# MLA Citation Style

**MLA and this handout cannot provide examples for every possible situation!**

- When an exact example is not provided by MLA, find the closest example and adapt it. It is often necessary to assemble a citation from several examples.

- The authority for MLA style is the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (called *Handbook* here), which is available at most libraries for in-library use. The current edition is the 6th edition.

- The *Handbook* is sold by the AC Bookstore and other booksellers. Call 371-5304 or e-mail bookstore@actx.edu for information. The MLA Web site (http://www.mla.org/style_faq) also has information and examples.

- This handout contains several interpretations obtained from an editor at MLA. These interpretations were requested in situations not directly addressed in the *Handbook*.

- Writing a works-cited list can be a time-consuming undertaking. Don’t leave it until the last minute!

- Most examples here are from the *Handbook* or the MLA Web site. To avoid confusion, quotation marks indicating a direct quote from the *Handbook* are omitted from examples.

## CONTENTS OF HANDBOOK

The numbers are **NOT page numbers**. They correspond to the numbering system in the *Handbook*. They help you locate information in order in this handout and in the *Handbook*.

### Important Tips

**Formatting, etc.**

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- Editor, Translator, Named Edition 5.6.1
- Two or More Books by the Same Author 5.6.3
- Book by Two or More Authors 5.6.4
- Book by Corporate Author (Organization) 5.6.6
- Work in an Anthology (e.g., *Short Story Criticism*), 5.6.7
- Literary Work in a Literature Textbook (Anthology) 5.6.7
- Reference Book 5.6.8
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- A Personal Home Page 5.9.2c
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- Library Subscription Service (Library Databases) 5.9.7

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- Using the Author’s Name in the Reference 6.3
- Citing Volume and Page Number of a Multi-Volume Work 6.4.3
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### Sample First Page and List of Works Cited
Important Tips

Arrangement of entries in the works-cited list: Arrange citations alphabetically by the last name of the first author. When there is no author, use the title. (An organization can be an author.)

Authors: Give the name of the author or editor as it appears on the title page. On the works-cited list, use the last name first. See the book examples for multiple authors. Use the editor’s name in the place of the author’s name only if the editor wrote the information you borrowed in your paper.

City of publication: Include the publication location information from the title page for books. The state is included (two-letter abbreviation) except for major cities such as New York, Boston, Los Angeles, and London. If several cities are listed, use the first one.

Date/n.d.: The publication date may be on the title page of a book. If it is not, use the copyright date on the following page. If no date is given, use “n.d.” instead. (See example 5.6.25).

Edition: It is abbreviated “ed.” See example 5.6.14 below.

Editor: It is abbreviated “Ed.” See examples below by format type.

Header: Each page has a header (in the upper right corner one-half inch from the top) that includes your last name and the page number. This is best done with the “header” feature of a word-processing program.

Indentation: Use a hanging indentation format for citation entries (see examples). The indentation should be one-half inch on a word processor or five spaces on a typewriter.

Internet sources often were published in print first. These citations include the print information and the electronic information. See the “Print Sources” section for examples for the print part of an electronic citation.

Line-spacing: Double-space the paper and the works-cited list.

Margins: One inch on all sides.

Missing publication information: Use n.p. when a city of publication or publisher name is not available. Use n.d. when a publication date is not available. (See section 5.6.25 below for examples.)

Publisher names: Omit articles (a, an, the). Omit words such as Co., Corp., Inc., Ltd., Publishers, and Books. Use the surname for publishing companies with a person’s name (e.g., Norton for W.W. Norton). Use the first surname when there are two surnames (e.g., Thomson for Thomson-Gale). Omit Press except for university presses (7.5). University presses: Use U for university and P for press (e.g., Yale UP for Yale University Press, U of Texas P for University of Texas Press). (7.1)

Subtitles: Put a colon (:) after the main title and then include the subtitle. See examples below.

Underlining vs. italics: Use underlining instead of italics in material that will be graded. (MLA Web site)
PRINT SOURCES—Double-space your citations!

Get publication information for a book from the title page except for the copyright date, which is usually found on the next page. (5.6.1)

5.6.1 Book by a Single Author
Author (last name first). Book Title. City of publication: Publisher, year of publication.


—Books with editors or translators and those with a named edition

5.6.3 Two or More Books by the Same Author
Type three hyphens followed by a period for authors or a comma for editors, translators, or compilers. List books alphabetically by title.


