



MLA Formatting and Style Guide

The MLA (Modern Language Association) format is the writing and documentation system used primarily in the Arts and Humanities. Like any referencing system, the MLA outlines specific ways to number your pages, create your title page, and establish headings, in addition to specifying how to cite material from other authors. Always check with your instructor to find out how closely they want you to follow these guidelines. For complete guidelines for MLA format, as well as for specific issues not covered here, see:

[MLA Handbook. 9th ed. Modern Language Association of America, 2021.](#)

If you have come to this page seeking an answer to a specific question, try using your browser's search function (ctrl+F on Windows; command+F on Mac) to look for keywords (e.g. "indirect quotation").

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1. OWL Purdue MLA Sample Paper

The [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) is an excellent resource for students looking to improve their MLA formatting. Especially handy is the [MLA Sample Paper](#), which is formatted in perfect MLA and has helpful annotations explaining what to look out for *and* explanations for why individual MLA requirements exist.



2. On Using Generative AI Responsibly

The University of Toronto has created a [Generative AI Guide for Students](#) that you can self-navigate to learn how to harness these emerging technologies efficiently and responsibly. The University has also created a guide to [Citing Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Generative Tools \(including ChatGPT\)](#). This is an excellent resource for students looking to make use of recent advances in Generative AI technologies while still adhering to Academic Integrity guidelines. These guides are likely to be updated more often than this Style Guide; where University guidance differs from the advice given in this document, therefore, students should defer to the official guides.

To summarize, the University advises students to ask their instructors—before beginning their assignment—if they are allowed to use AI tools in their assignments and, if yes, in what capacity. If you have received a green light to make use of AI in your writing, be sure to follow your instructor’s specific instructions when citing and giving credit for its use. If any specific instructions remain unclear, you should ask follow-up questions.

You may also wish to consult the [MLA’s guide on citing Generative AI in MLA Style](#). In brief, the guide recommends 1) citing the tool whenever you incorporate any content created by AI into your assignment, 2) acknowledging the specific function you have used (e.g. paraphrasing, translating, image creation, etc.), and 3) carefully checking the secondary sources that the AI cites, where applicable. The following instructions focus on incorporating AI-generated textual content.

The MLA does not recommend citing AI tools as one might an author; focus instead on giving your reader the information they will need to recreate, as accurately as possible, the results you received from the AI.

“Title of Source (i.e. provide the prompt you submitted to the AI to generate the cited content)”
prompt. Title of AI Tool, version, Publisher, Date of Creation, URL.

“What is the significance of the Wolfenden Report and James Baldwin to Wole Soyinka’s novel *The Interpreters*?” prompt. *ChatGPT 4o*, 19 Feb. 2025 version, OpenAI, 19 Feb. 2025,
www.chat.openai.com/chat.

When referencing AI in the body of your assignment, acknowledge use in an attributive phrase (e.g. “Asked to explain the significance of the Wolfenden Report and Baldwin to Soyinka’s novel, *Chat GPT 4o* explained...”) before quoting or paraphrasing the result as normal. Follow this with an in-text citation that gives a shortened version of the source title beginning your Works Cited entry (e.g. “What is the significance”).

If the AI tool cites an external source, you **must** verify the accuracy of its treatment of that source. The MLA guide recommends quoting from and citing the external source, rather than the AI. If,



after verifying the AI response's accuracy, you want to treat its use of the original source as an indirect quotation/paraphrase, you **must also verify** whether the AI has directly quoted from the source or fully paraphrased it. This way, you will be prepared to format your own quotation/paraphrase and indirect citation (per instructions in section 5 below).

You may use citation generators without crediting them, but it is your responsibility to verify the accuracy of the citation (and of your copying and pasting it into your document).

Finally, if you want to use AI to generate paraphrases, be sure to receive explicit permission from your instructor *and* to cite the AI. Uncredited use of AI here would constitute an offense. Furthermore, especially in large courses, multiple students sometimes attempt to paraphrase the same source sentence via the same AI tool and end up submitting identical paraphrases. These students then find themselves in academic misconduct meetings, attempting to explain how they and another student they've never met ended up writing identical sentences.

