

Citation Guide: MLA 9th Edition

MCC-Blue River Library

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Additional Help:

- style.mla.org
- owl.purdue.edu

BASIC RULE:

Always follow the requirements of your instructor.

This guide is based on the *MLA Handbook*, 9th ed., published in 2021 by the Modern Language Association. In academic writing, when you borrow the words, facts, creations or ideas of others, you must cite, or give credit to, those sources.

Cite Your Sources in Two Places:

1. Within your essay, where you put brief in-text citations to link readers to the longer citations on the Works Cited page.
2. On the Works Cited page, the last page of your essay, where you list complete citations for the sources you used.

Core Elements for an MLA Works Cited Citation:

Aim to locate all 9 core elements. **If an element is not provided, skip it.** Use punctuation mark shown after each element.

1. Author.	Last name, first name, middle initial. For multiple authors or no author, see p. 2 of this guide.
2. Title of Source.	Italicize titles of standalone sources (books, websites, magazines, journals, newspapers, databases). Put title in quotation marks if source is part of a larger work (chapters, short stories, a web page, articles).
3. Title of Container,	When a source is “nested” in a larger whole, the larger whole is the “container.” A source may have two containers: an article found in a journal (container 1) that is housed in a database (container 2). In this case , add elements 1-9 to your citation for the smaller 1 st container, followed by elements 3-9 for the larger 2 nd container. If a source has even more containers, continue to add elements 3-9 to your citation to account for each additional container. A print book does not have a container—it is self-contained.
4. Contributor,	Precede contributor’s name with “by.” Examples: edited by, translated by, illustrated by, uploaded by
5. Version,	A specific version or edition of a source, e.g., unabridged or abridged version 6th ed. expanded ed.
6. Number,	If source is part of a numbered sequence. Examples: vol. 1, no. 4 vols. 1-2 season 2, episode 1
7. Publisher,	Organization responsible for creating the source. For university publishers, abbreviate University as U and Press as P. Examples: U of Missouri P Harvard UP. Omit business abbreviations such as Corp., Co., Inc., and Ltd. in publishers’ names. Omit publisher for journals, magazines and newspapers, and for websites with titles that are essentially the same as the publisher’s name.
8. Publication Date,	Day-Month-Year style. Spell out May, June, & July; abbreviate September to Sept.; abbreviate all other months to three letters. Example: 12 Feb. 2023. If a publication is issued by season, the season is not capitalized. Example: summer 2022. Date of Access (date you accessed the source) is optional (unless your instructor says otherwise), but include it as last element of citation if no publication date is given.
9. Location. <i>For print sources:</i> page numbers or page range <i>For online sources:</i> DOI, stable URL/ permalink, or URL	For print sources: Example: p.24 / pp. 45-56 / pp.131-48 For Online sources: If available, use a DOI (digital object identifier), which is often provided in academic articles from electronic sources. If the DOI does not have https:// or http:// in front of the DOI, put https:// in front of the DOI. Example: https://doi.org/10.2147/IJGM.S323316 . If there is no DOI provided, look for a stable URL/permalink. Example: https://www.jstor.org/stable/26923507 . If no DOI or stable URL/permalink exists, use regular URL, copying it from your browser’s window. If using a database, you can use its Cite tool to retrieve a citation and then check it for proper format. For URLs (but not DOIs), you can omit http:// and https:// to save space.

MLA 9th Edition – Works Cited Citation Examples

Citations should be double-spaced (examples below are not). All lines of a citation after the first line are indented one tab (1/2 inch) from the left margin--this is called a hanging indent. See p. 7 for help with hanging indents.

Elements for an MLA Citation

Details on p. 1

1. Author.
2. Title of Source.
3. Title of Container.
4. Contributor,
5. Version,
6. Number,
7. Publisher,
8. Publication Date,
9. Location.

How to Cite Authors' Names

For 1 Author: Morrison, Toni. (Last Name, First Name.)

For 2 Authors: Kramer, Mark, and Wendy Call. (Last Name, First Name, and First Name, Last Name.)

