. Publication Date.

**Example:**


In-text citation: (Crane et al. vii)

**Notes:**

◆ This is a source with three editors. They selected and edited all of the essays that are included in the book.

◆ If you are citing one of the essays in the book, you should instead cite the name of the author who wrote the particular essay cited.

Chapter in an edited book

**Format:**

Author Last Name, First Name or Initial. “Title of Chapter.” *Title of Book*, editor (or editors), Publisher, Publication Date, Location (pages).

**Example:**


In-text citation: (MacArthur 70)

**Notes:**

◆ Editors’ names are both arranged in first name last name order.

◆ Sometimes you will need to cite an item that has another title as part of the title. In this case, the book title *Thoughts Abroad* is italicized within the chapter title which is printed in regular type and enclosed by quotation marks.
**Book with no author or editor**
(This example shows an edition number)

```
Format:
Title of Book. Version (if applicable). Name of Publisher Publication Date.

Example:
In-text citation: (MLA Handbook 117)
```

**Corporate Author**

```
Format:
Author. Title of Book. Publisher, Publication Date.

Example:
In-text citation: (Okanagan Writers' League 65)
```

**Poem in an Anthology**

```
Format:
Author Last Name, Author First Name or Initial. “Title of Poem.” Title of Anthology, editor (or editors), Version (if applicable), Publisher, Publication Date, Location (pages).

Example:
In-text citation:
When describing angels, Page writes, "Perhaps only a dog could accept them wholly, / be happy to follow at their heels / and bark and romp with them in the green fields" (59-61).

Notes:
- When inserting poetry in an essay, use a forward slash at the end of each line of poetry. If quoted line in poetry starts with a capital letter, leave it in upper case, even in the middle of the sentence.
- If the book is a second or revised edition, place this information after the editors, or after the title if no editors.
```

**Dictionary entry:**

```
Format:
Author (if applicable). “Title of Entry.” Title of Book.  Version (if applicable), Publisher, Publication Date, Location (page).

Example:
In-text citation: ("Ideology" 758)

Notes:
- If published electronically, include URL after page number.
```
Entry in an online reference work p. 35

Format:
Author (if applicable). “Title of Entry.” Title of Book, Other Contributors (such as editor if applicable), Version (if applicable), Publisher, Publication Date, Container (Title of Online Resource), Location (URL).

Example:

In-text citation: (“Keats, John”)

Notes:
❖ In in-text citation, give full title if brief or shortened version of one or two words.
❖ The title of the online resource is an example of a 2nd container.

Entry from Oxford English Dictionary (Online)

Format:
“Title of Entry.” Specific definition indication. Title of Book. Publisher, Publication Date, Location (URL).

Example:

In-text citation: (“Passion,” Entry 1, def. 6a)

Thesis or Dissertation: Retrieved from Online Repository. (example on MLA web site)

Format:
Author Last Name, First Name. Title of Thesis. Date of Publication. Name of Institution, Description of Work. Name of Database or Repository retrieved from, Location (URL or DOI).

Example:

In-text citation: (Eikenaar 65)

Note:
❖ Example of DOI as a location.
Graphic Novel

Format:
Author Last Name, First Name or Initial. *Title of Book*. Other Contributors (such as Adaptation or Translator if applicable). Series Number (if applicable), Publisher, Date of Publication.

Example:

In-text citation: (Yoshida 121)

Custom Course Materials
Reprinted from another source

Format:
Author Last Name, First Name or Initial. “Title of Article.” *Title of Book*, other contributors (such as editor), Publisher, Publication Date, Location (pages).

Example:

In-text citation: (Scudder 3)

Government Report: Print

Format:
Author (city or country, Dept. name). *Title of Report*. Publisher, Publication Date.

Example:

In text: (Canada. Health Canada 12)

WEB DOCUMENTS

Core Elements: Author. *Title of Source*. *Title of Container*, Publisher, Publication Date, Location. Optional Element – Date of Access.

Web page as part of Web Site

Format:
Author. “Title of Web page, posting or article.” *Title of Web Site*, Publisher (if applicable), Publication Date, Location (URL). Date of Access.

Example:

In-text citation: (Rader)

Note:
- Include date of access for online resources. They may move or change.
Web page with no author
Format:
"Title of Web page, posting or article." *Title of Web Site*, Publisher (if applicable), Publication Date, Location (URL). Date of Access.

