MLA Quick Guide

Paper and First Page Set-up:

- Use one-inch margins and double-spacing for the whole document.

- Use Times New Roman size 12 font, unless told otherwise.

- Indent the first line of each paragraph half an inch with the body of the text aligned to the left.

- Remove the extra space between paragraphs. You will have to do this manually, because Microsoft Word automatically adds the extra space.

    o To do this, in the Paragraph section of the Home tab at the top of the Word screen, then go to the Spacing section, and set "After" to "0."

    o In short: Paragraph → Spacing → After set to "0"→ Click Okay

- In the header of the document, type your last name and the page number, make sure this heading is aligned to the right of the page.

- For the overall header of your paper, type your first and last name, instructor's name, course title, and date aligned left on the first page.

    o A good way to remember this is that the format follows this rhyme "You and me on a classy day."

    o **Example:**

        ▪ "You" (First name Last name)

        ▪ "Me" (Instructor's First and Last name)

        ▪ "Classy" (Course title and number)

        ▪ "Day" (Date, in day-month-year format)

> Student Writer
> Professor Instructor
> English 101
> 3 September 2019

- Center the title of your paper on the first line below the full header.

    o Follow standard capitalization rules.

        ▪ You can look these up if you're not familiar with them.

Your First and Last Name

Instructor's First and Last Name

Course Title and Number

Date as Day Month Year

Title

Start the paper with something to get the reader's attention, and then lead into the thesis statement. The thesis statement is usually the last sentence of the introduction paragraph(s) so the reader can easily tell what the paper will cover. This is an important step in setting reader expectations. All of the body paragraphs should expand on and support the thesis statement.

The body of the paper describes and explores the thesis statement to strengthen the paper's claim or focus, using as many paragraphs as it takes to thoroughly support your main idea(s). All paragraphs should have a topic sentence, evidence and discussion sentences, and a conclusion and/or transition sentence. Use credible sources as evidence to support ideas.

Work(s) Cited Page Set-up:

- Create a separate page for the Works Cited after the final paragraph of your paper by inserting a page break.

    o You can do this by pressing ctrl + enter.

    o Another way to do this is to click on the Insert tab at the top of the Word screen, and then go to the Pages section (far left of menu) and click Page Break.

- Continue using Times New Roman size 12 font, one-inch margins, and double spacing.

- Center "Work(s) Cited" on the first line of the new page. (See example below).

- Format the entries with hanging indents. A Hanging Indent is when the first line of each entry is left aligned, with the following lines indented half an inch from the left margin. (See example below).

    o To set hanging indents, select the text on the Work(s) Cited page, and go to the Paragraph section of the top menu, then look at the Indentation section, then to the drop-down menu titled Special, and then select Hanging. Then, click Okay to add it to the page.

    o In short: Paragraph → Indentation → Special → Hanging → Click Okay

- List each of the sources you cited in your paper alphabetically by the entry's first word.

    o When an article (a, an, and the) is the first word for an entry, use the second word to alphabetize.

    o When there is no author, the title of the work used at the start of the entry, and also gets alphabetized.

Works Cited

Lucas, George, director. *Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*, Lucasfilm Ltd. /

    20th Century Fox, 2005.

Pfohl, Kelsey (@cuddlysophia). "When you answer 'what are you doing?' With

    'proofreading a tweet.'" Twitter, 1 Jan. 2016, 2:49 p.m., twitter.com/

    cuddlysophia/status/683057376702799872.

Van de Walle, John A., Karen S. Karp, and Jennifer M. Bay-Williams. *Elementary

    and Middle School Mathematics: Teaching Developmentally*, 8th ed.,

    Pearson Education, 2013.

"Ways of Organizing a Textual Analysis." *The Norton Field Guild to Writing*. W.

    W. Norton & Company, 2005-16, www.wwnorton.com/college/

    english/write/fieldguide/images/genres_img05new.gif.

<u>Note</u>: Please visit the Tutoring Lab and/or The Writing Center for help with using Microsoft Word.