3. General Formatting Notes

Paper and Margins:

Use 8.5 by 11 inch (21.59 by 27.94cm) white paper. Print on one side of the paper only.

Set all the margins (top, bottom, and sides) to 1 inch (2.54cm).

Include your last name and page number on the top right-hand corner of the header. Ensure that your name and page number are 0.5 inches (1.27cm) from the top and flush with the right margin. The font choice and size should match the rest of the document.

Do not use a separate title page (unless specifically requested by your instructor).

Fonts and Spacing:

Choose a legible, professional font (e.g., Times New Roman or Arial) and use it consistently throughout the paper. Match your font size with your font choice—11-point and 12-point are generally safe bets.

Double space the entire text of your essay (including the information on the first page, block quotations, and the Works Cited page). Indent the first line of each paragraph by 0.5 inches (1.27cm). Leave one space after end of sentence punctuation.



4. The First Page of Your Essay

Include your name, instructor's name, course code, and date 1 inch (2.54cm) from the top of the first page and flush with the left margin on separate, double-spaced lines.

Type and centre your title using regular font formatting (no italics, bold, or quotation marks, except where required by source titles) after the date. Use title case: capitalize all words except for articles ("the," "a," "an") and prepositions ("in," "for," etc.) unless they are the first word in your title.

Indent 0.5 inches (1.27cm) from the left margin and begin the body of your essay.

The first page of your essay should look like this:

Doe 1

John Doe

Professor Smith

English 101

1 January 2025

Postcolonial Adventures in Shakespeare's *Othello*

The politics of postcolonialism did not begin in the 1960s. Many of the same concerns and issues we see in contemporary postcolonial literature and criticism are present in Elizabethan drama. A good example of an Elizabethan play that...

5. Parenthetical Citations

In MLA style, use parenthetical citations to acknowledge others' work. Each of the parenthetical citations in your text is "keyed" to an alphabetical list of texts (the Works Cited page) included at the end of your essay. A parenthetical citation includes the author's last name followed by a space and the appropriate page number or numbers. Do not separate the author's name and page number with a comma. If the source is unpaginated, do not include a page number. Finally, unless you have good reason to place a citation elsewhere in a sentence (see the Halberstam examples below) or are using a block quotation, citations should immediately precede the final period.

(Last name #)



With the exception of common knowledge, you *must* cite any and all information for which you are not the original source. If you are unsure whether you should be citing something, ask yourself the following question: “Do I need to inform my reader that the words and/or ideas in this sentence come from another source?” If the answer is yes, you almost certainly need a citation. If you are still unsure, consider asking your instructor or TA for guidance. If you are *still* unsure, then add the citation. It is better to risk losing a grade for an MLA error than to risk committing unintentional academic misconduct by not citing external information.

Using Parenthetical Citations

There are four different ways to provide the necessary information for a citation in MLA style. In all four options, include both the author’s name and a page number. The following are examples of the different ways to cite your source in MLA style:

a) Use a direct quotation and mention the author in the sentence:

Weedon argues that the “power of fiction lies in its ability to construct for the reader ways of being and of understanding the world” (140).

b) Use a direct quotation in the sentence:

Contemporary feminist critics insist that the “power of fiction lies in its ability to construct for the reader ways of being and of understanding the world” (Weedon 140).

c) Paraphrase/summarize and mention the author in the sentence:

Weedon promotes the idea that fiction is a powerful political tool that helps readers understand their place in the world (140).

d) Paraphrase/summarize and mention the author in parenthesis:

One scholar promotes the idea that fiction is a powerful political tool that helps readers understand their place in the world (Weedon 140).

In each of the examples above, the reader knows the relevant information can be found on page 140 of a text by Weedon. The reader can consult the Works Cited at the end of the essay to get more information about the source. In the Works Cited, the reader would find the following entry:

Weedon, Chris. *Feminist Practice & Poststructuralist Theory*. Blackwell, 1997.

Parenthetical Citations for a Print Source with No Known Author

If you have a source with no known author, the parenthetical citation should include a shortened title in place of the author’s name.



The trade international trade in waste electronics is illegal under the terms of the Basel Ban (“Briefing Paper” 2).

