MLA Citations

The Modern Language Association (MLA) is a style guide typically used in the humanities. MLA citations give credit to the original content and help authors avoid plagiarism. In-text citations indicate where source material begins and ends. A works cited page offers a full citation of the source for readers to reference. This handout uses the MLA handbook (9th edition) to explain these concepts. However, writers should customize their own work according to their audience and assignment guidelines.

In-text Citations (6.1–6.30)

In-text citations refer readers to sources and must be used for direct quotes, summaries, and paraphrases. There are two kinds of In-text citation: parenthetical and in prose. Parenthetical puts the author's last name and the page number at the end of the sentence (e.g., (Jones 23)). A citation in prose names the author in the sentence itself (e.g., According to Jones,). When available, page number(s) are included for both styles.

> **Example:** ". . ." (Tolkien 81).
>
> **Example:** According to Tolkien, ". . ." (81).

In-Text Citation Examples

	Citation In Prose	Parenthetical Citation	Notes
Two Authors (6.5)	Dorris and Erdrich argue that . . . (23).	(Dorris and Erdrich 23).	Use the same order of names as the source.
Three or More Authors (6.5)	Burdick and others analyze	(Burdick et al. 42).	*et al.* is Latin for "and others"
Organization as Author (6.6)	The National Academy found . . . (114).	(National Academy 114).	Capitalize the organization name. No additional formatting is required.
Same Author, Multiple Works (6.8)	In her book *Jazz,* Morrison says, ". . ." (76).	(Morrison, *Jazz* 76).	Add a comma after the author's name(s), and then add the title.
Authors with Same Last Name (6.7)	J. Rogers opens with, ". . ." (654).	(J. Rogers 654). (Jack Rogers 654).	Include the author's first initial. If the initial is the same, include the entire first name.
Multiple Sources in One Sentence	Avoid in prose in this case, it could look like multiple authors for one text.	(Burdick et al. 42; Rogers 7).	Separate each source with a semicolon.
A Quote within a Quote (6.50)	Davidson uses Bennet's theory to support his argument, ". . ." (129).	". . . '. . .' . . ." (qtd. in Davidson 129). Use single quotation marks when quotation marks appear in the source.	Whenever possible, use material from the original source and not a secondhand source.
Quoting Poetry (6.22, 6.37)	The last lines of Williams poem are, "so sweet / and so cold"	The lines read, "so sweet / and so cold" (Williams lines 11-12).	A slash indicates a line break. Stanza breaks, use two slashes (//).

Works Cited Page

The works cited page is a separate page included at the end of the paper. It lists a full citation for every source used, so readers may investigate them for further reading. Each citation is made up of core elements.

Core Elements

Core elements are used to create each citation. If a core element does not apply to the source being cited, omit it—unless it is the title, in which case, you will provide a brief description of the source.

Author (or Creator) (5.4–5.22)

List multiple authors in the same order they are published in. If they are a different type of creator (editor, director, actor, etc.), specify after a comma. Sometimes, a work is authored by an organization.

> **One Author:** Tolkien, J. R. R.
> **Two Authors:** Green, John, and David Levithan.
> **Three or more:** Burdick, Anne, et al.

To cite the same author for different works in a works cited page, substitute three hyphens or an em dash.

> **Example:** Twain, Mark. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
>
> ---. *The Prince and the Pauper.*

Title of Source (5.23–5.30)

The tile of the source should for formatted in *italics* for independent works and "quotation marks" for smaller works inside larger works. Capitalize every word except for articles, prepositions, and conjunctions.

> **Examples:** *Book Title*; "Article Title", *Journal Title*; "Webpage", *Website*

Title of Container (5.31–5.37)

A container holds a smaller work. This could include a periodical, anthology, website, etc. Citations can include **more than one container**, such as a journal that contains an article *and* a database that contains the journal. The second container may include additional core element information. Some sources, like novels, are self-contained. Container titles are usually *italicized*.

> **Self-contained:** *a book* in print (source); *a movie* watched in a theater (source)
>
> **One container:** "a poem" (source), in *an anthology* (container)
>
> **Two containers:** "an article" (source) in an *online journal* (container) accessed through *a database* (second container)
>
> Carey-Webb, Allen. "Racism and 'Huckleberry Finn': Censorship, Dialogue, and Change." *The English Journal*, vol. 82, no. 7, Nov. 1993, pp. 22–34. *EBSCOhost*, https://doi.org/10.2307/819788.

Contributors (5.38–5.47)

Always list translators, editors of collected works, film directors, music conductors, and performing groups. Put this element after the title of source if it applies to just the source and not the entire container.

> **Examples:** translated by, adapted by, directed by, edited by, illustrated by, performed by, etc.

Version (5.48–5.50)

If a work is released in more than one form, it can be identified using the version.

> **Examples:** King James Version, expanded ed., 7th ed., director's cut, version 1.3.1

Number (5.51–5.53)

Number elements include volume, issue, episode, or seasons. Include the common abbreviation of the division type before the number.