For 3 or More Authors: Charon, Rita, et al. (Last Name, First Name of first author, et al.)

For No Author: Begin citation with title of source.

Type of Source	Works Cited entry
Entire Book	<p>Format: Author(s). <i>Title of Book</i>. Edition, Publisher, Year. <i>Database Name (if electronic)</i>, URL.</p> <p>Example (Print book): Bennett, Britt. <i>The Vanishing Half</i>. Riverhead Books, 2020.</p> <p>Example (E-book): Hulick, Kathryn. <i>Cybersecurity Careers</i>. ReferencePoint Press, 2019, <i>EBSCOhost</i>, search-ebSCOhost-com.ezproxy.mcckc.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1849580&site=ehost-live.</p>
Part of a Book (essay, chapter, poem, story, encyclopedia entry, dictionary entry, etc.)	<p>Format: Author(s). "Title of Part." <i>Title of Book</i>, edited by Editor, edition, vol. #, Publisher, Year, page number(s). <i>Database Name (if electronic)</i>, URL.</p> <p>Example (Essay in an e-book): Lorenz, Janet. "Willa Cather." <i>Critical Survey of American Literature</i>, edited by Steven Kellman, 3rd ed., vol. 1, Salem Press, 2016, pp. 475-82. <i>EBSCOhost</i>, https://search-ebSCOhost-com.ezproxy.mcckc.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1442654&site=ehost-live.</p> <p>Example (Poem in a print book): Troupe, Quincy. "Poem for My Father." <i>Of Poetry and Protest: From Emmett Till to Trayvon Martin</i>, edited and compiled by Philip Cushway and Michael Warr, W. W. Norton, 2016, pp. 194-95.</p> <p>Example (Print Dictionary): "Ambit, <i>N.</i> (1)." <i>Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary</i>, 9th ed., Merriam-Webster, 1998, p. 77.</p> <p>*Note: For dictionary words, include abbreviated part of speech (in italics) and number (in parentheses).</p>
Online Video (YouTube; TED)	<p>Format: Author(s). "Title of Video." <i>Website Title</i>, Website Publisher (if different than title), uploaded by Name of User, Date of Upload, URL.</p> <p>Example: "What's New in the MLA 9th Edition Handbook." <i>YouTube</i>, uploaded by Xamplio, 5 Oct. 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfIVWUwRRlI.</p> <p>Example: Belle, Robert A. "Our Emotions and our Money." <i>TED</i>, Jan. 2022, https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_a_belle_our_emotions_and_our_money.</p>

If adding Annotated Bibliographies: Annotations are placed beneath the corresponding Works Cited citation and should be formatted as a block, tabbed one-half inch beyond the hanging indent, and double spaced.

MLA 9th edition – Works Cited Examples (continued)