Parenthetical Citation for a Classic or Literary Work with Multiple Editions

When citing classic or literary works which have multiple editions, additional information should be included in the parenthetical citation. The parenthetical citation should still contain the page number, but also the abbreviation for volume (vol.), book (bk.), part (pt.), chapter (ch.), section (sec.), or paragraph (par.), as appropriate.

W.E.B. Dubois argues that “the color line” continued long after the American Civil War ended (16; ch. 2).

Parenthetical Citation for Authors with the Same Last Name

When using works by authors with the same last name, include the first initial of both authors’ first names.

Gender performance can be understood as a series of actions that produce the illusion of stable gender identity (J. Butler 12).

Lilith is saved by an alien species called the Oankali (O. Butler 14).

If the authors share a first initial, use the complete first name of both authors:

(Ove Butler 14), (Oliver Butler 43)

Parenthetical Citation for a Source with Multiple Authors

If you have a source with three or fewer authors, list all the authors’ names. If your source has three or more authors, use the name of the first author followed by “et al.” For reference, “et al.” is an **abbreviation** of “*et alia*” (Latin: “and others”), and so a period is always included after “al.” See the examples below. As with a standard citation, you may either mention the authors’ names in your sentence or in the citation.

a) Two authors:

Hand and Sandywell demonstrate the importance of the internet to the information economy (198).

Scholarship has demonstrated the importance of the internet to the information economy (Hand and Sandywell 198).



c) Multiple authors:

Kumasaki et al. note that the use of manga to teach safety in some universities in Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand showed that students were more able to identify hazards and hazardous behaviours (591).

The use of manga to teach safety in some universities in Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand showed that students were more able to identify hazards and hazardous behaviours (Kumasaki et al. 591).

Parenthetical Citation for Multiple Sources by the Same Author

If you are using multiple sources with the same author, include an abbreviated title to indicate which work you are referencing. If including the author's name and the source title in the same citation, separate them with a comma. The examples below show how to use a parenthetical citation for multiple sources by the same author.

a) Multiple sources by the same author with in-text attribution

Halberstam considers how masculinity can be performed by male and female bodies (*Female Masculinity* 2), before shifting their focus to notions of “queer time” (*In a Queer Time* 1).

b) Multiple sources by the same author without in-text attribution

One critic observed that both male and female bodies can perform masculinity (Halberstam, *Female Masculinity* 2) before introducing the idea of “queer time” (*In a Queer Time* 1).

Here, it is clear from context that Halberstam is the author for both texts, and so the writer does not need to include “Halberstam” in the second citation (but could choose to do so for maximum clarity).

Parenthetical Citation for an Indirect Source

An indirect quotation is a source quoted by another source. Indirect quotations may initially seem needlessly complex, but they exist to show your reader 1) where you found the information (Bozack in the example below) *as well as* 2) its original source (Baichwell). Use the abbreviation “qtd. in” to indicate an indirect quotation. See the example below.

Discussing human responsibility for environmental problems, Baichwell notes “we have to live with the uncomfortable ambiguity of our role” (qtd. in Bozack 71).

Parenthetical Citation for Multiple Sources

If you are referencing multiple sources, separate the works with a semicolon in the parentheses.



...as many theorists have noted (Razack 23; Malkki 389).

6. Formatting Quotations

Short Prose Quotations

Are you using a prose quotation that is shorter than four complete lines on your page? If yes, put it in double quotation marks and incorporate it into the text of your paper. Provide the parenthetical citation immediately following the quotation.

Periods (and semicolons) should appear after the parenthetical citation. Question marks and exclamation marks that appear in the original source should be included within the quotation marks, and a period should follow the citation. Consider the following example:

Pi emphasizes that the most dangerous animal in existence is “the animal as seen through human eyes” (Martel 34). Pi’s father thinks otherwise. He created a zoo exhibit that asks visitors “DO YOU KNOW WHICH IS THE MOST DANGEROUS ANUMAL IN THE ZOO?” (Martel 34). The exhibit contains only a mirror.

Long Prose Quotations

If you include any prose quotations longer than four lines on your page, type them into a block quotation, indented 1-inch (2.54cm) from the margin, double spaced, and without quotation marks. Block quotations are typically introduced by a colon. Place your parenthetical citation *after* the quotation’s final punctuation mark.

