

DOCUMENTING IN THE MLA STYLE

In the Humanities, the MLA (Modern Language Association) style is the preferred method of documentation. MLA style uses author page number parenthetical citations within the text to identify source material and a Works Cited list at the end of the text to give detailed information about all sources. All parenthetical citations must have corresponding entries listing bibliographic data in the Works Cited list; conversely, all sources in the Works Cited list must have citations in the paper.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR USING PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS IN MLA STYLE

1. Use parenthetical citations to identify each quotation, paraphrase, summary, or reference in your text. Include the author's last name and page number for a print source or electronic source in PDF, placing the period or other appropriate punctuation mark AFTER the parentheses. If you are using an electronic source that provides paragraph numbers rather than page numbers, place a comma after the author's name and precede the paragraph number with the abbreviation *par.* or *pars.* If the source has no page or paragraph numbers, no number can be given in the parenthetical citation.
Women's communication often reflects their role as mediators (Tannen 32). [print source]
Women's communication often reflects their role as mediators (Tannen, par. 9). [electronic source]
Women's communication often reflects their role as mediators (Tannen). [no page or paragraph number provided by source]
2. If you mention the author's name in your text, include only the page or paragraph number in your citation:
Tannen notes that women's communication often reflects their role as mediators (32).
3. If a quotation runs more than four lines, block the quotation by indenting all lines ten spaces from the left margin only. Double-space. Omit quotation marks. End blocked quotations with a period, then add parenthetical citation with no period after the parentheses.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

1. For a source with no author, use the first significant word of the title by which you'll alphabetize your entry on the Works Cited page. For example, "Hospitals Turn to Advertising" in the *New York Times* would be cited as ("Hospitals" 47) because "Hospitals" is used to begin the Works Cited entry.
2. If your source has multiple authors, use the following guidelines. (Note the punctuation.)
 - for works with two to three authors, give the authors' last names in the order listed on the source: (Raden and Green 41). (Raden, Green, and Brown, pars. 13-14).
 - for works with more than three authors, you have the option of giving all the last names or giving the first author's last name followed by *et al.*; whatever option you choose, use that same format for the Works Cited page entry: (Jacobs, Smith, Bowling, and Williams 61). OR (Jacobs et al. 61).
3. If two or more of your sources are by the same author, place a comma after the author's name and add a shortened version of the title before citing the page number: (Murray, "Essential" 221).
4. If your source is authored by a group (corporation, association, government agency, etc.), you may shorten terms that are commonly abbreviated: (Natl. Research Assn. 15). It is better to include a long name in the text so that the reading is not interrupted with an extended parenthetical reference: E.g. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa predicts advancement within thirty years (12).
5. When using an indirect source—i.e. when quoting or paraphrasing an author who has been quoted by another author—indicate both names as follows: (Goodman qtd. in Murray 207). On the Works Cited page, include only your source, Murray.
6. If you wish to include two or more works in a single parenthetical citation, cite each work as you normally would and use a semicolon to separate the citations: (Raden 38; Cramer, par. 16).

7. When citing a literary work, such as a novel, that is available in several editions, put a semicolon after the page number and add other identifying information, using appropriate abbreviation such as *ch.* for a chapter in a novel: (Twain 35; ch. 2). When citing classic verse plays or poems, omit page numbers altogether and cite by division (act, scene, book, part) and line, with periods separating the various numbers. In general, use Arabic numerals rather than roman numerals. For example, (*Iliad* 9.19) refers to book 9, line 19 of Homer's *Iliad*, or (*Hamlet* 1.5.35-37) refers to act 1, scene 5, lines 35-37 of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

MLA ESSAY FORMAT

1. Double-space your entire text, including all block quotations and the Works Cited page, with no extra space before or after a title or between paragraphs.
2. Headers: place a header (your last name plus page number) in the upper right-hand corner of each page (e.g. Smith 1), including the Works Cited page.
3. On the left-hand corner of the first page, type your name, your instructor's name, the course title, and the date on separate lines, double-spacing between the lines. Then enter the title of your text, centered, capitalizing the first word and all major words.

MLA PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS IN SAMPLE RESEARCH PAPER

Smith 1

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College Writing 552-100

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Less is More

In describing her writing process, author Ellen Goodman has said, "What makes me happy is rewriting It's like cleaning house, getting rid of all the junk, getting things in the right order, tightening things up" (qtd. in Murray, *Write* 207). Student writers should try to emulate Goodman's example, for as William Zinsser says in his book, *On Writing Well*, "Clutter is the disease of American writing" (7). Eliminating clutter and achieving conciseness is one goal of the revision process.