MLA Sample Paper

Your Last Name 1

First and Last Name

Instructor's First and Last Name

Course Name and Number

Date as Day Month Year (Example: 19 March 2019)

This heading only goes on the first page.

Title

  MLA papers should have one-inch margins and be double-spaced with Times New Roman, size 12 font. Once your paper is formatted properly, begin your paper with an attention-getter or hook, then transition to the topic of your essay. Continue to narrow the topic and then lead into your thesis statement.

  The beginning of each paragraph will be indented half an inch with the body of the text aligned left. The thesis statement should be the last sentence of your introductory paragraph, and contain your argument and/or claim/focus.

  Body paragraphs will provide detailed information that supports the thesis statement. Information from sources should be used and cited in your body paragraphs to support your claims. Each paragraph should have a topic, topic sentence, evidence, analysis of the topic and evidence, and conclusion/transition sentence(s).

  The Works Cited page will be on a separate page after the final paragraph of the paper. Create a separate page by inserting a page break. List each citation alphabetically by the author' source's first word.

When the citation begins with an article (a, an, the), use the second word. When no author is listed, the title of the work is used for the citation entry. Format the entries with hanging indents, where the first line of each citation is left aligned, with subsequent lines indented.

Works Cited

Brown, Ruth. "Pedestrian Seriously Injured When Struck by Vehicle in

Downtown Boise on Wednesday." *IdahoStatesman.com*, 7 Feb. 2019.

www.idahostatesman.com/news/local/community/boise/article94520602

.html.

Chartier, Allen. "Lake St. Clair Metropark Bird Banding Report – May 26-June 2,

2016." *Michigan Hummingbird Guy*, Blogspot.com, 4 June 2016.

mihummingbirdguy.blogspot.com/2016/06/lake-st-clair-metropark-bird-

banding.html.

Goffman, Alice. "How We're Priming Some Kids for College - and Others for

Prison." *TED*, Mar. 2015.

www.ted.com/talks/alice_goffman_college_or_prison_two_destinies_on

e_blatant_ injustice?language=en.

National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. "Immunization

Schedules." United States, Department of Health and Human Services,

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 Feb. 2016, www.cdc.

gov/vaccines/schedules/.

MLA Source Integration

Paraphrases, summaries, and/or direct quotes are strategies to integrate ideas from other writers into your paper. Again, consistent, proper citation of sources is an important part of avoiding plagiarism and increasing your credibility as the writer. Please see the *Quote Sandwich* handout for further information about ways to integrate sources.

When integrating sources, be sure not to change the original meaning/intent of the information from the source. This means that you should never force a source to fit the point of your work.

Paraphrase

Paraphrasing is putting ideas from your source(s) into your own words and does not require quotation marks. Be purposeful with phrasing, because using words that sound similar to the words in your sources can still be a form of plagiarism. The purpose of paraphrasing is to communicate the same idea, using your own words in a way that fits your writing style for the paper.

Paraphrasing is often used for single sentences or paragraphs.

Example of Avoiding Plagiarism in Paraphrases

The sections bolded below indicate the pieces of each sentence that match too closely to be a true paraphrase. Even though the words are different, more has to be done than just changing the words. The words have to be expressed in a new way.
(Example from *Radical Candor* by Kim Scott).

Source: At first blush, it seems like achieving results is more a matter of challenging directly than caring personally.
Plagiarism: **At first,** it can look like **getting results** is more about setting **direct challenges** than **personal care.**
Paraphrase: In chapter 4, Scott expresses that when first looking at how to achieve collaborative results, it can appear as if it's important to set challenges for people, when in reality it is more important to care about your team (75).

Note: Make sure you cite the source you are paraphrasing by using a signal phrase. For example, "The source suggests…"). Use the signal phrase along with an in-text parenthetical citation. Even if you have put the information in your own words, it is important to include the citation to avoid plagiarism, because you got the information from someone else. Please see our *Plagiarism* and *In-text Citations* handouts for more details.

Summary

A summary takes a large amount of information and condenses it to the main points, written in your own words. It needs to accurately represent the ideas from the source.

