MLA STYLE GUIDE

In academic writing, the source of any borrowed ideas or information must be acknowledged; presenting other people’s ideas without giving them credit is not allowed. Various disciplines have certain ways of crediting others’ ideas. Modern Language Association (MLA) style is used in most humanities classes, especially English, while American Psychological Association (APA) style is used in many social science classes. It is important to be aware of the styles typically used in the various disciplines and to use the style required by the professor. This style guide is based on the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Paper, 7th* edition. More information links available online at http://depts.gpc.edu/library

PART ONE: PAGE FORMAT

Margins:
Margins should be one inch on all sides of the page. Indent the first line of a paragraph ½-inch. Do not justify the right margin.

Page Numbers:
Page numbers should be placed in the top right corner of every page ½-inch from the top of the page. Type your last name before the page number as a precaution in case of misplaced pages. If a title page is included, it is not counted and not numbered.

Spacing:
The entire paper should be double-spaced, including all quotations, notes, and the list of works cited.

Title Page:
A research paper using traditional MLA style does not need a title page, unless it has an outline, abstract, or other elements preceding the text of the paper. Beginning 1-inch from the top of the page on the left side, type on separate lines your name, instructor's name, course number, and date. It is not necessary to put “by” before your name.

Title:
The title of your paper should not be underlined, placed in quotation marks, or typed in all capital letters. CENTER it on the page and follow the normal rules of capitalization.

Italics:
Use italics to identify titles of longer works (books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, long poems, plays, films, etc.). Titles of shorter works (essays, articles, stories, chapters, most poems) go inside quotation marks.
Research papers and some essays use quotations to provide technical, literary, or other examples to support ideas. Whenever you draw from the work of a scholar or expert in the body of your paper, it is important to remember to copy a quotation accurately and cite (give credit to) the author. You must cite your source when you use a direct quotation and also when you paraphrase or rewrite information. A good rule to follow is: If in doubt, cite it. The use of direct quotations should be limited to no more than ten percent of the paper. REMEMBER: Information in citations must match the information on the Works Cited page.

|| TYPES OF CITATIONS

**Primary Source Citations**
A good paper will use primary quotations to support technical facts or comments made about literature. A primary quotation is material quoted directly from the work about which you are writing (poem, short story, novel, play, or other work).

**Secondary Source Citations**
In addition to primary support from quotations, a paper frequently needs secondary support. A secondary quotation is most often an expert’s ideas about a work taken from a scholarly journal, reference book, or source other than the work itself. Usually, it is best to paraphrase secondary material, being sure to give credit to the source paraphrased. Controversial ideas are often included in secondary quotations.

When both primary and secondary quotations appear in a paper, many instructors like to see them in this order:
- An introduction of an idea in a student’s own words
- A primary quotation
- A secondary quotation analyzing the primary quotation
- An analysis by the student summing up the paragraph or section

|| EXAMPLES OF QUOTATIONS

**In-text Quotations:**
Quotations of this type are preferable to other types of quotations.

**Primary:**

*Emily believes that she is a “lady of the first class”* (239).

*At one particular moment, Faulkner explains, they found the body “rotted beneath what was left of the nightshirt”* (236).

*According to Faulkner, “the body had apparently once lain in embrace”* (236).

*Emily believes that she is a “lady of the first class”* (239) *because of her aristocratic upbringing.*

*She is such a powerful distraction in his life that he finds himself whispering “strange prayers and praises”* (118) *to her at the most unusual times.*

**Secondary:**

*According to Ray B. West, Jr., Miss Emily’s principal problem is “her obstinate refusal to submit to, or even to concede the inevitability of change”* (184).
Full Sentence Formal Quotations:
Although the in-text quotation is the preferred way to present quotations, the full sentence formal quotation is acceptable for more lengthy examples.

Primary:
Emily insists that she is a lady of breeding, “I am a lady of the first class” (239).

Secondary:
Ray B. West, Jr., describes Miss Emily’s failure to change as a fault: “The trouble with Miss Emily is her obstinate refusal to submit to, or even to concede the inevitability of change” (184).

NOTE: When quoting a complete thought in this formal type of quotation, it is important to capitalize the first word after the initial quotation mark whether the original is capitalized or not.