> **Examples:** vol. 2, no. 1 (*no.* is the abbreviation for *issue number*); season 4, episode 12

Publisher (5.54–5.67)

Publishers are typically companies or organizations. Publishers include book publishers, film studios/companies/distributors/networks, theater companies, and government agencies.

> **Examples:** Oxford UP, Bloomsbury, Twentieth Century Fox, U.S. Dept. of Justice, etc.

Publication Date (5.68–5.83)

Publication dates include release, composition, revision, forthcoming, or access dates. For sources with multiple dates, cite the most recent. Use all information available: day, month, year, time stamp, date range.

> **Examples:** 15 Jan. 2023, June 2022, 2 July 2016 5:47 p.m., 2022–24

Location (5.84–5.99)

Locations include page number(s), DOIs, permalinks, URLs, or physical location (for artwork or performance). A DOI (digital object identifier) is a permanent link provided by the publisher.

> **Examples:** p. 7, pp. 21-26, www.uvu.edu/writingcenter, https://doi.org/10.1632/ka.2013.128.1.193.

Supplemental Elements (5.105–5.119)

Contributors, original publication dates, and generic sections of a source should be placed after the title of source. Other supplemental elements go at the end of the entry such as access date, medium of publication, medium of access, dissertations and theses, publication history, etc.

> **Examples:** Accessed 25 Oct. 2015, PDF download, Lecture

Tip: Punctuation in citations

Use a period after author, title of source, supplemental elements, and the last element of a citation. List everything else with a comma.

Missing Citation Elements

Where possible, avoid using citations that are missing several citation elements. Besides the examples below, in the case that the source is missing information because of the source type, simply omit those elements.

No Author (5.3)

If the source has no author, start the entry with the title. Use a shortened version of the title for in-text citations. If the source is from a group or organization, use their name in place of a first and last name.

> **In-text Example**: ". . ." (*The Green Knight* 12).
> **Works Cited Example**: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.* Translated by Simon Armitage; Illustrations by Diana Sudyka, The Folio Society, 2008.

No Title (5.23)

For untitled works provide a brief description of the source instead (without using quotation marks or italics).

No Page Numbers (6.26)

If the page numbers are not given, leave that information out. Do not count unnumbered pages.

Works Cited Examples

Article from a Journal in an Online Database

Author Last Name, First Name, and Author First Name Last Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, vol. #, no. #, Month Year, pp. #–#. *Name of Database*, DOI (preferred), URL (omit https://) or Permalink.

Eve, Martin Paul, and Joe Street. "The Silicon Valley Novel." *Literature and History*, vol. 27, no. 1, May 2018, pp. 81–97. *EBSCOhost*, https://doi.org/10.1177/0306197318755680.

Artwork Viewed Online

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Work*. Date, Location.

Van Gogh, Vincent. *Sunflowers*. 1888, National Gallery, www.nationalgallery.org/van-gogh-sunflowers

Book

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Year Published.

Alcott, Louisa May*. Little Women.* Little, Brown and Company, 2018.

Book (Translated)

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book.* Translated by First name Last Name, Publisher, Year Published.

Homer. *The Odyssey.* Translated by Robert Fagles, Penguin Classics, 2006.

Chapter or Article in an Anthology

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Work." *Title of Anthology*, edited by Editor Name, Publisher, Year, pp.#–# Page(s) of Entry.

Gibson, Stephen. "What She Asks of Me." *Tumbled Tales: An Anthology of Unconventional Stories*, edited by Hannah Terao and Brandy Hussa, A Wandering Wave Press, 2023, pp. 135–145.

Film

Movie Title. Director's Name and Other Relevant Contributors. Producer or Distributor, Year Released.

Babe. Directed by Chris Noonan. Kennedy Miller Mitchell, 1995.

Lecture Notes

Lecturer's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Lecture." (Lecture if Untitled) Course Name, Date, Location.

Saavedra, Thomas. Lecture. Humanities Through the Arts, 19 July 2023, Utah Valley University.

Online Newspaper Article

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Name of Publication*, Publication Date, URL.

Long, Wes. "Curtain Call." *Salt Lake City Weekly*, 2 Nov. 2022, cityweekly.net/utah/curtain-call/Content?oid=19120328

Personal Communication

Interviewee Last Name, First Name. Type of Interview. Date Interviewed.

Tan, Amy. Personal communication with author. 11 July 2023.

Video Uploaded to a Sharing Site

Creator's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Video." *Sharing Site*, uploaded by Screen Name, Release Date, URL.

Nishimura, Mariko. "What Is Graphic Design?" *YouTube*, uploaded by Kinetic Typography 101, 11 Aug. 2011, youtube.com/watch?v=rUeiZ6c6EBw.

Website

Website Name. Organization, Date (or date last edited), URL.

Folgerpedia. Folger Shakespeare Library, 17 July 2018, folgerpedia.folger.edu/MainPage.