5.6.4 Book by Two or More Authors

—More than three authors. Use the first author listed, followed by et al. (and others in Latin), or list the other authors’ names as they appear on the book's title page.


5.6.6 Book by a Corporate Author (An Organization)

5.6.7 Work in an Anthology (AC's Print Literary Criticism Sources)
Examples: Masterplots, Black Literature Criticism, Contemporary Literary Criticism, Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism, Nineteenth-Century Literary Criticism, Short Story Criticism, Poetry Criticism, Drama Criticism, Classical and Medieval Literary Criticism.

—IMPORTANT! An anthology is a collection of works published together. All essays in the anthologies listed above were first published in a journal or book. Cite the original publication information from the beginning or ending of the essay, followed by Rpt. in. Then include the citation for the anthology itself from the title page and next page (date only) of the volume. Use the beginning and ending page numbers for the essay used.

Note: Essays in Masterplots were written for Masterplots, so they do not have prior print information. Citations are written differently for the online Masterplots essays in the Literature Reference Center library database. See “Electronic Sources” section for an example. The example below is for the print version.

General Format For An Anthology

Author(s). "Title of Article." Previous print publication information. Rpt. in Title of Anthology. Editor. Volume number. City of publication: Publisher, year. Starting and ending pages of essay you used.

—Signed article first printed in a JOURNAL  (Example: Short Story Criticism)

In this entry, 1 is the volume number of the journal, and 3 is the issue number. They are included for scholarly journals. The title of a story within the title of the article has its own single quotation marks.

—Signed article first printed in a BOOK  (Example: Short Story Criticism)

The original citation in Short Story Criticism did not include the location of Michigan State University Press, so N.p. is used to indicate that no place of publication was given.

—Literary work in a literature textbook (Anthology)

5.6.8 Article in a Reference Book (Encyclopedia Or Dictionary)

—Important! Sources such as Short Story Criticism and Masterplots are anthologies. See 5.6.7 above.

Author(s) of article (If there is no author, do NOT substitute the editor's name). "Title of Article." Title of Reference Book. Edition. Year of publication.

If no author is given, begin with the title.

—For familiar works

—For less familiar works

5.6.14 A Book Published in a Second or Subsequent Edition


5.6.15 A Multi-Volume Work

5.6.16 A Book in a Series (Example: Information Plus series. Series is abbreviated.)
For more information, consult the MLA Handbook. (See pg. 1 for details about accessing the Handbook.)

Citations are double-spaced.

Author(s). Book Title. Name of Series (from title page). Number in series (if provided). City of publication: Publisher, year.


5.6.21 A Government Publication


5.6.25 A Book without Stated Publication Information or Pagination

5.7.1 Article from a Journal (Use volume and issue, if given, for scholarly journals only.)

In this example, 28 is the volume number, and 1 is the issue number.

5.7.5 Article from a Newspaper
Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Source Day Month Year, edition (if given): pages.

Omit introductory the or other article adjectives from the newspaper’s title.
Abbreviate all months except May, June, and July.
Use a section designation (A, B, etc.) if needed.
Use a plus sign after the page number if the story is continued on another page.
Include edition if given.
Do not include volume and issue numbers.

5.7.6 Article from a Magazine (Do not use volume and issue, even if given.)

5.7.7 Review
Reviewer's name (if given). “Title of Review” if any. Rev. of Title of Work Reviewed, by author of work. Title of Publication Where Review Appeared. Date: page.


The CQ Researcher (This example is for the print version. See section 5.9.7 for the online example.)
The CQ Researcher has some unusual features, and the citation below was composed by an MLA editor with whom we corresponded. The electronic information was removed since this section is for the print version.
The title of the article is underlined instead of in quotation marks because the whole issue consists of one article. Volume and issue numbers are NOT be included because COR is not scholarly. The is omitted.


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**Electronic Sources**—Double-space your citations!

**General Format for a Document from an Electronic Source**

Author’s name (if given). “Title of Document.” Information about print publication (if any). Information about electronic publication. Access information.

Many electronic sources were published in print first, and the print publication is acknowledged in the citation. See the Print Sources section above to find out how to write the print part (if any). The print section contains information about how to handle multiple authors, editors, etc.

**Important Things to Know about Electronic Sources**

---**URLs for library database entries.** MLA discourages the use of long URLs. Instead, it recommends using the URL of the home page of the database vendor. See the list of databases after the database examples in this handout to find a list of home page URLs.