A summary is often used to cover information from a larger work, such as an entire chapter, a movie, or even an entire book. The point of a summary is to highlight themes, key points, and main arguments and ideas from a source.

One type of summary is a synopsis. A synopsis is usually found on the back of a movie case, back cover of a book, or inside the front flap of a hardcover book.

Sample Movie Synopsis:

"When Thor's evil brother, Loki (Tom Hiddleston), gains access to the unlimited power of the energy cube called the Tesseract, Nick Fury (Samuel L. Jackson), director of S.H.I.E.L.D., initiates a superhero recruitment effort to defeat the unprecedented threat to Earth. Joining Fury's "dream team" are Iron Man (Robert Downey Jr.), Captain America (Chris Evans), the Hulk (Mark Ruffalo), Thor (Chris Hemsworth), the Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) and Hawkeye (Jeremy Renner)."
(Synopsis from Google)

Direct Quote

A direct quote uses two or more of the source's exact words, and integrates them into the paper. These include quotation marks to signal that it is a direct quote.

Example:

> According to *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul*, "… play can be scientifically proven to be useful" (Brown 31).

Integrating Direct Quotes

Prior to quoting a whole sentence, **provide the reader with a connection** between the quote and the main point. Put a colon between a complete sentence and the quote.	**Example**: *Play* suggests that there is more to playing than we might first assume: "… play can be scientifically proven to be useful" (Brown 31).
Ghost Quotes are quotes that have no connection to your points. Always explain how a quote relates to the main point. The example given does **NOT** offer proper context, and is a ghost quote.	**Error:** Staying on task is important. "… play can be scientifically proven to be useful" (Brown 31).

Direct Quote Integration Methods	Examples
Quotes should be exact, but they also need to fit the grammar of your sentence. Use brackets [ ] to indicate words you changed to fit your sentence better.	*Play* informs readers that "… [playing] can be scientifically proven to be useful" (Brown 31).
Using Ellipses (…) When shortening a quote to focus on relevant points for your paper, use ellipses (…) to indicate where you left words out. Sometimes quotes include information not actually relevant to your work, so you can leave them out.	**Full example:** "Kids think history is dry as a bone if they are forced to memorize dates and names, but let them play a game of Diplomacy or imagine themselves living on the frontier in colonial times and history comes alive" (Brown 100). **Example with Ellipses:** "Kids think history is dry… if they are forced to memorize dates and names, but let them play a game… and history comes alive" (Brown 100).

Examples found in: Brown, Stuart, M.D., and Christopher Vaughan. *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul.* Penguin Group, New York, 2010.

Indirect Quotes

Indirect quotes are ideas found in one of your sources that originally come from a different source. When using an indirect quote, give the original author credit for the idea in the signal phrase. In the in-text citation in parentheses, begin with "qtd. in" and cite the source where you found the idea.

Example:

In *Perspectives on Pedagogical Grammar,* Odlin claims that "… pedagogical grammar is necessarily "a hybrid discipline," one which draws from several areas of study" (qtd. in *Pedagogical Grammar*).

In this example, the source for our paper is the book, *Pedagogical Grammar*, and the indirect source that originally had the information is *Perspectives on Pedagogical Grammar*.

Example from:

Keck, Casey, and YouJin Kim. *Pedagogical Grammar*. John Benjamins Publishing Company, Philadelphia, 2014.

MLA Block Quotes

A block quote is a form of direct quotation that shares longer information from a source in a format that stands out from the rest of the paper. When using MLA format, it is best to use short quotes, summarizing, and/or paraphrasing. However, if a quote is more than four lines long in your paper, it becomes a block quote and requires special formatting. MLA recommends using only one block quote per 4 pages of text to avoid overwhelming the reader. See the *Source Integration* handout for more information.

Block Quote Guidelines:
- To make a block quote:
  - In Microsoft Word, highlight your quote and press the Tab key. (See example below).
- Block quotes do not use quotation marks around the text. (See example on next page).
- The parenthetical citation goes after the final punctuation mark of the quote.
- The whole quote is indented half an inch from the left.
  - This means that it stands out from the rest of the body of the paper.
- Use a signal phrase in the paragraph right before the quote, and then discuss the information after the quote to better argue your point.
  - Example signal phrase: "According to Smith . . ."
- After the block quote, continue the body paragraph without an indentation.

