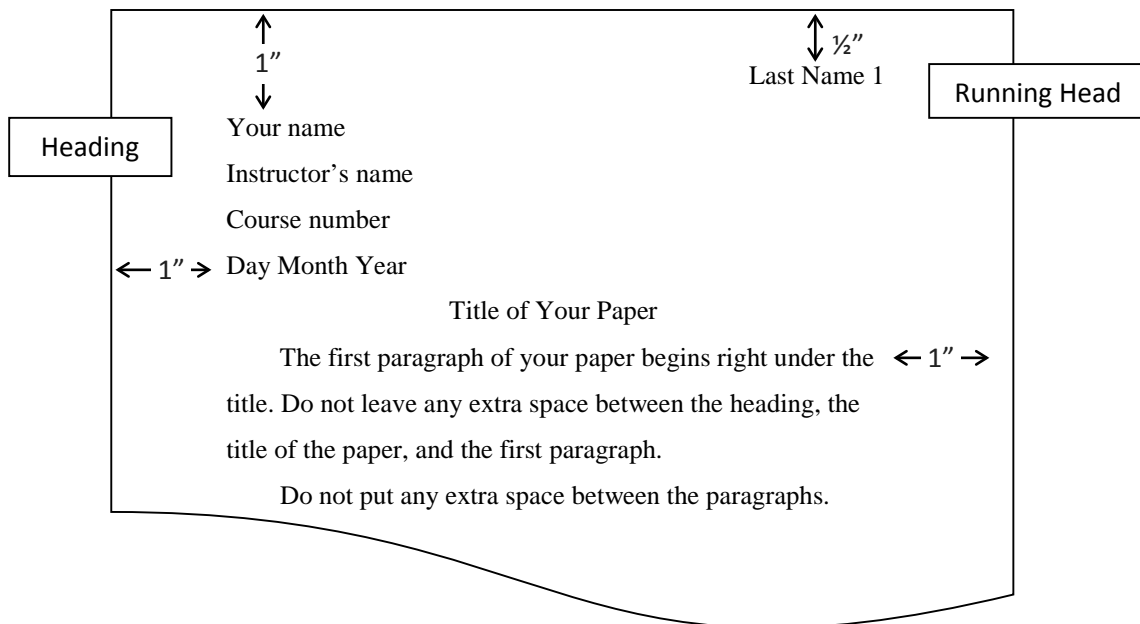


Please refer to the following information and examples for guidance in using sources and for formatting a paper in the Modern Language Association of America (MLA) style. Consult the eighth edition of the *MLA Handbook* and the MLA Style Center (style.mla.org) for additional information. Copies of this handout are available in the Nittany Success Center and in the library. An online *MLA Quick Citation Guide* is also available from the Citation Guides link in the Research section on the Penn State University Libraries' home page (libraries.psu.edu).



Formatting a Research Paper *style.mla.org*

The information presented below reflects the most common formatting for a research paper. Always check with your instructor for specific requirements.

1. Use one inch (1") top, bottom, and side margins.
2. Double space everything, including block quotes and citations in the works-cited list.
3. Choose an easily readable font and size, such as 12-point Times New Roman.
4. Justify only on the left side of the paper.
5. Include a **running head** (header) with your last name and page number in the upper right-hand corner. Check with your instructors to find out their preference for numbering the first page.
6. Center the title and capitalize all the main words.
7. Indent the beginning of each paragraph using one tab space (1/2"). Do not leave extra space between paragraphs.
8. The *Works Cited* page follows the text of the paper, beginning on a new page and continuing the page numbering of your paper.
9. Use one space after a period, although you may want to check your instructor's preference.
10. Check style.mla.org for guidance on setting up tables and illustrations.

Citing Sources and Plagiarism

MLA Handbook, pp. 6-10

In scholarship, sources are not selected to fill an arbitrary quota (e.g. “find at least five, peer-reviewed journal articles”), but are chosen for their ability to act as compelling evidence in your papers and projects. Citing evidence, therefore, is not busy work. It performs three essential and related functions:

- **It establishes credibility.** Citations help readers see the breadth and depth of your research. Readers can also see if you are using appropriate evidence and if you are using that evidence appropriately.
- **It acts as a map.** Scholarship is an ongoing conversation. New findings and ideas build on previous findings and ideas; it’s how a field of study advances. Citations make those connections explicit for your reader. Not only does this make you more credible, it helps interested researchers track down your evidence for use in their research.
- **It gives credit.** Acknowledging those that contribute to the conversation is an essential function of scholarship. It illustrates the debt your research owes to the research that precedes it.

