

MLA Style Basics

Modern Language Association (MLA) style is a system for formatting and documenting essays used in most humanities classes. Using MLA correctly increases your credibility as a writer and avoids accidental incidents of plagiarism. The 8th edition of the MLA Handbook was released in April 2016, and it includes significant changes to the Works Cited page.

Tips for Using MLA Style:

- Double-space every line, including title and Works Cited. Use a readable font (12-point Times New Roman). Use 1-inch margins for everything except the header.
- No title page is needed. In the upper left-hand corner of page one, list the following information (double-spaced): your name, your instructor's name, the course number and title, and the date.
- Include a header on every page with your last name and the page number in the upper right-hand corner, which should be .5" from the top margin.
- Summaries and paraphrased ideas should be in your own words, but you must still cite the source.
- Cite all quotations and paraphrased ideas, even if you just borrow short phrases from the original source. Limit use of quotes to only the most essential language. Enclose quotations in quotation marks (except as below). Parenthetical citations go outside the final quotation marks but *before* the period.
- Quotations longer than four typed lines of prose (three for poetry) should be in a block quote. Indented the entire quote one inch from the left margin (2" total). Omit quotation marks. The quotation will be double-spaced. In a block quote, the parenthetical citation comes *after* the period.
- Use signal phrases ("According to Einstein,") in order to integrate outside sources into your paper.
- MLA uses in-text, parenthetical citations – never footnotes.
- For electronic sources, include the doi or URL link to the source in the Works Cited entry.
- Medium (print, web, etc.) is no longer required on the Works Cited page.

In-Text Citations:

Without a signal phrase:

- Rusbal, a hot air balloon company, also manufactures inflatable decoys of military vehicles such as tanks and fighter jets (Kramer 14).

With a signal phrase:

- MacQueen describes Rooney as "a long-in-the-tooth kid actor on the dreaded cusp of adolescence" (46).

MLA 8th Edition Works Cited Basics:

Book with one author

With one author

Hawkins, Paula. *The Girl on the Train*. Riverhead Books, 2015.

A book with two authors

Facione, Peter, and Carol Ann Gittens. *Think Critically*. 3rd ed., Pearson, 2015.

With three or more authors

Greenblatt, Stephen, et al., editors. *The Norton Shakespeare*. 3rd ed., Norton, 2015.

A work in an edited book (short story, essay, book chapter, etc.)

Carter, Angela. "Hollywood." *Shaking a Leg: Collected Writings*, edited by Jenny Uglow, Penguin, 1998, pp. 384-86.

Journal Article

Dubose, Mike S. "Holding Out for a Hero: Reaganism, Comic Book Vigilantes, and Captain America." *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 40, no. 6, Dec. 2007, pp. 915-35.

Journal Article from a Database

Anderson, Thomas P. "Titus, Broadway, and Disney's Magic Capitalism; or, The Wonderful World of Julie Taymor." *College Literature*, vol. 40, no. 1, Spring 2013, pp. 66-95. doi:10.1353/lit.2013.0008.

Newspaper Article

In Print (For articles continued on non-consecutive pages, list the first page number and +):

Kramer, Andrew E. "Decoys in Service of an Inflated Russian Might." *New York Times*, 13 Oct. 2016, pp. A1+.

Online:

Sisario, Ben. "The Singer's Secret Archive." *New York Times*, 2 Mar. 2016, www.nyti.ms/1QpEZ9J. Accessed 13 Oct. 2016.

An Entire Website

Center for Puppetry Arts. *Center for Puppetry Arts*, 2016, www.puppet.org/.

A Page on a Website

"Our History." *Center for Puppetry Arts*, 2016, www.puppet.org/about/history/.

Adapted from *The MLA Handbook*, Eighth Edition