---**Page numbers.** Page numbers and paragraph numbers are omitted if not provided in the source (Gibaldi 245). Page numbers assigned by browsers like Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox vary from computer to computer and should not be used. PDF documents (Adobe Acrobat Reader documents) are scanned in from the original documents and provide page numbers that can be used. Paragraph numbers are used if available, but they are not common. Example: (Smith, pars. 19-20)

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**5.9.1 A Document from an Internet Site**

Author’s name (if given). “Title of the Document.” Information about print publication, if any. Information about electronic publication. Access information.


For more information, consult the MLA Handbook. (See pg. 1 for details about accessing the Handbook.)

**Citations are double-spaced.**

### 5.9.2 An Entire Internet Site


--- *A home page for a course (5.9.2a)*


--- *A personal home page (5.9.2c)*


### 5.9.4 An Article in an Online Periodical

--- *Scholarly journal (5.9.4.a)* (Use volume and issue number if available.)


--- *Magazine (5.9.4.c)* (Use the date. Do not use volume and issue numbers.)


### 5.9.7 A Work from a Library Subscription Service (AC’s databases such as Academic Search Premier and Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center that are accessed through the AC Library home page)

Author(s), if given. "Title of the Article." Complete publication information for the original print version, if any. Date of online publication, if given. Name of the Database Used. Sponsoring organization or company (such as EBSCO or Gale—appears somewhere on the screen). Lynn Lib., Amarillo Coll. Date of access by student <URL of database vendor home page—see “Database URLs” section below>.

--- *Prior publication in a scholarly journal or magazine.* Look for issue numbers, seasons, months, and words like *Journal, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, and Annual.*

Use volume and issue numbers for scholarly journals. Including issue numbers for all scholarly journals contradicts 5.7.1, but an MLA editor okayed such usage because determining page numbering can be difficult in electronic versions. Use the publication date for non-scholarly items like magazines.

If you cannot tell whether a publication is scholarly, call the AC Library at 371-5468 or toll-free 866-371-5468. It can be looked up in an AC Library database called UlrichsWeb (“Multi-Subject Databases” section). If a referee’s shirt icon appears by the publication name after you look it up, the publication is scholarly.

For more information, consult the MLA Handbook.  
(See pg. 1 for details about accessing the Handbook.)

Citations are double-spaced.

(In the above example, 63 is the volume, and 4 is the issue.)


—Prior publication in a book. (A major identifying factor is the inclusion of the publisher.)


—The CQ Researcher
This publication has some unusual features, and the citation below was composed by an MLA editor with whom we corresponded. The title of the article is underlined instead of in quotation marks because the whole issue consists of one article. Volume and issue numbers are NOT be included because CQR is not scholarly. The is omitted.

No page numbers for HTML Version (the default version that comes up automatically).


Use page numbers for PDF Version. Open it by clicking PDF link in upper right corner of article. PDFs are scanned from original, so page numbers must be included in citation and parenthetical references.

For more information, consult the MLA Handbook. (See pg. 1 for details about accessing the Handbook.)

—Database URLs for citations (vendor home pages)

**IMPORTANT!!! Database companies (multiple databases) and their URLs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database Company</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EBSCOHost (Academic Search Premier and others)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ebsco.com/">http://www.ebsco.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomson Gale (Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center and others)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.galegroup.com/">http://www.galegroup.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FirstSearch/OCLC (WilsonSelectPlus and others)</td>
<td><a href="http://firstsearch.oclc.org/">http://firstsearch.oclc.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProQuest (Proquest Historical Newspapers and others)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.proquest.com/">http://www.proquest.com/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See databases below that are not produced by these companies.