When to use a Block Quote:
- Do your best to avoid using block quotes.
  - Using too many block quotes reduces your credibility as a writer because it can end up looking like you are relying on other people's words instead of letting their ideas inform your own.
- If there is absolutely no other way to include the information from a source, and if there is no other effective way to convey the same information, then a block quote may be necessary.
  - Please visit the Writing Center to get help with shortening long quotes, paraphrasing, and summarizing information from sources.

Sample Block Quote

For students to get the most out of the CWI Writing Center, it is crucial to understand the Writing Center's purpose and function. The Writing Center webpage provides information on their services and philosophy:

> The Writing Center is a place where students can get help with academic, creative, and professional writing. Writing Center consultants are careful readers and listeners. As such, they will not edit papers, but will instead offer strategies for revision and help identify errors. They help with any type of writing at any stage of the writing process, including brainstorming, drafting, revising, and polishing. (The Writing Center)

This information provides a description of The Writing Center, and how writing consultants help support students. In essence, this quote describes the Writing Center's ability to guide and develop writer's skills without editing or doing the work for them.

MLA In-text Citations

In-text citations provide the reader with source information to identify where the information came from, along with giving credit to the original author. Using in-text citations correctly helps writers avoid plagiarism, which makes in-text citations a vital part of academic integrity.

Basic Format:
- Parenthetical citations have parentheses ( ) with the author(s)' last name(s) and page number with no commas.
    - Example: (Smith 27).
- The period of the sentence comes after the parenthetical citation.
    - Example: Despite Iron Man being the leader, Peter Parker's relatable and witty personality have made Spider-Man the public's favorite Avenger (Smith 27).

Basic In-Text Citation Examples*
(Note: Examples are in Times New Roman font according to MLA Style).

Type of Citation	Signal Phrase	Parenthetical Reference
2 Authors	Mary Howard and Ann Wallis … (23).	(Howard and Wallis 23).
3 or more Authors	Jones et al. … (23).**	(Jones et al. 23).**
No Known Author	In the article, "Title" (23).	("Title or Initial Noun Phrase" 23).
Article with no author:	The article, "Over the Rainbow" states that… (3).	("Title of Article" 3).
Book or journal with no author:	In *The Book or Journal*, "We needed an example" … (15).	(*Title of Book or Journal* 15).
Section of book or journal with no author:	In "This Section," "we also needed an example"… (7).	("Title of Section" 7).
From a single page:	When the writer states, "This specific quote," … (57).	(57). This indicates page 57.
From multiple, continuous pages:	Throughout *The Book*, "The author says, "this example," … (11-15).	(11-15). This indicates pages 11 *through* 15.
From multiple, non-continuous pages:	In several places, the author mentions, "the same information," …(22, 76).	(22, 76). This indicates pages 22 *and* 76.

From continuous and non-continuous pages:	In *This Book*, "We saw this in several places"… (11-15, 76).	(11-15, 76). This indicates pages 11 *through* 15, *and* 76.

* Please refer to the MLA Handbook (8th edition) or the MLA website at style.mla.org for more details on specifics and variations of in-text citations.

** et al. - an abbreviation meaning "and others."

Signal Phrases:
- Use words such as ("According to…," "Research suggests…,"or "Smith stated…").
- These phrases indicate that the words coming next will be from a source.
- Sometimes, signal phrases are used to introduce the author of the source.
- When using the same source again in your paper, you do not need to use the same signal phrase.
  - Examples:
    - In his book, Smith states, "Quote from book…." (16).
    - Later on, Smith also writes, "Another quote from book…" (93).

Note: In college-level writing, it is best to use a signal phrase to introduce sources. Please see our *Quote Sandwich* handout for more information.

Examples of Signal Phrases

Author Mentioned in Signal Phrase:

According to R. J. Palacio's character Justin in *Wonder*, "No, no, it's not all random, if it really was random, the universe would abandon us completely. And the universe doesn't" (204).