Type of Source	Works Cited entry
<p>Journal Article</p> <p>from a Library Database</p> <p>2 authors & has DOI</p> <p>3 or more authors & has permalink/stable URL</p>	<p>Format: Author(s). "Title of Article." <i>Title of Journal</i>, vol. #, no. #, Date of Publication, page number(s). <i>Database Name</i>, DOI, permalink/stable URL or URL.</p> <p>Example 1: Virtanen, Marianna, and Marko Elovainio. "Justice at the Workplace: A Review." <i>Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics</i>, vol. 27, no. 2, Apr. 2018, pp. 306-15. <i>ProQuest</i>, https://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0963180117000639.</p> <p>Example 2: Mariti, Chiara, et al. "Owners as a Secure Base for Their Dogs." <i>Behaviour</i>, vol. 150, no. 11, 2013, pp. 1275–94. <i>JSTOR</i>, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23525230.</p> <p>Note: For location element, a DOI/doi (if provided) is preferred. If DOI is not preceded with http:// or https://, precede it with https://. If a DOI is not given, use a permalink/stable URL or a regular URL.</p>
<p>Magazine or Newspaper Article</p> <p>(from print source, database & website)</p>	<p>Format: Author(s). "Title of Article." <i>Title of Magazine/Newspaper</i>, vol. #, no. #, Date of Publication, page number(s). <i>Database Name</i> (if from a database), URL.</p> <p>Example: Metcalfe, Elizabeth. "Restored and Revived." <i>House and Garden</i>, Feb. 2022, pp. 86-93. (<i>print magazine</i>)</p> <p>Example: Shuster, Simon. "Man In the Middle." <i>TIME Magazine</i>, vol. 194, no. 26, Dec. 2019, pp. 42–47. <i>EBSCOhost</i>, https://search-ebSCOhost-com.ezproxy.mcckc.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=afh&AN=140105384&site=ehost-live. (<i>library database</i>)</p> <p>Example: Spoerre, Anna. "Kansas City Zoo: Gorilla Tests Positive for Covid as Zoo Officials Await Vaccines." <i>The Kansas City Star</i>, 6 Oct. 2021, https://www.kansascity.com/news/local/article254797357.html. (<i>newspaper website</i>)</p>
<p>Article or Page on a Website</p>	<p>Format: Author(s). "Title of Article or Web Page/Section." <i>Title of Overall Website</i>, Website Publisher (if different than website title), Date Published, URL.</p> <p>Example: Mayo Clinic Staff. "Food Allergy." <i>Mayo Clinic</i>, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 31 Dec. 2021, https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/food-allergy/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20355101.</p> <p>Example: "Hearing Loss: An Overview." <i>American Hearing Research Foundation</i>, 2022, https://www.american-hearing.org/disease/hearing-loss-an-overview/. Accessed 31 Mar. 2022. (<i>No author or exact date of publication.</i>)</p> <p>Note: If no author is provided, start citation with title of source. If no exact publication date provided, include date you accessed the source as last element of citation.</p>
<p>Article or Page on a Government Website</p> <p>(Government agency as author & publisher)</p>	<p>Format: Author(s). "Title of Article or Page." <i>Title of Overall Website</i>, Website Publisher (if different than website title), Date of Publication, URL.</p> <p>Example: United States, Environmental Protection Agency. "Unconventional Oil and Natural Gas Development." <i>United States Environmental Protection Agency</i>, 12 Oct. 2021, https://www.epa.gov/uog.</p> <p>Note: If website's name is essentially the same as name of publisher, you can omit publisher's name.</p>
<p>Artwork Viewed Online</p>	<p>Format: Artist(s). <i>Image Title</i>. Date of creation. <i>Title of Overall Website</i>, Website Publisher (if different than website title), URL.</p> <p>Example: Kelly, Ellsworth. <i>Wild Grape</i>. 1960. <i>MoMA</i>, https://www.moma.org/collection/works/88128.</p> <p>Note: If image is untitled, give a concise, informative description of it (no italics or quotation marks).</p>

In-Text Citations: Information & Examples

In-text citations provide a means to give credit within the text of your paper when you are borrowing others' words, facts, creations, or ideas. **Use in-text citations when:** **quoting** -- enclosing someone's exact words within quotation marks
paraphrasing -- putting the ideas of others into your own words and sentences
 or **summarizing** -- using your own words to give an overview of another's main points

MLA In-Text Citation Basics:

- **MLA in-text citations generally contain the author's last name and the source's page number.** These brief citations identify your sources in the text of your paper at points where you are borrowing material, usually at the end of a sentence. In-text citations refer readers to the Works Cited list, where complete citations are listed.

Examples: If you mention the author's name in a sentence, you need only include the **page number** in parentheses: Cain concludes that "Love is essential; gregariousness is optional" (264).

An exact quote from Cain, within quotation marks

If you don't mention the author's name in a sentence, you put the **author's last name and the page number** in parentheses: A record of our times evolves through everyday news stories (Cioffi 11).

A paraphrase of Cioffi's words

- **If no author is provided**, use a shortened version of the title of the source within parentheses **or**, alternatively, the complete title of the source within the text of your paper. The first word of the *shortened title* must be the same as the first main word (not *A*, *An*, or *The*) of the source's *complete* title on the Works Cited page. For shortened titles, use the first word or words of the complete title, ignoring the words *A*, *An*, *The*.

