



Using MLA Documentation

When you write a research paper or a speech, you must document your sources. If you do not give credit to the person (s) whose work you are using, you are **plagiarizing**, and this is a serious academic offense that will not be tolerated. By documenting your sources, you are informing your reader exactly which sources you have taken information from and how this information can be retrieved. To help you prepare to document, you should create a working bibliography on cards so that you can organize the sources you used as you take notes.

The most frequently used style of documentation for research papers in the humanities (including English courses) is the Modern Language Association (**MLA**) style. It consists of a parenthetical citation system that calls for a source name and page reference to be entered at each place you use a source in your paper. Also, at the end of your paper or speech you need to include a Works Cited list giving full bibliographic details about **each cited** source.

In MLA documentation, you are expected to document any source that you **quote**, **paraphrase** (put in your own words) or **summarize** with a two-part system.

1. Within the body of the paper, use **in-text citations**.

Example: (**quote**) “Therefore people from different cultures, when interpreting each other’s behavior, often misinterpret the relationship, the activity or the emotion” (Hall 171).

{ **Direct quote**—author’s name and page number in parentheses }

Example: (**quote**) “If you hail from western Europe, you will find that [the person you are talking to] is roughly a fingertip distance from you “(Morris 131).

{ **Quote using bracketed words** to fit into the text of the prose. The bracketed words replace the word *he* in the original quotation. }

Example: (**quote**) “People from different cultures...respond to others’ behavior by visible cues such as body language and tone of voice” (Jones 34).

{ **Quote using ellipses** that replace the omitted words of a quotation. }



Example: (**paraphrase**) Desmond Morris notes that people from the Mediterranean prefer an elbow to shoulder distance from each other (131).

{Author's name cited in text; page number in parentheses.}

Zoologist Desmond Morris notes that people from the Mediterranean prefer an elbow-to shoulder distance from each other (131).

{Author's name and credentials cited in text; page number in parentheses}

Example: (**paraphrase**) On the other hand, people from the Mediterranean prefer an elbow-to shoulder distance from each other (Morris 131).

{Author name and page number cited in parentheses.}

Example: (**summary**) Expected amounts of space between people when they are talking differs among cultures: In general, people from western Europe prefer fingertip to shoulder distance, from eastern Europe, wrist to shoulder, and from the Mediterranean, elbow to shoulder (Morris 131).

{Author's name and page number cited in parentheses.}

2. At the end of your paper, provide an alphabetical list of sources titled **Works Cited**. These will be the sources from which you **quoted, paraphrased, or summarized**.



Works Cited

Angell, Lance R. "The Relationship of Impulsiveness, Personal Efficacy, and Academic Motivation to College Cheating." *College Student Journal*. vol. 40, no.1, Mar. 2006, pp. 118-131. www.ezproxy.mcckc.edu:2338/ehost/detail/detail?vid=2&sid=d49452bb-5f638b847c3ac6a2ad04%40sessionmgr4002&hid=4104&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=EJ765306&db=eric.

Clayton, Mark. "How Teachers Can Reduce Cheating's Lure." *Christian Science Monitor* 27 Oct. 1997. www.csmonitor.com/1997/1027/102797.feat.learning.3.html.

Hickman, John N. "Cybercheats." *New Republic* 23 Mar. 1998: pp. 14-15.

Howard, Rebecca Moore, and Laura J. Davies. "Plagiarism in the Internet Age." *Educational Leadership*. vol. 66, no. 6. Mar. 2009, pp. 64-67. www.ezproxy.mcckc.edu:2337/ehost/detail/detail?vid=3&sid=ccd44b99-978d-496e-af07768f8fd096dd%40sessionmgr103&hid=109&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=36666628&db=mih.

Jones, Dorothy L. "Academic Dishonesty: Are More Students Cheating?" *Business Communication Quarterly*, vol. 74, no. 2, June 2011, p. 141.

"Plagiarize." *The American Century Dictionary*. Warner Books, 1995, p. 439.

*Be sure to place your Works Cited information on its own sheet(s) and to list information in alphabetical order by author's last name, **or if author is unknown, by the title of the article or reference**. Do **not** number works cited entries and indent (five spaces) the second and subsequent lines of each entry. The entries should be double-spaced.

Sources: **The Beacon Handbook and Desk Reference 5th ed.**
The MLA Handbook, 8th ed.
Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers, 5th ed.

Revised: 05/2016