Citing sources is often reduced to “if you don’t give proper credit to the words and ideas of others, it’s plagiarism.” There are many types of plagiarism; such as using someone else’s work and submitting it as your own, failing to appropriately acknowledge others when quoting or paraphrasing, or presenting another’s line of thinking as your own. Refer to the *MLA Handbook* for additional guidance on how to avoid plagiarism.

General Guidelines for Authors and Titles

MLA Handbook, pp. 61-75

1. Refer to the author by his or her full name the first time it is mentioned in the text, but by last name only thereafter, unless you have two authors with the same last name. In that case, use both the first and last names consistently.
2. Titles of books, plays, magazines, journals, newspapers, movies, television shows, albums, and Web sites are to be *italicized*.
3. Titles of journal articles, short stories, essays, poems, and songs are in quotation marks.
4. Capitalize the first and last words and all main words in the titles of your sources (e.g. “Eight Days a Week,” *Great Expectations*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Star-Ledger*, *The Simpsons*, “The Raven”).

Use of Numbers

MLA Handbook, pp. 92-93

1. Spell out numbers that can be written in one or two words (four, thirty-five); use numerals to represent longer numbers (110, 5½).
2. Do not begin a sentence with a numeral; either spell it out or revise your sentence.
3. Following are examples of the format for inclusive numbers, including page numbers in your works-cited list. The second number is given in full through ninety-nine and when necessary for clarity.

13-35	83-110	101-07	191-217	1,955-59
55-99	625-884	125-52	816-1,954	1,425-922

Works Cited

MLA Handbook, pp. 20-53, 102-116

The eighth edition of the *MLA Handbook* reflects a significant change from previous editions in terms of citing your sources. In the past, you were provided specific instructions for citing sources according to their format; such as books, journal articles, and newspapers. These specific instructions have been replaced in the eighth edition with a set of principles and a list of core elements.

The **principles** in the eighth edition of the *MLA Handbook* are:

- “Cite simple traits shared by most works” (3).
- “Remember that there is often more than one correct way to document a source” (4).
- “Make your documentation useful to readers” (4).

The **core elements** in the eighth edition of the *MLA Handbook*, shown in the order they should appear in the works-cited list and with the appropriate punctuation, are:

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



From *MLA Handbook* (8th ed.), published by the Modern Language Association (style.mla.org). See last page of this handout for a practice template.

Keep in mind, you will only include those elements that apply to the source you are documenting.

CORE ELEMENTS

1. AUTHOR

MLA Handbook, pp. 21-25, 102-195

Examples:

One author: Bok, Derek.

Two authors: Berg, Maggie, and Barbara K. Seeber.

Three or more authors: von Stumm, Sopie, et al.

Editor: Gallagher, Gary W., editor.

Corporate author: United Nations.

This element ends with a period.

Notes

- Reverse only the first author's name.
- The word editor is no longer abbreviated, as it was in the 7th edition.
- You do not have to repeat the name of an organization that is both the author and the publisher. In those instances, you will begin your entry with the title; the organization will be listed as the publisher.

2. TITLE OF SOURCE

This element ends with a period.

MLA Handbook, pp. 25-29

Titles of books and Web sites are italicized; titles of journal articles are in quotation marks. According to the *MLA Handbook* guideline, use italics for sources that are “self-contained and independent” (25-26) and “quotation marks if the source is part of a larger work” (25). Use a colon between titles and sub-titles.

Examples:

Book title: *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy.*
Journal article: “The Hungry Mind: Intellectual Curiosity Is the Third Pillar of Academic Performance.”
Web site article: “Our History and Mission.”

3. TITLE OF CONTAINER

This element is followed by a comma.

MLA Handbook, pp. 30-36, p. 107

The term *container* is new to the eighth edition and refers to the “larger whole . . . that holds the source” (30). Citations may include more than one container. Titles of containers are usually italicized.

For example, if your source is a poem that appears in a book, the book is the container. If your source is a journal article accessed through a library database, you will cite two containers: the title of the journal and the name of the online database. In that case, you will follow through with all the information about the first container (the version, number, publisher, publication date, and location) before citing the information about the second container.

Examples:

Journal title: *The Georgia Review,*
Web site: *The Donor Sibling Registry,*
Journal article from library database
Container 1 title: *Perspectives on Psychological Science,*
Container 2 title: *Sage Journals Online,*

Notes: Include articles (A, An, The) if they are part of the journal's title. Capitalize these words both in your text and in the works-cited list. This is a change from the 7th edition.

4. OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

This element is followed by a comma.

MLA Handbook, pp. 37-38

You will only need to include this element if your source included other contributors integral to identifying your source, such as directors or translators.

5. VERSION

This element is followed by a comma.

MLA Handbook, pp. 38-39, p. 107

One of the most common uses for this element would be numbered editions of books. You would also include information for works in other media, such as the director's cut for a movie.

Example:

Book: 8th ed.,
Book: Rev. ed.,

6. NUMBER

This element is followed by a comma.

MLA Handbook, pp. 39-40

Include the volume number when citing a book, if you used one volume of a multi-volume set. When citing a journal article, include the volume and the issue number.

Examples:

Book with a version: 2nd ed., vol. 2,*Book:* Vol. 5,*Journal:* vol. 6, no. 6,

Note: If the journal only uses issue numbers, and not volume numbers, you will just use the issue number after the journal title.

7. PUBLISHER

This element is followed by a comma.

MLA Handbook, pp. 40-42, p. 97, pp. 108-109

Use this element when citing a book, but do not include this information for journals, magazines, or newspapers. The publisher of a Web site is often found in the copyright notice at the bottom of the home page.

Use the full name of the publisher, with the following exceptions:

- Omit business words from the publisher's name (such as Company or Co., Corporation or Corp., and Incorporated or Inc.).
- Use the abbreviation UP for University Press.

Examples:

Book: Free Press,
Princeton UP,
U of Toronto P,

Web site: National Aeronautics and Space Administration,

Notes

- The place of publication is no longer included in your citation. This represents a change from the 7th edition.
- Omit the publisher's name when citing a Web site if the title of the site is essentially the same as the publisher.

8. PUBLICATION DATE

This element is followed by a comma.

MLA Handbook, pp. 42-46

Examples:

Book: 2016, *Dated article on Web site:* 28 May 2014,

Journal: 2011, *Magazine article:* 25 Apr. 2007,

Journal with season: Spring 2008, *Newspaper article:* 6 Sept. 1926,

Journal with month: Jan. 2013,

Note: Months are abbreviated in the works-cited list, with the exception of May, June, and July.

9. LOCATION

This element is followed by a period.

MLA Handbook, pp. 46-50, p. 110

For magazine, journal, or newspaper articles, the location refers to the page or page numbers. For online sources, the location is usually indicated by the URL. Copy the URL from your browser, but omit *http//* or *https://*. If your journal article includes a DOI, use that, rather than the URL.

Examples:

Web site: donorsiblingregistry.com/about-dsr/history-and-mission.

Journal article from library database

Container 1 location: 574-88. *Container 2 location:* doi:10.1177/1745691611421204.

Notes

- You will have to click “Undo” if your Word program automatically formats your URL as a hyperlink.
- While the eighth edition recommends including URLs, check with your instructors for their preference.

➤ OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

MLA Handbook, pp. 50-53

Some examples of optional elements include the date of the original publication (for republished sources), the city of publication in certain circumstances, and the date of access if the online work does not include the date it was published.

Internal Documentation (In-text citations, parenthetical citations)

MLA Handbook, pp. 54-58, 75-77, 116-127

Every time you paraphrase or directly quote a source, you *must* give the reader the author’s last name and the page number of the source, either in the tag (introductory) line or in parentheses. Do not use a comma between the author’s name and the page number. Paraphrase wherever possible.

“If you borrow more than once from the same source within a single paragraph and no other source intervenes, you may give a single parenthetical reference after the last borrowing” (*MLA* 124). Keep in mind, “When a source has no page numbers or any other kind of part number, no number should be given in a parenthetical citation” (*MLA* 56).

Author’s name in tag line

“With all the controversy over the college curriculum,” writes Derek Bok, “it is impressive to find faculty members agreeing almost unanimously that teaching students to think critically is the principal aim of undergraduate education” (109).

Authors’ names in parentheses

We begin to think we must always be busy and schedule every minute of our time, but fail to consider that “Research shows that periods of escape from time are actually essential to deep thought, creativity, and problem solving” (Berg and Seeber 26).

More than two authors

Moving from a topic to a research question can be difficult, but keep in mind, “If the writer asks no *question* worth pondering, he can offer no focused answer worth reading” (Booth et al. 45).

Note: If a work has more than two authors, the in-text citation follows the format of the works-cited list. Notice that *et al.*, which means “and others,” ends with a period.

Indirect quotations

Use material from original sources whenever possible. If you need to include a quotation from an indirect source, use the original author's name in the tag line and add *qtd.in* ("quoted in") before the indirect source in the parenthetical citation.