If page numbers are not provided, which is common for internet sources, do not include them. PDF articles may have page numbers, so use them if available.

Sample In-Text Citations for the Works Cited citation example below:

Linford, Jenny. *The Seven Culinary Wonders of the World: A History of Honey, Salt, Chile, Pork, Rice, Cacao, and Tomato*. Illustrated by Alice Pattullo, Smithsonian Books, 2018.

Signal phrases "signal" that borrowed information is coming.

Sample In-text Citations	Paraphrase, Author in parentheses	Until the mid-19 th century, chocolate was enjoyed only in liquid form (Linford 174).
	Quote, Author in sentence	Of research on honey's use in medicine, Linford writes, "Recent findings show that raw honey can kill more than 250 clinical strains of bacteria, including the so-called superbug MRSA" (62).
	Quote, Author in sentence	As Jenny Linford notes, "[O]nly 6 percent of the salt produced in the world today is used for food purposes" (79).

Note: The closing period goes **after** the parentheses.

In-Text Citation Examples: *continued*

Paraphrase, No author	Fathers participating in a weekly program of reading to their children said that the activity improved their parenting skills ("Engaging Fathers" 27). <div style="text-align: right;">Title of source (shortened) → ↑ Page number</div>
Quote divided by your own words	"He was obeyed," writes Joseph Conrad of the company manager in <i>Heart of Darkness</i> , "yet he inspired neither love nor fear, nor even respect" (87). ← Page number
Paraphrase, two authors	Others note that doctors have not yet adequately explained the effects climate change will have on human health (Lemery and Auerbach 4-5). ← Two Authors
Quote divided by your own words (indirect source)	With her art, Carrie Mae Weems addresses social change and what she refers to as "the <i>ism</i> brothers" – racism, sexism and classism (qtd. in Watts 55-56). ←

In-text Citations for Indirect Sources – An Example

A source that paraphrases or quotes another source is called an indirect source. **Example:** an article by Linda S. Watts includes a quote by Carrie Mae Weems, and you want to use the Weems quote in your paper. When possible, find the original source of the quote and not a secondhand source. But if the original source can't be located, cite the source that you are looking at (in this case, the article by Watts).

To cite Weems within the text of your paper:

1. Name the original source of the information—in this case, Weems—in the text of your paper immediately before you quote or paraphrase the source.
2. Cite the indirect source, Watts, in the parenthetical citation following Weems' words: (qtd. in Watts 55-56). Be sure to cite Watts in the Works Cited list at the end of your paper (but not Weems).

Block Quotes (for Long Quotations)

If a quote runs more than four lines of your text (or more than three lines for verse/poetry): Block quote off from the rest of the text by indenting the entire quote a one-half inch (one tab) from the left margin. The introductory phrase you place before your long quotation usually ends with a colon. Do not enclose the block quote in quotation marks.

Block Quote Example:

Nick describes his impression of Gatsby at their first meeting: ← Phrase introducing quote

He smiled understandingly—much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced—or seemed to face—the whole external world for an instant, then concentrated on you with an irresistible prejudice in your favor. (Fitzgerald 48) ← Author and page number

For block quotes, the closing period goes **before** the parentheses.

Formatting Your MLA Paper

For Microsoft Word 365 (online version)

See p. 7 for
Works Cited page
formatting

1. Click on “Layout” tab. Click **Margins**. Click on box that says “**Normal**.” This is the default setting (1 inch on all sides).
2. Click on “Home” tab at far left of tool bar, select **Times New Roman** from the font box and change font size to **12**.
3. While you’re still on the “Home” tab, click the 3 dots at the far right end of the toolbar and click “**Line Spacing**.” In the **Line Spacing box** at left, click the number **2** for double spacing.
4. Click on the 3 dots again > click **Line Spacing**, then move to the “**Line Spacing**” box at left and click “**Remove Space After Paragraph**” at bottom of box. This will make sure that you aren’t adding additional spaces after each paragraph!