Indented Long Formal Quotations:
The indented or long formal quotation is to be used sparingly, if at all, in research papers. Any quotation exceeding four lines should be indented ten spaces from the left margin of the text and aligned with the right margin in the text. Quotation marks are not used around any indented quotations.

Primary:
Emily spent the remaining years of her life in isolation. Faulkner describes the tragedy of her death: And so she died. Fell ill in the house filled with dust and shadows, with only a doddering Negro man to wait on her. We did not even know she was sick; we had long since given up trying to get any information from the Negro. He talked to no one, probably not even to her, for his voice had grown harsh and rusty, as if from disuse. (235)

Secondary:
Thus, Emily spends her adult years in total isolation from the community around her. William T. Going views her isolation as resistance to change: The trouble with Miss Emily is her obstinate refusal to submit to, or even to concede the inevitability of change. The results are her refusal to pay taxes, the dust in her house, and the murder of Homer. (123)

NOTE: When indenting an entire paragraph that begins with an indentation itself, use an extra three spaces in the first line.

|| PUNCTUATING QUOTED MATERIAL

Double quotation marks (“…”) are used for direct quotations as well as the titles of poems, short stories, chapters in books, songs, episodes of a radio or television series, articles in periodicals, and other minor titles.

“A good friend,” observes Claudius Miniken, “makes hills easier to climb.”
“A Rose for Emily” is Faulkner’s macabre and ghoulish short story about a scorned woman.”

Single quotation marks (‘…’) are used to enclose a quotation within a quotation.

“Edgar Allen Poe’s ‘A Predicament’ is one of the funniest short stories I’ve ever read!” Chet exclaimed.
The period and the comma are placed within quotation marks and follow the parenthetical reference to the source of a quotation.

“Jenny,” he said, “let’s have lunch.” She replied, “OK, but first I want to finish ‘The Machine Stops.’ ”

The author states that “time alone reveals the just” (471).

Feeling that reality is “all that the case may be” (22), Slothrop takes little interest in saving for the future.

A question mark, exclamation point, dash, colon or semicolon is placed within quotation marks when they apply only to the quoted matter. They are placed outside when they do not.

Within quotation marks:

Pilate asked, “What is the truth?”

Gordon replied, “No way!”

Outside quotation marks:

What is the meaning of the term “half-truth”?  
Stop whistling “All I Do is Dream of You”!

She spoke of “the protagonists”; yet, I remembered only one in “The Tell-Tale Heart”: the mad murderer.

|| USING ELLIPSES

An ellipsis is a literary device that indicates that a word or words in a quotation have been omitted. Ellipsis marks, three double-spaced periods separated from the text with single spaces, are used to substitute for the omitted material.

Martin meant to imply a hidden meaning when he intimated that his character “transgressed beyond . . . the normal bounds of human reason” (123).

Four dot ellipses (a normal period followed by the three spaced dots) must have complete thoughts on either side of the ellipsis. Use four dots in the following instances only:

To omit the last part of a quoted sentence

She said, “I’m always tired. . . . Since I have nothing to do now, I’m bored. My feet hurt” (134).

To omit the beginning of the next sentence

She said, “I’m always tired. . . . I’m bored. My feet hurt” (134).

To omit a complete sentence or more

She said, “I’m always tired. . . My feet hurt” (134).

To omit one or more complete paragraphs

NOTE: Never begin or end a quotation with an ellipsis.
MLA STYLE GUIDE | PART THREE: CITATION FORMAT

The use of citations within the text of a report or paper (in-text citations) points the reader to the original source of any works used as support. These in-text, or parenthetical, citations clearly point to specific sources in the alphabetical listing of works cited, providing readers who wish to further explore sources with detailed information on how to find them. To avoid interrupting the flow of your writing, place the in-text citation where a pause would naturally occur (preferably at the end of a sentence), but as near as possible to the material documented:

Machiavelli contended that humans were “ungrateful” and “mutable” (1240), and Montaigne thought them “miserable and puny” (1343).

Identify the location of the borrowed information as specifically as possible. For most print documents this will typically be the page number. However, citation format will vary based on the source type – consult the MLA style guide to identify requirements. As you conduct your research, be sure to keep a written record identifying the source of any information you collect; this will make it easier for you to format your citations and complete your works cited entries.

|| VARIATIONS ON THE BASIC FORMAT

**Author Listed in Text:** put the page number (or page number range) in parentheses at the end of the sentence.

- Miller states that every college student needs to own a dictionary (95).
- Jones has an optimistic view of life (27-32).