Studying a foreign language in college often results in only superficial understanding; as George Dennis O'Brien puts it, "Enough French to read the menu, not enough to compliment the chef" (qtd. in Bok 43).

In the above example, Bok's book would appear in the works-cited list.

Work listed by title

If there is no author, use the article or book title (or a shortened version of the title, if it is a lengthy title) before the page number. For example, a parenthetical citation to the anonymous article "Tweeting All the Way to the Bank" which appeared in the *Economist* would be formatted as ("Tweeting" 61).

Citing more than one source in a single parenthetical citation

If you wish to cite more than one source, separate the citations with a semicolon.

(Badke 48; Lupton 411-13).

Block quotes – MLA Handbook, pp. 75-79

When you quote more than four typed lines of prose or more than three lines of poetry, set off the quotation by indenting it one tab from the left margin. Long quotations should be introduced with a tag line followed by a colon. Do *not* use quotation marks around the material.

In *Our Underachieving Colleges*, Derek Bok discusses the sequential nature of coursework inherent in most college majors:

An introductory course can acquaint students with the principal subfields of the discipline and the basic concepts and ideas that distinguish the field. Intermediate courses can acquaint students with the methods of the discipline for acquiring and analyzing information. More advanced courses can then apply what has been learned to important problems in the field. Finally, a culminating experience – normally a substantial research paper – will allow students to draw on previous courses and readings to gather and analyze information and ultimately produce a piece of work of their own that demonstrates their ability to explore a problem in depth. (138)

Note: As you can see in the above example, the parenthetical citation follows the ending period of the quotation. There is also a space after this period.

Errors in source material – MLA Handbook, p. 86

If there is an error in the original copy, you may add *sic*, which is Latin for "thus," to assure your readers that the quote is accurate, even with the error. Do not correct the error. Use *sic* in square brackets if it appears within the quote or in parentheses if it appears after the quote. Only use *sic* for directly quoted material, not a paraphrase.

"According to the Transportation Department, the trains where [sic] running late that day."

Shaw admitted, "Nothing can extinguish my interest in Shakespear" (sic).

Ellipsis – MLA Handbook, pp. 80-85

Ellipsis points (three spaced periods) are used to designate that material has been omitted from the source material. These are used *only* with directly quoted material, not paraphrases. Please consult the handbook for guidelines on the proper spacing for an ellipsis.

Works Cited

MLA Handbook, pp. 20-53, 102-116

The list of works cited follows the text of the paper, beginning on a new page and continuing the page numbering of your paper. Center the title *Works Cited* one inch from the top. All sources used in your project are listed in alphabetical order and are double-spaced with hanging indentation.

Works Cited	Last Name 9
Mayers, R. Stewart, and Sally J. Zepeda. "High School Department Chairs: Role Ambiguity and Conflict During Change." <i>NASSP Bulletin</i> , vol. 86, no. 632, Sept. 2002, pp. 49-64. <i>ProQuest</i> , search.proquest.com/docview/216030655?accountid=13158.	
Zepeda, Sally J. "Cognitive Dissonance, Supervision, and Administrative Team Conflict." <i>International Journal of Educational Management</i> , vol. 20, no. 3, 2006, pp. 224-32. <i>ProQuest</i> , doi:10.1108/0951354061065419.	
---. "Leadership to Build Learning Communities." <i>Educational Forum</i> , vol. 68, no. 2, Winter 2004, 144-51. <i>ProQuest</i> , search.proquest.com/docview/220659130?accountid=13158.	
Zepeda, Sally J., and Bill Kruskamp. "High School Department Chairs: Perspectives on Instructional Supervision." <i>The High School Journal</i> , vol. 90, no. 4, Apr.-May 2007, pp. 44-54. <i>JSTOR</i> , www.jstor.org/stable/40364192.	
Zepeda, Sally J., and R. Stewart Mayers. "An Analysis of Research on Block Scheduling." <i>Review of Educational Research</i> , vol. 76, no. 1, Spring 2006, pp. 137-70. <i>JSTOR</i> , www.jstor.org/stable/3700585.	
---. "New Kids on the Block Schedule: Beginning Teachers Face Challenges." <i>The High School Journal</i> , vol. 84, no. 4, Apr.-May 2001, pp. 1-11. <i>ProQuest</i> , search.proquest.com/docview/220237371?accountid=13158.	