The narrator highlights the importance of setting in the novel through her detailed description of the area around Kitamaat. She begins her story by providing a visual map of the terrain where most of the action in the novel occurs:

Find a map of British Columbia. Point to the middle of the coast. Beneath Alaska, find the Queen Charlotte Islands. Drag your finger across the map, across the Hecate Strait to the coast and you should be able to see a large island hugging the coast. This is Princess Royal Island, and it is famous for its kermode bears that are usually white. Princess Royal Island is the western edge of traditional Haisla territory. During land claim talks, some of this territory is claimed by both the Haisla and Tsimshian nations — this is called an overlap and is a sticky topic of discussion. (Robinson 4)

Note: When using a block quotation, do not indent the first line of the quotation; however, if the quotation includes a new paragraph, the new paragraph should be indented.



Quoting Verse

If you are quoting a single line (or less) of poetry or verse, place it in quotation marks and incorporate it into the text of your essay.

If you quote two or three lines of verse, you must separate each line with a forward slash [/]. Place the passage in quotation marks and incorporate it into the text of your essay. When you use slashes to separate lines of quoted verse, be sure to put a space before and after the slash. If your quotation includes a stanza break, use two forward slashes to indicate the break [//]. Include a parenthetical citation giving the author's name (where necessary) and the cited line number(s). Do not include line numbers if they do not appear in the source text. Consider the following examples:

a) Quoting less than one line of poetry

The persona of Plath's poem is "poor and white" and feels claustrophobic (31). She has "always been scared of" her father (41).

b) Quoting three lines of poetry

Sylvia Plath's "Daddy" opens with a metaphor that conveys the speaker's sense of claustrophobia. She compares herself to a "black shoe / In which I have lived like a foot / For thirty years" (2-4).

c) Quoting two lines of poetry with a stanza break

Sylvia Plath's "Daddy" has no set rhyme scheme; however, the poet uses assonance and end rhyme to create sound patterns that hold the poem together. The "oo" sound is particularly prominent: "Barely daring to breath or Achoo. // Daddy, I have had to kill you" (5-6).

If you are quoting more than three lines of verse, type them into a block quotation indented 1 inch (2.54cm) from the left margin. Block quotations of poetry should accurately reproduce the line breaks, spacing, and punctuation found in the original. Do not use quotation marks for block quotations unless they appear in the original. Your parenthetical reference should appear at the end of the last line of poetry, after any punctuation in the original. The following is an example of a blocked verse quotation (from a poem without punctuation):

In his poem "i have found what you are like," Cummings uses unconventional line breaks and syntax but traditional images and rhyme patterns:

deeds of green thrilling light
with thinned

new fragile yellows



lurch and press
— in the woods
which
stutter
and

sing (8-16)

Here, Cummings uses pastoral imagery combined with fragmented syntax to...

Quoting Drama

If you are quoting the words of a single character in a prose play, follow the guidelines for a standard prose quotation. In place of giving a page number, supply your reader with act, scene, and line numbers (where these exist). Use Arabic numerals instead of Roman numerals. If you are quoting the words of a single character in a verse play, follow the MLA guidelines for quoting poetry while again giving act and scene numbers in Arabic numerals where they exist in the original.

a) Quoting the words of one character in a verse play

Some of Lear's greatest insights come when he discusses metaphysical issues with Kent and the Fool. For example, when these three characters take refuge from a storm in a hovel, Lear notes that "[w]hen the mind's free / The body's delicate" (3.4.11-12). He elaborates on this point by observing that the "tempest in my mind / Doth from my senses take all feeling else, / Save what beats there" (3.4.12-14). This metaphor suggests...

If quoting dialogue between two or more characters, type the passage into a block quotation indented 1 inch (2.54 cm) from the left margin. Characters' names should be in capital letters followed by a period and then followed by the text as it appears in the original. Subsequent lines of the character's dialogue should be indented an additional amount (i.e. using a hanging indent). When the dialogue shifts to another character, start a new. Follow this pattern throughout the block quotation. As with all block quotations, do not include quotation marks unless they appear in the original.