Two ways to reduce clutter are to cut every word that is unnecessary and to replace vague words with specific concrete words (Neeld, par. 36). Such cleaning up of prose has two results: precision and energy (Elbow 134). Marjorie Ford and John Ford expand upon this idea of energy in concise writing:

The number of words in a sentence of a passage often makes the difference between writing that has a quick, witty, to-the-point feeling to it and writing that is dull and plodding. Thus one of the major principles

of effective rewriting is the principle of economy in language: we might call it the "less is more" principle.

(141)

In tight, concrete writing, less is more, for "two plus two equal seven—or eleven" (Murray, "Essential" 221).

GUIDELINES FOR MLA WORKS CITED

1. Double space the Works Cited page(s). Begin the first line of each entry at the left margin, and indent subsequent lines ½ inch.
2. Alphabetize entries according to the last name of the author, or if no author, the first significant word of the title (ignoring A, An, The). For more than one work by the same author, alphabetize according to title. Instead of repeating the author's name, type three hyphens and a period before the title, as in the following example:

Murray, Donald. "The Essential Delay: . . ." (First source by Murray; title begins with *E*).

---. *Write to Learn* . . . (Second source by Murray; title begins with *W*.)
3. Italicize the title of full-length works: books, journals, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, films, paintings. Use quotation marks for shorter works contained within the full-length works: chapters, essays, articles, poems, songs. Capitalize the first, last, and all important words in a title.
4. For publication information, give the first city of publication listed (if more than one city is listed), a shortened form of the publisher's name (Harcourt for Harcourt Brace Jovanovich), and the latest copyright date.
5. At the end of the entry give the medium: Print, Web, DVD, Performance, Television, Film, Lecture, etc.
6. Number the Works Cited page as you would all other pages. For example, if your text ends on page 5, your Works Cited page begins on page 6. Center the heading Works Cited above the list. Do not use bold print, italics, or quotation marks, and capitalize only the *W* and the *C*.

REFERENCE EXAMPLES

NON-PERIODIC SOURCES:

Book by one author:

Androski, Tom. *To Engineer is Human: The Role of Failure in Design*. New York: St. Martin's, 1997. Print.

Book by multiple authors:

Wright, Donald, John W. Burns, and Robert Atwan. *Advertising the American Way*. New York: Dell, 1993.
Print.

Note: For two or three authors, give names in the order listed on the title page, using the last name, first name format only for the first author. If there are more than three authors, you have the option of listing all names in full or giving only the first name and then adding *et al.* ("and others"): Smith, Robert et al.

Edited book:

Hall, Donald, ed. *The Oxford Book of American Literary Anecdotes*. New York: Oxford UP, 1991. Print.

Note: UP refers to University Press.

Book published in a second or subsequent edition:

Bordeaux, Peter. *The Deconstruction Movement*, 2nd ed. New York: Vintage-Random, 2001. Print.

Note: The edition may be by number, by name (*Rev. ed.* for “Revised edition”; *Abr. ed.* for “Abridged edition”); or by year (2003 ed.)—whichever the title page indicates.

Edition of a literary work:

Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage: An Episode of the American Civil War*. 1895. Ed. Fredson Bowers. Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1996. Print.

Note: Indicate the original year of publication (1895) right after the title.

Anthology/multiple sources by the same author:

Murray, Donald. “The Essential Delay: When Writer’s Block Isn’t.” *When a Writer Can’t Write*. Ed. Mike Rose. New York: Guilford Press, 1985, 219-26. Print.

---. *Write to Learn*. 3rd ed. Fort Worth: Holt, 1990. Print.

Note: Alphabetize according to title (*Essential* precedes *Write*.) Give author’s name in the first entry only. Thereafter, instead of repeating the name, type three hyphens, followed by a period. Note also that the first example is the format for a work in an anthology or collection of works.

Previously printed scholarly article in a collection/anthology:

Nelkin, Dorothy. “The Grandiose Claims of Geneticists.” *Chronicle of Higher Education* 31 (1993): B3-4. Rpt. in *Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum*. Ed. Laurence Behrens and Leonard J. Rosen. New York: Longman, 2000. 524-28. Print.

Note: The order of elements in this entry is author of the article, title of the article, title of the journal that originally published the article, volume and year of journal, page numbers of the article in the journal, title of the book in which the article is reprinted, editors and publication information about the book, and the page numbers where the article is found in the book.

Book by a corporate author:

Institute for Research. *Manual of Policies and Procedures Related to Sponsored Research*. Green Bay: University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, 2002. Print.

Signed (author’s name given) article in a reference book:

Simms, Martha, “Opera in America.” *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 1998 ed. Print.

Note: If an edition number is given, state the edition before the year (e.g. 10th ed. 1998).