Note: If you use the author's name in the signal phrase, you do not need to use it again in the parenthetical reference.

Author Mentioned in the Parenthetical Reference:

One of the characters from *Wonder*, Justin, talks about how the universe intentionally influences people's lives (Palacio 204).

Note: Some information in this handout is adapted from from *MLA Handbook*. 8th ed., Modern Language Association of America.

MLA Works Cited Page

The Work(s) Cited page is the part of your paper where you list all of your sources so that readers can see where you got the information, and find that same information later on. Again, this maintains academic integrity. It also demonstrates that you took the time to do research to inform your ideas, which helps build more credibility.

Creating MLA Citation Entries

There is no specific format for each type of source. Find the available source information that matches the *MLA Core Elements*. Remember, the purpose of the citation is to help the reader know where the information came from. For further clarification, please refer to the MLA website or to the MLA Style Manual, 8th Edition.

Formatting the Work(s) Cited Page

- Like the rest of the paper, this page uses Times New Roman font, size 12, and is double spaced.
- Sources are listed with hanging indents.
    - Hanging indents are when the first line of the entry is left aligned, with subsequent lines indented one-half inch from the left margin. (See example below).
- Page title is usually Works Cited, but depends on number of sources.
    - If you only have one source, then use Work Cited.
- Entries on the Work(s) Cited are alphabetized by the first word in each entry, except for if the first word is an article (a, an, the).
    - If the first word is an article (a, an, the), use the next word in the title for alphabetizing.
- If there is no author, the title of the work becomes the start of the citation and is used for alphabetizing.

Work(s) Cited Formatting Example

Your Last Name 5

Work Cited

Scott, Kim. *Radical Candor: How to Get What You Want by Saying What You Mean*. Pan Books, London, 2018.

MLA Core Elements

The information MLA asks for in the Work(s) Cited entries, regardless of the type of source, is listed below:

Core Element	Description
Author(s).	List the author's last name first, followed by a comma and the first name. All subsequent authors are listed with their first name then last name. Organizations can also be listed as the author.
"Title of Source."	List the title of a section (article or chapter) in a larger work.
Title of Container,	List the title of the larger work (journal or book) containing the section.
Other Contributors,	List other contributors like editors, performers, and directors.
Version,	List identifying numbers like editions, versions, or director's cut.
Number,	List identifying numbers like volumes, series, issues, or episodes.
Publisher,	List the company that published the work like website sponsors, Facebook, Twitter, or databases that contain academic journal articles.
Publication Date,	List when the work was published like the day, month, year, and time.
Location.	List the DOI or URL for Web sources and/or page number(s).

*If you can't find one of the Core Elements, you may need to reconsider if the source really is academic and credible. Not every academic, credible source will have all the elements, so it is important to use your best judgment.

Common Examples

These sample citation entries are from sources commonly used in college writing. Your citations will be similar, but may not be exactly the same. It's important to follow the order and punctuation of the entry type. All of these examples are provided in Times New Roman, size 12 font.

Note: The first entry in each of the following sample entries is the information you need to include in the citation, the second part is a sample citation.

Book with single author:

Last Name, First Name. Title. Publisher, Year of publication.

Oluo, Ijeoma. *So You Want to Talk About Race*. Seal Press, New York, 2018.

*Please see note about including the City of Publication in the *Special Notes about MLA 8th Edition* section

Book with two authors:

1st author's Last name, First name, and 2nd author's First and Last name. *Title*. Company, Year of Publication.

Brown, Stuart, M.D., and Christopher Vaughan. *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul*. Penguin Group, New York, 2010.

Book with three or more authors:

Last name, First name, et al. *Book Title: Subtitle*. Publisher, Year.

Wysocki, Anne Frances, et al. *Writing New Media: Theory and Applications for Expanding the Teaching of Composition*. Utah State UP, 2004.

Films or Movies:

Director's Last name, First name. *Full Title of Movie*. Production Company, Year.

Lucas, George. Director. *Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*. 20th Century Fox, 2005.

