Tips on Using MLA Style—Updated 2016

This handout will briefly describe MLA documentation procedures. It is not intended to be inclusive, nor is it intended to replace the MLA handbook.

Guidelines for writing a Work(s) Cited section:

- The Work(s) Cited page follows your completed essay. Place the Work(s) Cited title in the center of the page, an inch from the top.
- Double space all lines.
  Note: To save space, the following examples on this tip sheet are not double-spaced.
- Begin the first line of all entries at the left margin, and indent all subsequent lines within the same citation by 5 spaces (one tab or ½ inch). This is also known as a hanging indent.
- Alphabetize the list by the last names of authors. If no author is given, alphabetize by title.

How to make citations within the text:

- If you have used the author’s name in your paraphrased information, put only the page numbers in parentheses after the segment you are citing.
  Example: Monroe argues for abolition of . . . (177-98).

- If you did not name the author in your paraphrased information, put both the name and page numbers in parentheses at the end of the segment.
  Example: Johnson’s political opinions are usually described as progressive, yet she . . . (Monroe 177-98).

- Quoted material in your text: Enclose quotations of fewer than four lines in quotation marks.
  Example: Monroe describes Sarah Johnson as a “political trendsetter for the twenty-first century” (198).

- Block quoting in the text is used for presenting a long quotation (more than 4 lines). The entire quote is set off from the text by indenting ten spaces, or one inch, and it is double-spaced throughout. DO NOT use quotation marks around the block quote.
  Example: The American Library Association released a statement regarding the updated role of city and county libraries:
  People from households making less than $25,000 annually are three times more likely to rely on library computers than those earning more than $75,000 annually. Computer access at the local library helps to close the technology gap, and access to the internet through public computers is a major step toward closing the educational divide. (2)
  a) Writer must use a complete sentence to introduce quote, followed by a colon.
  b) Do not indent the first line an extra amount or add quotation marks not present in quote.
  c) For a block quote, place page number after the period.
The Core Elements of a Work(s)-Cited Entry:

The eighth edition of the *MLA Handbook* introduces a new model for entries in the works-cited list, one that reflects recent changes in how works are published and consulted. Instead of consulting guidelines for citing a book (or DVD or web page), the writer creates an entry by utilizing the MLA’s list of core elements—facts common to most works—which are assembled in a specific order.

The MLA core elements appear below, and the numbered elements are followed by appropriate punctuation for that particular element’s order in the citation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Element:</th>
<th>Explanation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Author.</td>
<td>Who created the source—or whose work on the source you chose to emphasize first and foremost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Title of source.</td>
<td>The title of the specific source you are citing. This could be a whole book or a short poem within it, if your focus is on the poem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Title of container,</td>
<td>The title of a larger source containing the source you are citing. When a source stands alone (like a whole film or novel), there is no container. When an essay (source) is published in a journal (large source), then that journal (larger source), is called a container.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Other contributors,</td>
<td>Noteworthy contributors to the work, such as editors, translators, or performers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Versions,</td>
<td>Description of a source that appears in more than one version, such as a book in revised editions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Number,</td>
<td>Number indicating the source's place in a sequence, such as volume and issue numbers for journals, or season and episode numbers for television shows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Publisher,</td>
<td>Organization that produces or sponsors the source and delivers it to readers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Publication date,</td>
<td>When the source was made available to the public. This might be a year, a month, a specific date, or even a specific time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Location.</td>
<td>Where to find a specific source. This could be page number for print sources, a URL or DOI for online sources, or the location of a lecture or performance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Example:*

Author. Title of source. Title of container, Other contributors, Versions, Number, Publisher, Publication date, Location.

In the new model, the writer asks, “Who is the author? What is the title?” and so forth—regardless of the nature of the source. It is usually best to account for all the containers that enclose your source. Each container likely provides useful information for a reader seeking to understand and locate the original source.
Examples of how to list entries in the Work(s) Cited page—double-space all lines:

**Book with one author**

**Book with two or more authors**

**Source with two or more editors**

**Book with author and editor**

**An essay, short story, and poem in a collection**
Dewar, James A., and Peng Hwa Ang. “The Cultural Consequences of Printing and the Internet.” *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, edited by Sabrina Alcorn Baron et al., U of Massachusetts P/Center for the Book, Library of Congress, 2007, pp. 365-77. (If there is more than one relevant publisher to your research, list them in your citation separated by a forward slash.)

**Selection from an anthology or textbook**

**Issue of a Periodical** (journal, magazine, newspaper) usually carries a date on its cover or title page. Cited examples are listed below:

**Journal**

**Magazine article**

**An Article in a national newspaper (print)**

**Online Periodical**
Online Periodical in Database

E-Reader (App or On Device)

Web site

Article on Web site

Personal Interview
Jackson, Sha-Mena. Personal Interview. 7 July 2015.
(Subject interviewed)

Public Speech or Live Performance

Work of Art
(Place the date of creation immediately after the title.)

Email
(When you document an email message, use its subject as the title.)

Film or Television Series
Kuzui, Fran Rubel, director. Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Twentieth Century Fox, 1992. (When documenting a work in film or television, you should generally cite the organization that had the primary overall responsibility for it.)

Tweet
@perisiankiwi. “We have report of large street battles in east & west Tehran now - #Iranelection.” Twitter, 23 June 2009, 11:15 a.m., twitter.com/perisiankiwi/status/2298106072.