5. Where cursor is blinking at top left of your paper, type the following, each on a separate line:

Your First and Last Name	→	Example: Xander Smith
Your instructor’s name	→	Example: Professor Cohen
Name of your course	→	Example: English 101
Today’s date	→	Example: 12 May 2023

Note: Even though you set up your font at the beginning, make sure all text is showing up as Times New Roman font, size 12, in your header and in your paper. If it isn’t, click cursor in front of text, select the text, and repeat step 2 above.

6. To set up your header with your last name and page numbers, click on the **little tab** sticking out at the top right side of your document. A three-column header box will open above. Click inside the column farthest to the right and type your **last name** (but no numbers or spaces).

		Type last name here
--	--	---------------------

7. Next, select (highlight) your last name (within the header) and change font on Header to **Times New Roman**, size **12**.
8. Click on the “Insert” tab towards top left of your screen, then click **Page Numbers** in right middle area of tool bar.
9. See the six boxes and click on the **box in the top right**.
10. You should see the symbol **< # >** beside your name at the top right of your page. **Example: Smith < # >**
11. Double-click on your document outside of your header. Notice that header will not display on your screen, but it is still there. To see it, click on **File > Print > Print this Document**, which takes you to **Print Preview** to see your header. But don’t print the document if you’re not ready. You can just click Cancel to get out of Print Preview.
12. To center and type your paper’s title, hit **Enter** on keyboard to move down to a new line. Click “Home” tab, then click “Text Alignment” icon  above middle of your document. Select **Align Center**, then type the paper’s title.
13. Hit **Enter** on keyboard to move down to a new line. Click the “Text Alignment” icon  again, and this time choose **Align Left**.
14. Hit “Tab” on keyboard to indent and start typing your paper. Be sure to hit the Tab key every time you start a new paragraph, unless Word Office 365 does it automatically for you.

Formatting Your MLA Paper

For Regular Microsoft Word (traditional version)

1. Click on **“Layout”** tab. Click **Margins**. Click on box that says **“Normal.”** This is the default setting (1 inch on all sides).
2. Click on **“Home”** tab at far left of tool bar, select **Times New Roman** from the font box and change font size to **12**.
3. In **“Paragraph”** section on left side of tool bar, click on the tiny **arrow** in lower right. Paragraph box appears; in **“Line Spacing”** dropdown box, select **Double**. Also, check the box next to **“Don’t Add Space to Paragraphs of the Same Style”** to make sure that you aren’t adding additional spaces after each paragraph!
4. Where cursor is blinking at top left of your paper, type the following, each on a separate line:

Your First and Last Name → Example: Xander Smith
Your instructor’s name → Example: Professor Cohen
Name of your course → Example: English 101
Today’s date → Example: 12 May 2023

Note: Even though you set up your font at the beginning, make sure all text is showing up as Times New Roman font, size 12, in your header and in your paper. If it isn’t, click cursor in front of text, select the text, and repeat step 2 on p. 6.

5. To set up header with last name and page numbers:
On first page of your paper, click **“Insert”** tab at top left, then **“Page Number”** at right. Click **top of page** option, then **Plain number 3** box.
6. Click once at immediate left of the number 1, then type your last name and hit the space bar once. Ex.: Smith 1
7. Select (highlight) last name and page number. Click on **“Home”** tab and change font to Times New Roman, size 12. To close header, double click below the dashed line.
8. To center and type your paper’s title, hit **Enter** on keyboard to move down to a new line. Click **“Home”** tab, then click **Center** button in **Paragraph** section. Type the title of your paper.
9. Hit **Enter** on keyboard to move down to a new line. Click **Align Left** button in **Paragraph** section.
10. Hit **“Tab”** on keyboard to indent, then start typing your paper. Hit Tab key every time you start a new paragraph.