Website by Corporate Author or Organization:

Name of Governmental Body or Authors, Name of Agency. Title of Publication/Article. Date, URL.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Immunization Schedules." cdc.gov. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 31 Jan. 2014. www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html. Accessed 25 Oct. 2018.

Image:

Last name, First name. "Title of Image." *Title of the Website,* First name Last name of any contributors, Version (if applicable), Number (if applicable), Publisher, Publication date, URL.

Vasquez, Gary A. "Photograph of Coach K with Team USA." *NBC Olympics,* USA Today Sports, 5 Aug. 2016, www.nbcolympics.com/news/rio-olympics-coach-ks-toughest-test-or-lasting-legacy. Accessed 20 Apr. 2019.

Personal Interviews:

Last name, First name. Personal interview. Date of Interview.

Parsons, Jim. Personal interview. 4 Aug. 2012.

Selection from an anthology:

Last name, First name. "Title of Essay." *Title of Collection*, edited by Editor's Name(s), Publisher, Year, Page range of entry.

Bishop, Elisabeth. "The Fish." *The Penguin Anthology of Twentieth Century American Poetry*, edited by Rita Dove, Penguin Books, 2011, pp. 147-149.

Scholarly Article from a database:

Last name, First, and Second Author. "Title of Source." *Title of Container*, Other Contributors,
Version, Number, Publisher, Publication Date, Location.

Hagen, Patricia L., and Thomas W. Zelman. "'We Were Never on the Scene of the Crime':
Eavan Boland's Repossession of History." *Twentieth Century Literature,* vol. 37,
no. 4, 1991, pp. 442-453, *InfoTrac Student Edition*,
doi:10.5465/amle.2013.0337. Accessed 19 Mar. 2016.

Scholarly Article Online:

Last name, First name. "Title of the Article." *Title of the Journal*, Version (if applicable),
Numbers (such as a volume and issue number), Publication date, Page numbers. *Title of
the Database,* URL or DOI.

Dolby, Nadine. "Research in Youth Culture and Policy: Current Conditions and Future
Directions." *Social Work and Society: The International Online-Only Journal,* vol. 6, no.
2, 2008, www.socwork.net/sws/article/view/60/362. Accessed 20 May 2009.

***Ted* Talk or Lecture:**

Last name, First name. "Title of Video." *TED*, Date, URL.

Heyworth, Gregory. "How I'm Discovering the Secrets of Ancient Texts." *TED*, Oct.
2015, www.ted.com/talks/gregory_heyworth_how_i_m_discovering_the_secrets_of_anci
ent_texts.

Tweet:

Twitter handle. Tweet in quotes." *Twitter*, Date, Time, URL.

@tombrokaw. "SC demonstrated why all the debates are the engines of this
campaign." *Twitter,* 22 Jan. 2012, 3:06 a.m.,
twitter.com/tombrokaw/status/160996868971704320.

Web site:

Last name, First name. "Title of the Article or Individual Page." *Title of the Website*, Name of the Publisher, Date of Publication in Day Month Year format, URL.

Roberts, Bill. "Growing Pains, Again, in West Ada School District: As Families Keep Moving in, Classrooms Keep Filling." *idahostatesman.com*. Idaho Statesman, 3 Aug. 2014. www.wsj.com/articles/boise-idaho-feels-the-growing-pains-of-a-surging-population-1523793600.

YouTube Video:

Last name, First name. "Title of the Film or Video." *Title of the Website,* role of contributors and their First name Last name, Version, Numbers, Publisher, Publication date, URL.

McGonigal, Jane. "Gaming and Productivity." *YouTube*, uploaded by Big Think, 3 July 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkdzy9bWW3E.

Important Notes about MLA 8th Edition

Previous versions of MLA did not require the URL in the citation entry, but this is recommended in MLA 8 to help the reader easily locate the source. You do not need to include http:// or https:// in the URL.

For books, include the City of Publication:
- If the book was published before 1900
- If the publisher has offices in several countries
- If the publisher is unknown in North America

(Information adapted from "OWL at Purdue MLA Works Cited Page: Books")

[Updated April 2019]