If you are citing two or more works by the same author, list the name in the first citation only. Use three hyphens and a period for all the following citations. The same rule applies for multiple authors, as long as the authors' names in each source appear in the same order. If they are not in the same order, or if there are different coauthors, you must list all names in the same order as shown in the original source. For entries beginning with the same name, but with different coauthors, alphabetize by the last names of the second author listed (Kruskamp before Mayers, in the examples above).

All citations are to be double spaced with hanging indentation. In order to save space, the following examples are not double spaced.

EXAMPLES

Book by a single author or editor

Bok, Derek. *Our Underachieving Colleges: A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should Be Learning More*. Princeton UP, 2006.

Gallagher, Gary W., editor. *Fighting for the Confederacy: The Personal Recollections of General Edward Porter Alexander*. U of North Carolina P, 1989.

Wood, Edward W., Jr. *Worshipping the Myths of World War II: Reflections on America's Dedication to War*. Potomac Books, 2006.

Book by two authors

Berg, Maggie, and Barbara K. Seeber. *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*. U of Toronto P, 2016.

Book by three or more authors

Booth, Wayne C., et al. *The Craft of Research*. 2nd ed., U of Chicago P, 2003.

Book by a corporate author

Corporate authors include associations, institutions, or any group whose members are not identified individually. Omit the initial article *The* in the name. If the corporate author is also the publisher, begin your citation with the title and list the corporate author as the publisher.

United Nations. *Consequences of Rapid Population Growth in Developing Countries*. Taylor and Francis, 1991.

Work in an anthology

Begin the citation with the information for the part of the book (short story, essay, poem) you are using, followed by the information for the anthology. Notice the page numbers for the piece you are citing appear at the end of the citation.

Poston, Ted. "A Matter of Record." *Ebony Rising: Short Fiction of the Greater Harlem Renaissance Era*, edited by Craig Gable, Indiana UP, 2004, pp. 493-94.

Article from a reference book (e.g. dictionary, encyclopedia)

"Content." *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., Merriam-Webster, 2003, p. 269.

Article from an online reference source

"Content." *Collegiate Dictionary*. Merriam-Webster, 2016, unabridged.merriam-webster.com/collegiate/content.

Note: In this example, the URL is considered the location.

Web site article

"Our History and Mission." *The Donor Sibling Registry*, donorsiblingregistry.com/about-dsr/history-and-mission. Accessed 16 Aug. 2016.

Note: The date of access is included in the citation above since the online work did not include the date it was published.

Scholarly journal article



The Hungry Mind: Intellectual Curiosity Is the Third Pillar of Academic Performance

Sophie von Stumm¹, Benedikt Hell², and Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic³

¹Department of Psychology, University of Edinburgh, 7 George Square, Edinburgh, UK; ²School of Applied Psychology, University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland, 4600 Olten, Switzerland; and ³Department of Psychology, Goldsmiths University of London, New Cross, SE14 6NW, London, UK

Perspectives on Psychological Science
6(6) 574–588
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sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav
DOI: 10.1177/1745691611421204
http://pps.sagepub.com



The citation for the above **journal article**, accessed through a library database, would appear in your works-cited list as follows:

von Stumm, Sophie, et. al. “The Hungry Mind: Intellectual Curiosity Is the Third Pillar of Academic Performance.” *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, vol. 6, no. 6, 2011, pp. 574-88. *Sage Journals Online*, doi:10.1177/1745691611421204.

In this example, notice the first container (the journal *Perspectives on Psychological Science*) is followed by the additional relevant core elements for that container: the number (vol. 6, no. 6), the publication date (2011), and the location (pp. 574-88). The second container is the online library database (*Sage Journals Online*). The only core element needed for this second container is the location (doi:10.1177/1745691611421204).

Newspaper article

Steinhauer, Jennifer. “Pinch of Reality Threatens the California Dream.” *The New York Times*, 22 July 2009, Washington ed., pp. A1+.

Van Ingen, Lori. “Protest to Target City Surveillance Cameras.” *The Intelligencer Journal* [Lancaster], 26 June 2009, pp. B1+.

Interview

Killian, Harry. Personal interview. 16 Nov. 2008.

Video or film

Begin with the title of the film (as in the first example), unless you are citing the contribution of a particular individual (second and third examples). You may choose to include the director and/or other participants as **other contributors** (core element # 4; as in the third example below).

Interstellar. Paramount Pictures, 2014.

Nolan, Christopher, director. *Interstellar*. Paramount Pictures, 2014.

McConaughey, Matthew, performer. *Interstellar*. Directed by Christopher Nolan, written by Jonathan Nolan and Christopher Nolan, Paramount Pictures, 2014.

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.

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.