Quotation with ellipsis: Kingsolver addresses the reader in second person, telling her to imagine a violent forest with “frogs ... secreting their precious eggs...[v]ines strangling their own kin ... [and] ants ... hauling [a tree] down to the dark for their ravenous queen” (5).

7. Works Cited Page

Your MLA-formatted essay must have a separate Works Cited page. The basic formatting features of the Works Cited page are as follows:

Use a page break to separate your Works Cited page from the body of the essay. This way, if you change the length of the essay, the Works Cited page will always begin at the top of a new page.

Use the same 1-inch (2.54cm) margins and same last name and page number header as the rest of the essay.

Centre the title “Works Cited” in standard font formatting (no italics, bold, or quotation marks) on the first line of the page. Use the title “Work Cited” if you only cite one source.

Double space everything; do NOT put extra lines between entries.

List entries alphabetically. If you cite more than one work by the same author, list these alphabetically by title, and give the author’s full name in the first entry. Second and subsequent entries should give three hyphens in place of the author’s name.

E.g.

Smith, John. *Great Dogs of North America*. Dog Press, 2003.

---. “Great Labradors.” *Dogs Illustrated*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1994, pp. 12-50.

Capitalize every word in the titles of texts except for articles (“the,” “a,” “and”), prepositions (“in,” “on”), and conjunctions (“and, but”), except where these words are the first word in the entry or following a colon.

End each citation with a period.

Use italics for the titles of independently published books and journals. Use quotation marks for the titles of texts published as part of collections like poems and articles.

Use a hanging indent (second and following lines of each entry indented 0.5 inches [1.27cm]) for each entry. This allows your reader to easily scan the list to find specific sources. By formatting the



entire list using a hanging indent, you can eliminate the need to manually space each line any time each time you add/edit an entry.

When giving page numbers, use “p.” if the source has only one page; use “pp.” for sources with multiple pages. Use page numbers efficiently. For example, if the source can be found on pages 483-497 of the container, the citation would read “... pp. 483-97.”

For academic publishers, you may opt to use the abbreviation “UP” in place of “University Press,” or you may write the publisher’s name out in full. Whichever option you use, be consistent.

Take care when pasting computer-generated citations, as these will generally lose their formatting (hanging indents, italics, etc.) when pasted into your document.

The MLA uses a list of core elements for the Works Cited Page which are common to most works. Here is that list and the specific punctuation that follows each element:

1. Author.
2. Title of source.
3. Title of container,
4. Contributor,
5. Version,
6. Number,
7. Publisher,
8. Publication date,
9. Location.

Any element that is not applicable to the source being documented should be omitted.

If you are unsure whether to include X element in your citation, consult the MLA Guide and the OWL Purdue MLA Sample Paper. A secondary option is to ask your Instructor and/or TA. If you are still unsure, remember that the Works Cited list exists so your reader can verify your citations and find the sources you have cited for their own consultation. Therefore, you should *be certain to* include sufficient information to locate the specific source before attempting to excise redundant information for efficiency.

Common Entries in a Works Cited Page

The following are common entries likely to be used by undergraduate students writing research essays. For more details or other, less common entries, consult the MLA Handbook and the OWL Purdue Sample MLA Paper.



1. Book with One Author:

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Work*. City of Publication, Publisher, Date.

Note: Only include the City of Publication if your book was published before 1900, if the publisher operates internationally, or if they are unknown in North America.

Smith, John. *Great Dogs of North America*. Dog Press, 2003.

2. Book with Two Authors:

Last Name, First Name, and First Name Last Name. *Title of Work*. Publisher, Date.

Minogue, Sally and Andrew Palmer. *The Remembered Dead: Poetry, Memoir, and the First World War*. Cambridge UP, 2018.

3. Book with Three or More Authors:

Last name, First name, et al. *Title of Work*. Publisher, Year.

Evans, Julie, et al. *Equal Subjects, Unequal Rights: Indigenous Peoples in British Settler Societies*. Manchester UP, 2003.

4. Journal Article:

Last Name, First name. "Title of article." *Title of Journal*, volume number, issue number, date, page range.

Smith, John. "Great Labradors." *Dogs Illustrated*, vol. 14, no. 3, 1994, pp. 12-50.