**Two or Three Authors:** list each of them.

- Michael was furious over the rejection of his work (Jones and Smith 102).
- Michael was furious over the rejection of his work (Jones, Smith, and Brown 102).

**Four or More Authors:** abbreviate.

- Joshua Norton was not a citizen of the United States (Thompson et al. 5).

**Two or More Authors with the Same Last Name:** include the first initial, or if the first initials are the same, use the full first name.

- Gaedel was the only midget ever to play in a major league baseball game (K. Holloway 63).
- Choosing their own subjects aids children in learning to write (Jane Frost 27-32). However, Joseph Frost insists that choosing their own subjects does not contribute significantly to a child’s learning to write (407-409).

**More Than One Work by the Same Author:** give the author’s last name, an abbreviated title of the work, and page number.

- The author comically stated that “Maybe man would not overrun the planet, but his pet poodles and Siamese cats might” (Westin, Pethood 6). She then further stated that there are 50 million homeless animals in the country (Westin, “Planning” 10).

**Corporate Author:** it is preferable to cite the name in the text.

- The RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company published the article about the dangers of smoking.
Electronic Sources: only include the author’s last name because few electronic sources include page numbers. Do not cite page numbers from printouts because pagination may vary in different printouts.

Despite the many challenges she has faced on the Internet, the author still enjoys the “magic” of the MOO (Dibbell).

No Author Identified: substitute the title (or an abbreviated form of the title) for the author’s name in the sentence or in the parenthetical citation. Be sure to italicize the title if the source is a book, and place quotation marks around the title if the source is a magazine or journal article.


Each of the teletubbies has his/her own language acquisition level, and, because of this, a child can identify the progress to the next level when the child feels comfortable (“The Inside Story”).

Entire Work: it is preferable to cite the name in the text.

James Joyce’s Ulysses is an example of modern literature.

Entire Volume or Multi-Volume: there is no need to cite pages.

Johnny always felt completely at ease in the wilderness (Wellek, vol. 2).

Part of One Volume of a Multi-Volume Work: list the author’s name and then the volume and page number separated by a colon and a space.

Johnny always felt completely at ease in the Wilderness (Wellek 2: 1-10).

Indirect Quotations (citing an author who was quoted by another author): include both names. First, give the name of the author whose words you are citing followed by “qtd. in.” Then, give the name of the author of the source you used. If you include the author whose words you are quoting in your text, you do not need to include the author’s name again in your citation.

In last month’s issue of Rolling Stone, Lenny Kravitz admitted that Jimmy Hendrix was an “extraordinary man” (qtd. in Riverwell: 220).

NOTE: Whenever you can, try to take material from the original source and not from a secondhand one. Your credibility as a writer could suffer if you depend too heavily on secondhand sources.

Plays and epic poetry When referencing commonly-studied verse plays and poetry, omit page numbers and cite by division (act, scene, canto, book, part, line) with periods separating the various numbers.

(Iliad 9.19) refers to book 9, line 19 of Homer’s Iliad.

Standard poetry If you are citing only line numbers, do not use the abbreviation l. or ll. which can be confused with numerals. Initially, use the word line or lines; in subsequent references to the poem, give the numbers alone.

MLA STYLE GUIDE | PART FOUR: WORKS CITED

In order to point the reader back to the original source of any works used as support within an essay or report, an alphabetical listing containing key information about the works cited should be included after the text of your paper. This listing is called the “Works Cited” because it includes only works actually cited within the paper.

|| GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR WORKS CITED PAGE
: Center the title *Works Cited* at the top of the page.
: Double-space the entire list.
: List only works actually cited within the paper.
: Alphabetize the list by the first word in each entry (excluding a, an, or the).
: The first line of the works cited entry should be aligned with the left margin, while every line that follows is indented ⅝-inch.
: Authors' names should appear in full and inverted, meaning that last names should appear first and first names should appear last.
: If you have more than one work by a particular author, give the name in the first entry only. For all other entries, type three hyphens, followed by a period and finish the entry normally.
: Enclose titles of works published within larger ones in quotation marks, such as newspaper articles, short stories, poems, etc.
: Pay close attention to proper punctuation for each entry.
: Do NOT number entries.
: Do not separate primary and secondary sources or types of sources (books, newspapers, magazines, etc.) unless told to do so by the instructor.

