

MLA FORMATTING AND STYLE GUIDE

The Basics

MLA (Modern Language Association) style is most commonly used to write papers and cite sources within the liberal arts and humanities. MLA style specifies guidelines for formatting manuscripts and using the English language in writing. MLA style also provides writers with a system for referencing their sources through parenthetical citation in their essays and Works Cited pages.

According to MLA style, your paper should be typed and double-spaced; and it should use a legible font like Times New Roman with a standard font size of 12 points. Margins should be set to one inch on all sides, and only one space should be left after periods or other punctuation marks. Other basic aspects of the MLA style are:

- Indent the first line of a paragraph one-half inch from the left margin.
- Create a header that numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. When putting the page number (header) in the upper right-hand of each page, it should include author's last name followed by page number.
- Use italics throughout your essay for the titles of longer works and, only when absolutely necessary, for providing emphasis.
- Do not make a title page for your paper unless specifically requested.
- In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date. Again, be sure to use double-spaced text. (See example below.)

Please note: this guide has been updated to reflect the changes of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th Edition (2009).

Citing the Most Common Sources

Authors

- An item with **more than three** authors can be listed by the first author's name, followed by a comma and then the Latin abbreviation et al. (Penner, Jane N., et al.).

Titles

- Capitalize all important words – first word of the title, first word of the subtitle (right after the colon), and all major words. Do not capitalize words such as: a, an, the, against, between, in, of, to, and, but, for, and so, **unless** they are the first word of the title or subtitle.
- Whole book titles are in *italics* while article or chapter titles are put in “quotation marks.”
- Leave out initial articles from titles of newspapers, magazines, and journals (*Lancet*, not *The Lancet*, *New York Times*, not *The New York Times*).

- Titles of books are taken from the title page (first printed page of the book) and not from the cover. If the title on the title page starts with any of the initial articles “A,” “An,” or “The,” include it in your citation but be sure to alphabetize by the second word.

Dates

- For books, just use the year.
- For newspaper and magazines articles, use Day Month Year format (17 July 2007).

Abbreviations

- Abbreviate all months except for May, June, and July.
- University Press in the name of a publisher may be shortened to UP.

Page numbers

- Do **not** put p. or pp. when citing page numbers.
- Show page numbers as completely as you can (you will need to view the PDF version to find complete pagination information for some articles). Some databases will have article citations that only give the first page number, in which case put a “+” after the start page (67+).

Books

There are four parts to each reference: (1) author, (2) title, (3) publication information, and (4) medium of access. Each part is followed by a period and one space.

One Author

La Naour, Jean-Yves. *The Living Unknown Soldier: A Story of Grief and the Great War*. New York: Metropolitan, 2004. Print.

Two or Three Authors

McClendon, Ruth, and Leslie Kadis. *Reconciling Relationships and Preserving the Family Business: Tools for Success*. New York: Haworth, 2004. Print.

Edited Book

Kinkead, Joyce A., and Jeanette Harris, eds. *Writing Centers in Context: Twelve Case Studies*. Urbana: NCTE, 1993. Print.

Electronic Books

Treat **electronic** books like a print book for the author, title, publisher, and date information, and add “Web” for web access.

One Author

Baker, Jim. *Lawful Order: A Case Study of Correctional Crisis and Reform*. New York: Garland, 1998. *NetLibrary*. Genesee Com. Coll. Lib., NY. Web. 4 Aug. 2004.

Edited Book

Youngblood-Coleman, Denise and Mary Ann Azevedo, eds. *Burundi 2007 Country Review: Political Conditions*. Houston, TX: CountryWatch, Inc., 2007. *CountryWatch*.
CountryWatch.com. Genesee Com. Coll. Lib., NY. Web. 27 July 2007.

Periodical Articles in Print

References for periodicals, like those for books, have four major parts: (1) author, (2) title, (3) publication information, and (4) medium of access, each followed by a period.

Newspaper Article

James, Caryn. “Adding the Power of TV to the Power of the Printed Page.” *New York Times* 21 Nov. 1996, late ed.: C15. Print.

Magazine Article

Updike, John. “Colonoscopy.” *Poetry* July/Aug. 2006: 289. Print.

Article in a Scholarly Journal That Uses Only Issue Numbers

Dressler, William W., and James R. Bnidon. “The Health Consequences of Cultural Consonance: Cultural Dimensions of Lifestyle, Social Support, and Arterial Blood Pressure in an African American Community.” *American Anthropologist* 102 (2000): 244-60. Print.

Article in a Scholarly Journal with More Than One Series

Meuter, Matthew L., et al. "Self-Service Technologies: Understanding Customer Satisfaction with Technology- Based Service Encounters." *Journal of Marketing* 64.3 (2000): 50-66. Print.

Internet Sources

The basic format for citing an Internet source is:

Author, "Title of Article or Page Within a Website." *Name of Website or Database*. Name of Organization Responsible for the Website. Publication date (or last update). Web. Access date.

Note 1: Any one website may not provide all of the listed items; you can't put what you don't have – use the MLA abbreviations for any missing information [N.p.= No publisher, N. pag.= No page number, and n.d. = no date given].