5. Work in Anthology or Edited Collection:

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Chapter." *Title of Work*, edited by Editor's Name(s), Publisher, Date, Page Range.

More, Hannah. "The Black Slave Trade: A Poem." *British Women Poets of the Romantic Era*, edited by Paula R. Feldman, Johns Hopkins UP, 1997, pp. 472-82.

6. Entire Anthology or Edited Collection:

Last Name, First Name, editor. *Title of Work*. Publisher, Date.

Weisser, Susan, editor. *Women and Romance: A Reader*. New York UP, 2001.



7. An Introduction, Preface, Foreword, or Afterword:

If you are citing an introduction, preface, foreword, or afterword, you must give the author(s) of the part being cited before giving the name of the part being cited. Do not italicize or put quotation marks around this part. Then give the title of the complete work, and follow this with the word “by” and the collection’s author(s).

If the part and the collection share authors, place only the surname(s) after “by”:

Last Name, First Name. Part of Book. *Title of Work*, by Last Name, Publisher, Date, Page Numbers.

Allan, Stuart, et al. Introduction. *Environmental Risks and the Media*, by Allan et al. Routledge, 2000, pp. 1-26.

If they are different, include full names:

Last Name, First Name. Part of book. *Title of Work*, by First Name Last Name, Publisher, Date, Page Numbers.

Beck, Ulrich. Foreword. *Environmental Risks and the Media*, by Stuart Allan et al., Routledge, 2000, pp. xii-xiv.

8. Book by a Corporate Author:

Corporate Author. *Title of Work*. Publisher, Date.

Canada Research Council. *Canadian Business in 2010*. Academic Publishing House, 2007.

9. Government Publication:

Governmental Author. Title. Publisher, Date.

United States, Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. *Nigerian Advance Fee Fraud*. Department of State Publication Bureau, 1997.

10. Article with No Author in Reference Book:

“Entry Name.” *Title of Work*. Edition, Publisher, Year.

“Postmodernism.” *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed., Oxford UP, 1998.

11. A Review:

Last Name, First name of the review author. “Title of Review (if applicable).” Review of *Title of Work Reviewed*, by First Name Last Name. *Title of Periodical*, day month year, page.

Zacharia Benjamin. Review of India, Empire, and First World War Culture: Writings, Images and



Songs, by Santanu Das. *Histoire Sociale*, vol. 54, no. 110, 2021, pp. 195-97.

12. Published Conference Proceedings:

Last Name, First Name, editor. *Title of Conference*, Conference Date, Location, Publisher, Date of Publication.

Rudner, Stuart E., editor. *Employment Law 2010: Proactively Managing Legal Risk in Challenging Times*, 29 September 2009, Osgoode Hall Law School, York University, Toronto, Osgoode Professional Development, 2010.

13. Film or Movie:

Film Title. Directed by First Name Last Name, performances by First Name Last Name, Name of Studio or Distributor, Date.

Trouble Every Day. Directed by Claire Denis, performances by Vincent Gallo, Tricia Vessey, and Beatrice Dalle, Canal +, 2001.

14. Online Video Recording:

Last Name, First Name. "Name of Video Recording." *Platform*, uploaded by Channel Name, day month year, url.

Wynn Natalie. "J.K. Rowling." *YouTube*, uploaded by ContraPoints, 26 Jan. 2021, www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gDKbT_I2us.

15. Recorded Television Episode:

"Title of Episode." *Title of Collection of Recordings*, written by First Name Last Name, directed by First Name Last Name, Name of Distributor, Date of Distribution.

"Never Kill a Boy on the First Date." *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, written by Rob Des Hotel and Dean Batali, directed by Davide Semel, Fox Home Entertainment, 2004.

16. Painting, Sculpture, or Photograph:

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Work*. Date of Composition, Name of Institution, City.

Thomson, Tom. *Canoe Lake*. 1915, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.

If the name of the city is part of the institution name (e.g., Art Institute of Chicago), it is not necessary to include it as a distinct element in your citation. If the medium/materials are importance to the reference, you may opt to include this information at the end of the reference.