An introduction, preface, foreword, or afterword:

Bernstein, Carl. Afterword. *The Gentle Art of Muckraking*. By Jessica Mitford. New York: Random, 1995. 275-77. Print.

Government document:

United States. Dept. of Labor. Bureau of Statistics. Dictionary of Occupational Titles. 4th ed. Washington: GPO, 2006. Web.

Note: For most federal documents, cite Washington as city of publication and GPO (Government Printing Office) as the publisher.

Pamphlet:

Wisconsin Citizens Concerned for Life Fund. *Life Cycle*. Milwaukee: WCCL Education Fund, Inc. 2007. Print.

NONPRINT SOURCES

Personal interview:

Diamond, Carol. Personal interview. 27 Dec. 2008.

Note: *Personal* may be replaced with *Telephone* or *E-mail* depending on the type of interview.

Lecture:

Kenny, Rachael. "Great Depression." University of Wisconsin—Green Bay, Green Bay. 21 Oct. 2007. Lecture.

PERIODICALS:

Journal article in a print journal with continuous pagination throughout a year:

Fulwiler, Toby. "How Well Does Writing Across the Curriculum Work?" *College English* 46.3 (1993): 213-25. Print.

Note: The 46 and 3 are the volume and issue numbers, and 213-25 refers to the page numbers of the entire article.

Journal article in a journal that paginates each issue separately:

Folter, Jack. "The Primary Game." *Wilson Quarterly* 12.1 (1999): 64-77. Print.

Article from a magazine:

McPhee, John. "The Control of Nature: Cooling the Lava." *New Yorker* 22 Feb. 2001: 43-47. Print.

Note: For a magazine, do not give a volume or issue number even if they are provided. If the magazine is published weekly or biweekly, give the entire date. If it is published monthly or bimonthly, give the month(s)

and year. If the article is not printed on consecutive pages, write only the first page number and a plus sign, leaving no intervening space (e.g. 43+).

Article from a daily newspaper, no author:

“Hospitals Turn to Advertising.” *New York Times* 20 Mar. 1999:B7+. Print.

Note: If author is indicated, begin citation with author. If the paper is locally published and the city is not included in the newspaper name, add the city in brackets, not italicized, after the name: *Star-Ledger* [Newark]. If an edition is named on the masthead, add a comma after the date and specify the edition (e.g. *natl. ed, late ed.*). Indicate section along with the page number. If the section is indicated by a letter, follow example above. If the section is indicated by a number, put a comma after the date (or edition, if any) and add the abbreviation *sec.* before the number and pages (e.g. 21 Apr. 2002, late ed., sec. 6:8-10). If the article is printed on consecutive pages, indicate all pages; if it is not printed consecutively, write only the first page number and a plus sign (e.g. C13+).

Internet source:

“Verb Tenses.” *The OWL at Purdue*. Purdue U Online Writing Lab, 2001. Web. 23 July 2007.

Note: The order of elements for the entry is name of author, if given; title of work; title of the overall Web site (italicized); publisher or sponsor of the site (if not available, use *N.p.*); date of publication (if no date is given, use *n.d.*; medium of publication (*Web*); date of access (day, month, and year).

Article from an online database provided through a library subscription service:

Tolson, Nancy. “Making Books Available: The Role of Libraries, Librarians, and Booksellers in the Promotion of African American Children’s Literature.” *African American Review* 32.1 (1998): 9-16. *JSTOR*. Web. 1 Oct. 2002.

Note: For the first part of the entry follow rules of citing works in print periodicals, omitting original medium (*Print*). Then give the title of the database (italicized); medium of publication consulted (*Web*); and date of access (day, month, year).

Article from an online periodical:

Saddy, Guy. “Is Prog Rock on the Rocks?” *Arts & Opinion* 3.6 (2004): n. pag. Web. 9 May 2009.

Note: Begin the entry by following rules for print periodicals. If no page numbers are given, use *n. pag.* Conclude the entry with the medium of publication (*Web*) and date of access.

A NOTE ON USING URLS

From *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, 3rd ed.

“Inclusion of URLs has proved to have limited value . . . for they often change, can be specific to a subscriber or session of use, and can be [long and complex]. Readers are now more likely to find resources on the Web by searching for titles and authors’ names than by typing URLs. You should include a URL as supplementary information only when the reader probably cannot locate the source without it If you present a URL, give it immediately following the date of access, a period, and a space. Enclose the URL in angle brackets, and conclude with a period.” (212-213)

Because some instructors require URLs for Web sources, you should keep track of URLs, database names, and dates you access sites. If required, put the URL at the end of the entry, in angled brackets; divide a URL only after a slash. (Diana Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual*, 5th ed with MLA update)