Example:
In-text citation: ("CBC Poetry Prize")

Blog posting
Format:
Author Last Name, First Name or Initial (or Username). "Title of Blog Post." *Title of Blog*, Publication Date, URL. Date of Access.

Example:
In-text citation: (Fleming)

MEDIA
Core Elements: Author. Title of Source. Title of Container, Publisher, Publication Date, Location.

Streaming video (such as YouTube)
Format:
Author Last Name, First Name or Initial (if available). "Title." *Internet Site*, Publisher (if applicable), Publication Date, Location (URL).

Example:
In-text citation: (Grekul)

Audio clip (such as a podcast): Retrieved from the internet
Format:
Author Last Name, First Name or Initial (if available). "Title." *Internet Site*. Publisher (if applicable), Publication Date, Location (URL).

Example:
In-text citation: ("New")

Social Media: Facebook
Format:
Author Last Name, First Name or Initial (if available). "Title." *Internet Site*. Publisher (if applicable), Publication Date.

Example:
In-text citation: (UBC Okanagan Library)
Social Media: Twitter

Format:
Author Last Name, First Name or Initial (if available). “Title.” Internet Site.
Publisher (if applicable), Publication Date, Location (URL).

Example:
Thorne, Laura. “Can your social media activities get you in trouble?” Twitter, 18 April 2013, 9:09 p.m., twitter.com/LauraThorne14/status/325038376610844672.

In-text citation: In the main text of the essay, a tweet is cited in its entirety.

Film: Writing about film in general

Format:
Title of film. Other contributors (if applicable), Distributor, Date of Release.

Example:

In text citation: (Hamlet)

Film: Focusing on contribution of person.

Format:
Title of film. Other contributors (if applicable), Distributor, Date of Release.

Example:

In-text citation: (Gibson)

Visual Art: Image retrieved from the internet

Format:
Creator's Last Name, First Name or Initial. Title of Work. Internet Site, Publication Date, Location (URL). Date of Access.

Example:

In-text citation: (Lee)

Visual Art: Image retrieved from a database

Format:
Creator's Last Name, First Name or Initial. Title of Work. Title of Database, Publication Date, Location (URL).

Example:

In-text citation: (Monet)
Visual Art: Image retrieved from a web site

Format:
Creator's Last Name, First Name or Initial (if available). Title of Work. Internet Site, Publication Date, Location (URL). Date of Access.

Example:

In-text citation: (Blake)

Visual Art: Image Exhibited in Gallery

Format:
Creator's Last Name, First Name or Initial (if available). Title of Work. Publication Date, Location (Name of Gallery).

Example:
Johnston, Byron, and Bryan Ryley. Here and There II. 2006, U of British Columbia FINA Gallery.

In-text citation: (Johnston and Ryley)

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION & NOTES

Interview conducted by researcher

Format:
Last name First Name or Initial. Type of Communication. Name of Receiver. Date.

Example:

In text citation: (Milton)

Telephone Conversation

Format:
Last name First Name or Initial. Type of Communication. Name of Receiver. Date.

Example:

In-text citation: (Stouck)

Note:
- Personal communication may be cited in the running text of your paper instead of using an in-text citation (“In a telephone conversation between Dr. Stouck and the author on June 22, 2016...”
**PowerPoint Posted to Connect**

**Format:**
Author Last Name, First Name or Initial. “Title of PowerPoint.” *Container*, Publisher, Publication Date, URL, Optional Element – Descriptive Term.

**Example:**

In-text citation: (Reeves)

**E-mail Message p. 29**

**Format:**
Author Last Name, First Name or Initial. “Title (subject line of e-mail.” Name of receiver, Date sent.

**Example:**
Shearer, K. “Public Poetry Reading Aug 1.” J. Gattrell, 7 July 2013.

In-text citation: (Shearer)

**Class Lecture p. 52**

**Format:**
Author Last Name, First Name or Initial. “Title of Lecture.” Title of Class, Date, Location. Optional Element – descriptor.

**Example:**

In-text citation: (Senger)
Works Cited


Johnston, Byron, and Bryan Ryley. Here and There II. 2006, U of British Columbia FINA Gallery.