Online Sources in a Work Cited Page:

Here are the common features you should look for when you are citing online sources as well as the format for how to cite them:

- Author and/or editor Last Name, First Name.
- “Article name”
- *Title of website, project, or book.*
- ver., ed., revised [date], vol., no.
- Publisher name, [date]
- p. or pp..
- DOI (if available), or permalink, or url.
- Date you accessed the information, if necessary.

If possible, provide each of the following pieces of information about the online source you are citing.

The MLA recommends that you include URLs or DOIs in your Works Cited list. If you can, cite the DOI assigned to an online publication instead of the URL, because DOIs are permanent; most websites are updated continually.

The Access Date is now considered an optional element of MLA-style citations. However, it should be used if required by your instructor and can be useful when the online work lacks a publication date or permalink/DOI.

If you are using peer-reviewed, authoritative sources, most of this information should be available. If information is missing, you may find a reliable external source and include the information in your citation in square brackets. Otherwise, it may be omitted.

1. Course of Departmental Website:

Department Name. University Name, Publishing Date. URL. Date of Access.

English Department. University of Toronto, 6 December 2011. www.english.utoronto.ca Accessed 19 Feb. 2025.

Last Name, First Name. *Name of Course*. University, Date of Publication. URL. Date of Access.

Brym, Robert and Lesley Kenny. *Introduction to Sociology 101*, University of Toronto, Dec. 2011, www.projects.chass.utoronto.ca/soc101y/brym/. Accessed 5 Dec. 2011.

2. An Image (Including a Painting, Sculpture, or Photograph):

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Work*. Date of Creation. Institution, City. *Name of Website*. URL.



Date of Access.

Thomson, Tom. *Canoe Lake*. 1915. Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto. *Art Gallery of Ontario*.
www.ago.ca/collection/object/agoid.69248. Accessed 19 Feb. 2025.

If the work is only available on the web and posted under a username, use that username for the author.

3. Document from Online-Only Academic Journal:

Last Name, First Name. "Article Name." *Title of Journal*, vol., no., date of publication, page numbers (if any). URL or DOI. Date of Access.

Zeki, Semir. "Artistic Creativity and the Brain." *Science*, vol. 293, no. 5527, 2001, pp. 51-52. Academic OneFile, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1062331>. Accessed 19 Feb. 2025.

4. Document from Scholarly Journal Found in Online Database:

Last Name, First Name. "Article Name." *Title of Journal*, vol., no., date of publication, page numbers (if any). *Database Title*, URL or DOI. Date of Access.

Zeki, Semir. "Artistic Creativity and the Brain." *Science*, vol. 293, no. 5527, 2001, pp. 51-52. *Academic OneFile*, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1062331>. Accessed 19 Feb. 2025.

5. An Entire Site:

Name of Author or Compiler. *Title of Website*. Version Number, Name of Institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available), DOI or URL. Date of Access.

Brawley, Lisa and James F. English. *Postmodern Culture*. University of Virginia, 2000.
www.pmc.iath.virginia.edu. Accessed 19 Feb. 2025.

6. An E-Book:

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Work*, name of editor, compiler, or translator, e-book (or App/Service ed.), Publisher, Date of publication.

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Kindle ed. AmazonClassics, 2017.

7. An E-Book hosted on a website with URL:

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Work*, name of editor, compiler, or translator. *Title of Website* (including date of electronic publication, name of sponsoring institution, revisions, if applicable). URL. Date of Access.



Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*, edited by Henry Churchyard. *Jane Austen Information Page*, 1996. www.pemberley.com/janeinfo/pridprej.html. Accessed 19 Feb. 2025.

More Resources for Citations and Research

Do you want to discuss your research paper? Book an appointment with an RGASC Writing Instructor.

Check out these resources to get more help and information on citations and research:

- [Reference and Research Help University of Toronto Mississauga Library](#)
- [Citing Sources — University of Toronto](#)
- [MLA Formatting and Style Guide — Purdue Online Writing Lab](#)
- [MLA Sample Paper — Purdue Online Writing Lab](#)

This version prepared by Sean A. McPhail in February 2025, in close consultation with the RGASC's guide to MLA 8th Edition; the *MLA Handbook, 9th ed.*; and the *OWL Purdue*.