Documenting Sources: MLA Style (8th Edition)

You must document your sources anytime that you use information that is not your own. We have provided examples of the most commonly used sources below, but you may need to adapt your citations as needed, or refer to the MLA Handbook for more complicated citations.

IN-TEXT DOCUMENTATION FORMAT

Note: Most electronic sources do not include page numbers from the original print version. If the source does provide them, page numbers should be at the end of the sentence in parentheses, otherwise use nothing at all.

Basic in-text citation with author signal phrase
Lister claims that “stained glass work is an act of meditation” (23).

Basic in-text citation with author’s/authors’ name/s in parentheses
Interest in rap music has become increasingly mainstream (Bliss and Thomas 75).

Source with no author and no page numbers
(Note: Use the first word or two of the title, ignoring initial articles. Titles will be in quotation marks or italicized, depending on how they appear in the works cited list.)
Colonial house plans often included traditional designs and methods (“Architectural”).

Indirect source (source within a source) (secondary source with three or more authors)
Taylor has noted “several discrepancies in twin studies of the past” (qtd in Thomas et al. 56).

CORE WORKS CITED ELEMENTS – Parts of a Citation + Punctuation
From MLA Style Center: https://style.mla.org/works-cited-a-quick-guide/

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(Note: The item you are citing may include a container nested inside a larger container, such as a journal article found in a database. Add any applicable elements 3-9 from the above list to the end of the citation to account for the second container.)
WORKS CITED FORMAT

General Formatting Tips

A works cited list should begin on a new page and be double-spaced. Each entry/citation in the list should be alphabetized by the last name of the first author listed. If no author, alphabetize by the first word of the title other than A, An, or The. When citing a complete date, all months but May, June, and July are abbreviated. If a date range, like 2011-2016, is given, use the range.

Note about works cited elements: In general, if an element is missing, it can be excluded from the citation.

Note about URLs: The MLA Handbook recommends the use of DOIs (digital object identifier) or permalinks/bookmarks for items retrieved from databases (look for a Permalink, Bookmark, Shared URL, etc.). It does not explain what to do if there is no DOI or permalink. In that case, the Library recommends using the URL for the database up to the .com (for example, search.proquest.com).

Books

Book by a single author


eBooks (Example shows two authors)

Johnson, Emily K., and Betty J. Friedman. A History of Women Artists. Thompson, 2009. ebrary,


(Note: In this example the book is “self-contained” and ebrary is the second container.)

Book by three or more authors


Book by an unknown author (or the organization/corporate author is also the publisher)


Work in an anthology

Spencer, Mark, Jr. “The Fifth Column.” Collected Science Fiction Stories, edited by Katie Spooner and Lynn Nord,


Article in a reference book from a database


250-58. Gale Virtual Reference Library, go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX2587500656&v=

2.1&u=cccl_main&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w&asid=33f80ebdb30d3ca30f59aebe37affa8.

(Note: The URL above is a permalink found in the database.)
Periodicals (Journals, Magazines, & Newspapers)

PDF versions of articles show original page numbers but usually do not show the database name, which is required in MLA style. Record the name of the database on the PDF printout. Non-PDF articles usually show paging information somewhere on the database retrieval page.

Article with two authors from a database


(Note: The DOI could also be expressed as a URL: dx.doi.org/10.1093/ohr/ohw012. Either form is correct. If there is no DOI, look for a link for the Permalink, Bookmark, Shared URL, etc. The MLA Handbook does not explain what to do if there is no DOI or permalink. In that case, the Library recommends using the URL for the database up to the .com.)

Article with no author from the Internet


Other Database Content (Essays, Reference Book Articles, etc.)

Viewpoint essay from *Opposing Viewpoints in Context* database


(Note: If a permalink is extremely long, use the URL up to the domain, such as .com, .org, etc.)

Article in a reference book from *Literature Resource Center* database


General Web Sites

Web site with author (and the publisher is different from the Web site title)

Corporate / Organization / Government Web site with no personal author


(Note: A publisher’s name may be omitted from the citation when a Web site’s title and the name of its publisher are essentially the same.)


Blackboard

Material created by instructor


Material from authors other than instructor


(Note: Cite the correct format for the source using as much information as available.)

Misc Sources

Personal interview

Smith, Jesse. Personal interview. 31 May 2016.

Images


(Note: In this example the author, date, and title of the image are unknown. When a source is untitled, make up a generic description for it. Capitalize the first word and any proper nouns in the description. Do not italicize or enclose in quotation marks.)
Streaming video


(Note: This is a segment of a film found in the Films on Demand database with a permalink URL.)

This handout adapted from:


(L:\Bibliographic Formats\MLA2016\Print\ElectronicStyle eb & wm) Revised August 22, 2016