For Google Docs

1. Change font from Arial to **Times New Roman** and font size from 11 to **12**.
2. To change line spacing to double space: > **Format > Line & Paragraph Spacing > Double**
3. Click **Insert > go to Header & Footers > click on Header**.
4. Make sure font on Header is Times New Roman, size 12.
5. Click **Align** icon above your paper; select **Right Align** to move cursor to right side of page. Hit **Enter**.
6. Type your last name, then press spacebar on keyboard once. Example: Smith 1
7. Click on **Insert > Page Numbers**. See four squares; click on top left square.
8. Click below Header line to close Header.
9. Where cursor is blinking at left, do step 4 in **the Regular Microsoft Word** instructions above. Next, click **enter** to go down a line.
10. Click **Align** icon above your paper; select **Center Align** and type title of your paper. Hit **enter** to move down to a new line.
11. Click **Align icon** again; select **Left Align**. Hit **Tab** on keyboard to indent, then start typing your paper.
12. Remember to hit the **Tab** key every time you start a new paragraph.

Works Cited Page and Hanging Indents

Create the Works Cited list on its own page, right after your essay.

Click **Align Center** icon, type the words Works Cited (no bold, no italics, no quotation marks) and hit **Enter** once. Click **Align Left** icon. Type citations, listing them alphabetically by author’s last name (or by title of source if no author is given). Indent second and subsequent lines of each citation one-half inch (0.5”) from the left margin—this is called a hanging indent. To create hanging indents: Highlight your Works Cited citations all together, making sure there is double spacing between each line.

Then, **For Word and Word 365:**

Right click and select **Paragraph** (or **“Paragraph Options”** in Word 365). Under **Indentation – Special**, select **hanging > OK**.

(In Word 365 use drop-down menu to select **“hanging.”**) **For Google Docs:** Follow above instructions, but after **“Right click,”** select **Format** in tool bar, go down to **Align & Indent > Indentation Options > Special Indent > Hanging > OK**. See p. 8 for examples.

**Sample MLA-style Paper
(Abbreviated)**

Student's Last Name 1

Student's First and Last Name

Instructor's Name

English 101

12 May 2023

Title of Your Essay

We Should Read Online Reviews with a Critical Eye

Most of us in America – 93 percent – use online reviews when making a new purchase, and we generally find them helpful (Turner and Rainie). Yet we have reasons to be wary, with reports of third-party “marketers” paying people for positive reviews (Botsman 146-47), and a recent announcement by Tripadvisor that it removed 1.3 million fake reviews in 2022 (sec. 03). Although online reviews are often beneficial, the risks of deception abound. As tech columnist John Thornhill notes, “[T]echnology is transforming trust-based transactions, but it also has created new problems of its own.” Unfortunately...

Entire paper:

Times New Roman 12 pt. font

Double-spaced

1-inch margins all sides

In-text citation with author and page numbers

In-text citation with author in sentence, no page number available.

-----Pretend this is the Works Cited page (a separate page after your essay)-----

A Works Cited list is organized alphabetically by author's last name. If a name is not available, use the title of the source.

Student's Last Name 10

Works Cited

Botsman, Rachel. *Who Can You Trust?: How Technology Brought Us Together and Why It Might Drive*

Us Apart. Public Affairs / Hachette Book Group, 2017.

Thornhill, John. “Online Reviews are Testing Tech’s Trust Revolution.” *Financial Times*, 14 Sept. 2020, ProQuest,

<http://ezproxy.mcckc.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/trade-journals/online-reviews-are-testing-tech-s-trust/docview/2467902139/se-2?accountid=2182>.

“Tripadvisor Review Transparency Report 2023.” *Tripadvisor*, 12 Apr. 2023, sec.03,

<https://www.tripadvisor.com/TransparencyReport2023>.

Turner, Erica, and Lee Rainie. “Most Americans Rely on Their Own Research to Make Big Decisions,

and That Often Means Online Searches.” *Pew Research Center*, 5 Mar. 2020, <https://pewrsr.ch/2VO7bQn>.

1/2 inch hanging indents

If no author is given, use the title of the source. Use shortened title for in-text citation.

Need Help?

MCC-Blue River Library - 816-604-6642
<https://mcckc.edu/library/blue-river>

Ask-a-Librarian:

<https://mcckc.edu/library>
Text: 816-920-0275