—**Other library databases and their home page URLs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database Name</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronicle of Philanthropy</td>
<td><a href="http://philanthropy.com/">http://philanthropy.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CQ Researcher</td>
<td><a href="http://library.cqpress.com/">http://library.cqpress.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CollegeSource</td>
<td><a href="http://www.collegesource.org/">http://www.collegesource.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facts on File World News Digest</td>
<td><a href="http://www.facts.com/">http://www.facts.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HeritageQuest Online (Genealogy/Local History)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.heritagequestonline.com/">http://www.heritagequestonline.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Cooperative</td>
<td><a href="http://www.historycooperative.org/">http://www.historycooperative.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSTOR</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jstor.org/">http://www.jstor.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NetLibrary</td>
<td><a href="http://www.netlibrary.com/">http://www.netlibrary.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT!Ref</td>
<td><a href="http://www.statref.com/">http://www.statref.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas Digital Sanborn Maps</td>
<td><a href="http://sanborn.umi.com/">http://sanborn.umi.com/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Citing Sources Within the Text (Parenthetical References)**

—Author and date: Parenthetical references are notations within the text of a research paper that guide the reader to related entries in the works-cited list. MLA uses the author’s name and a page number. The author’s name can be part of the text of the sentence, or it can be enclosed in parentheses with the page number.

—Page numbers: Page numbers or paragraph numbers are omitted if not provided in the source (Gibaldi 245). Page numbers provided by browsers like Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox vary from computer to computer and are not be used for citations. PDF documents (Adobe Acrobat Reader documents) are scanned in from the original documents and provide page numbers that can be used. Paragraph numbers can be used if available, but they are not common. Example: (Smith, pars. 19-20).

—Additional note: It is best to use the author’s name in the text of the sentence when no page or paragraph number is available (Gibaldi 242). The first time you mention the author in the text of your paper, use the full name. After that, refer to the person by only his or her last name. The exceptions to this rule are people who are well known by only one name, such as Madonna or Mozart, and situations involving writing about two or more people who share the same last name (Gibaldi 96).
Poetry

3.7.3 Poetry (by line number)

--Short selection
Bradstreet frames the poem with a sense of mortality: “All things within this fading world hath end” (1).

--Two lines
Reflecting on the “incident” in Baltimore, Cullen concludes, “Of all the things that happened there / That’s all that I remember” (11-12).

--More than Three lines
Elizabeth Bishop’s “In the Waiting Room” is rich in evocative detail:

It was winter. It got dark.
Early. The waiting room
Was full of grown-up people,
Arctics and overcoats,
lamps and magazines. (6-10)

Prose

6.3 Using the Author Name(s) in the Text of the Sentence

—Page numbers given in source
Schweitzer has argued this position extensively (178-85).

Others, like Fields and Whitt (210-15), do not share this view.

Many critics agree with the view of Harvick that “modern art is far from universally admired or understood by the general public” (241).

—No page numbers given. (It is best to use the author’s name in the text when no page numbers are given.)
Brinson’s Trends in Education contains many examples of the application of this principle.

6.3 Using the Author Name(s) in the Reference (inside the parentheses)

This position has been strenuously challenged (Nelson 187-95).

Others have firmly supported Chaney’s position (e.g., Kisselberg and Jones 250-55).

Many critics agree with the view that “modern art is far from universally admired or understood by the general public” (Harvick 241).
6.4.3 Citing Volume and Page Numbers of a Multi-volume Work

“When citing a volume number as well as a page reference for a multivolume work, separate the two by a colon and a space. . . . Use neither the words volume and page nor their abbreviations” (Gibaldi 247).

The anthology by Lauter and his coeditors contains both Stowe’s “Sojourner Truth, the Libyan Sibyl” (1: 2530-38) and Gilman’s “The Yellow Wall-Paper” (2: 606-19).

6.4.4 Citing a Work Listed by Title

When no author is given, the title is used. Long titles are shortened when enclosed in parentheses. Use the word by which the entry is capitalized in the works-cited list (usually the first important word). Shortened titles of books, plays, and movies are underlined, and shortened titles of shorter works such as articles are put into quotation marks.

—Books
A Senate sub-committee reached a finding in 1983 that school lunches in many parts of the country were “nutritionally inadequate” (Report 2).

—Articles in periodicals
The Wall Street Journal described Williams as “a tireless advocate for the poor” (“Dedicated”).

—Electronic sources
Voice of the Shuttle is a Web site well known to many researchers.

6.4.7 Citing Indirect Sources (one work quoted in another work)

The pastoral theme is described at length and in detail in Segretti’s essay (qtd. in Duffy 616-17).


6.4.8 Citing . . . Religious Works

In one of the most vivid prophetic visions in the Bible, Ezekiel saw “what seemed to be four living creatures,” each with the faces of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (New Jerusalem Bible, Ezek. 1.5-10).


Please help us provide accurate information! If you believe you have spotted an error, please let us know. Send an e-mail describing the error to comerford-jk@actx.edu, or call 371-5403.