Note 2: Begin a citation with the author's name. If no author is given, begin the citation with the title of the web page or name of the website. (The first example below shows an entry for a page without an author.)

Note 3: Leave out the name of the organization responsible for the website if it is the same as the name of the website or database.

Note 4: No URL needs to be given, simply "Web" as the medium of access.

Citing an Entire Website

The Purdue OWL Family of Sites. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2008.

Web. 2 Jan. 2013.

Maguire, Sharon. "Training Your New Puppy or Dog." *Dog Breed Info Center*. 2007. Web. 16 Feb. 2007.

Citing a Page on a Website

“How to Make Vegetarian Chili.” *eHow*. Demand Media, n.d. Web. 2 Jan. 2013.

Quade, Alex. “Elite Team Rescues Troops behind Enemy Lines.” *CNN.com*. Cable News Network, 19 Mar. 2007. Web. 14 May 2008.

Article from an Online Database

Langhamer, Claire. “Love and Courtship in Mid-Twentieth-Century England.” *Historical Journal* 50.1 (2007): 173-96. *ProQuest*. Web. 2 Jan. 2013.

Article in an Electronic Journal

Morken, Gunnar, and Olav M. Linaker. “Seasonal Variations of Violence in Norway.” *American Journal of Psychiatry* 157 (2000): 1674-1678. Web. 20 July 2007.

Images/Works of Art Accessed Online

Currin, John. *Blond Angel*. 2001. Indianapolis Museum of Art. IMA: It's My Art. Web. 2 Jan. 2013.

Lange, Dorothea. *The Migrant Mother*. 1936. Prints and Photographs Div., Lib. of Cong. *Dorothea Lange: Photographer of the People*. Web. 2 Jan. 2013.

Film/Video Recording Accessed Online

The Great Train Robbery. Dir. Edward Porter. Thomas Edison, 1903. *Internet Archive*. Web. 5 June 2008.

Parenthetical (In-Text) Citation

The MLA style of parenthetical citation includes the author's last name and page number(s). Parenthetical citations do *not* include the word "page" or "pages" or the abbreviations "p." or "pp."— just the page numbers.

Direct Quotations and Paraphrases

A page number is **always** included, whether material is copied word for word (presented in quotation marks) or paraphrased (presented in your own words, without quotation marks) from a source. If an electronic source does not provide page numbers, leave them out. Some electronic sources (e.g., General OneFile) will include a PDF version of the text. If so, use the page number from the PDF version of the document.

In in-text citations, give the author's last name and the page number of the source **within the sentence (before the period)**. For in-text citations that occur after long quoted material that is indented, the citation comes after the sentence and after the period.

Work with One Author

a.) Dust plays a larger role in our lives than we realize (Holmes 5).

OR

b.) Holmes points out that, “between 1 and 3 billion tons of desert dust fly up into the sky annually” (5).

Work with Two or Three Authors

a.) Many changes occurred during the Renaissance (Kerrigan and Smith 57).

OR

b.) Kerrigan and Smith found that many changes occurred during the Renaissance (57).

If a source is not listed here, or if you have questions, you can find more information in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (7th ed., 2009). One is available at the main desk of the Cannon Memorial library. Help is also available at the SLU's online library at <http://saintleolibrary.cloudaccess.net/citation-help.html>, or you can visit the MLA website at <http://www.mla.org>.

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ENG 002

4 January 2005

Plastic Girls

Ask a child who the president of the United States is, and you are bound to get a multitude of replies ranging from the accurate to the hysterical. Ask a child who Barbie is, and you are sure to a get...

Works Cited

- “Babes in Toyland...What’s a Feminist Mom to Do?” *Herizons* 31 Jan. 1997. Web. 9 Dec. 2004.
- “Barbie in the Nineties.” *Barbie: The Image of Us All*. Web. 20 Nov. 2004.
- Borger, Gloria. “Barbie’s Newest Values.” *US News and World Report* 1 Dec. 1997: 40. Print.
- Cunningham, Kamy. “Barbie Doll Culture and the American Waistland.” *Symbolic Interaction* 16.1 (1993): 79-83. Print.
- McQuade, Donald, and Christine McQuade. “Figuring the Body.” *Seeing and Writing*. Eds. Donald McQuade and Christine McQuade. Boston: Bedford, 2000. 230-321. Print.
- Norton, Kevin I., et al. “Ken and Barbie at Life Size.” *Sex Roles* 34 (1996): 287-94. Print.
- Rand, Erica. *Barbie’s Queer Accessories*. Durham: Duke UP, 1995. Print.
- Rogers, Mary F. *Barbie Culture*. London: Sage, 1999. Print.
- Saltzberg, Elayne, and Joan C. Chrisler. “The pursuit of the Perfect Female Body.” *Women: A Feminist Perspective*. Ed. Jo Freeman. Mountain View: Mayfield, 1993. 301-17. Print.
- “The Secret Lives of Barbie: Bad Girl.” *ABC News*. 30 Oct. 2002. Web. 2 Dec. 2004.
- “The Secret Lives of Barbie: Career Girl.” *ABC News*. 30 Oct. 2002. Web. 2 Dec. 2004.