NOTE: The entries in this handout have not been double-spaced to save paper. *Your entire list should be double-spaced.*

|| PRINT RESOURCES: Entire Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s). Title. Edition. City of publication: Publisher, copyright date. Print.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

|| PRINT RESOURCES: Parts of Books

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**Works in Anthologies/Volumes:**


Learning and Tutoring Center, Summer 2014


**A Work in a Series:**


**Works in Reference Books/Encyclopedias:**


**PRINT RESOURCES: Newspapers**

Author/Byline (if available). “Article Title.” *Newspaper Title* date [includes day/month/year], edition, section name/number: Page numbers of article. Print.


**PRINT RESOURCES: Magazines**

Author(s). “Article Title.” *Magazine Title* publication date [includes day/month/year]: Inclusive pages of article. Print.


**PRINT RESOURCES: Scholarly Journals**

Author(s). "Article Title." *Journal Title* volume.issue numbers (publication date): Inclusive page numbers of article. Print.


|| PRINT RESOURCES: Government Publications


|| GALILEO RESOURCES

General Guidelines for Writing a Works Cited Entry for a Database Source:
1. Cite information for the original source following MLA style for printed sources but omit “Print” at the end.
2. Give the title of the database (italicized).
3. OPTIONAL: Write GALILEO (all caps, followed by a period).
4. Give the medium of publication (Web, followed by a period).
5. Give the date of access (day/month/year, followed by a period).

|| GALILEO RESOURCES: Newspapers

Author/Byline (if available). “Article Title.” Newspaper Title date [includes day/month/year], edition, section name/number: Page numbers of original article. Database Name. Web. Access date [day/month/year].


|| GALILEO RESOURCES: Magazines

Author(s). "Article Title." Magazine Title publication date [includes day/month/year]: Inclusive pages of original article. Database Name. Web. Access date [day/month/year].


|| GALILEO RESOURCES: Scholarly Journals

Author (s). "Article Title." Journal Title volume.issue numbers (publication date): inclusive page numbers of original article. Database Name. Web. Access date [day/month/year].


Reference Articles:


CQ Researcher:


Opposing Viewpoints:


Reprinted Sources:


Legal Documents:


Government Documents:


WEB AND MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

Guidelines for Writing a Works Cited Entry for a World Wide Web Source:
1. Cite information for the source (include whatever information is available and appropriate to the source):
   *Author/Editor (if given, followed by a period).
   *Title of article in quotation marks (period inside quotation marks).
   *Print publication information if source has a print version (followed by a period).
   NOTE: only include original page numbers from a source—use “n. pag.” if they are not given. Do not put electronic pages; put paragraph numbers only if the Internet article specifies them. If dates are missing, use the abbreviation “n.d.”
2. Cite information about the electronic publication (as available):
   *Title of the website (italicized and followed by a period).
   *Sponsoring organization (followed by a comma)
   * Posting date or latest update.
   * Medium of publication (Web, followed by a period).
   * Date of access (day/month/year, followed by a period).
   NOTE: MLA no longer recommends including the URL for Web publications unless it would be difficult to find the source without it. If the URL is included, it is put at the end of the entry within angle brackets, followed by a period.

Online Encyclopedia Article:

Magazine Article found on the Web:

Include <URLs> when required by instructors or when websites are hard to find.


Scholarly Journal Article found on the Web:

Newspaper Article found on the Web:

E-books:

Corporate Author:

Entire Website:

Government Publication on the Web:

WEB AND MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES: Blog Entries


MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES: Sound Recording on Compact Disc

Composer/Performer. “Song Title.” *Title of Recording*. Performers. Manufacturer, date of issue. Medium [CD]. Supplementary information.

Blige, Mary J. *The Breakthrough*. Geffen, 2005. CD.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES: Film, DVD, or Video

*Title*. Screenwriter [if given]. Director. Producer [if pertinent]. Performers [if pertinent]. Original release date [if appropriate]. Distributor, year of release. Medium.

RESOURCES CONSULTED IN PREPARING THIS HANDOUT


