

Modern Language Association (MLA)

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Purdue University has an Online Writing Lab which can be accessed by anyone who needs help correctly formatting a paper in MLA format. The information presented on this document is from Purdue OWL's website. I've included information on this document that you will use when writing and typing your English III research paper.

In-text citations: Author-page style

MLA format follows the author-page method of in-text citation. This means that the author's last name and the page number(s) from which the quotation or paraphrase is taken must appear in the text, and a complete reference should appear on your Works Cited page. The author's name may appear either in the sentence itself or in parentheses following the quotation or paraphrase, but the page number(s) should always appear in the parentheses, not in the text of your sentence. For example:

William Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (263).

In-text citations for print sources with known author

For Print sources like books, magazines, scholarly journal articles, and newspapers, provide a signal word or phrase (usually the author's last name) and a page number. If you provide the signal word/phrase in the sentence, you do not need to include it in the parenthetical citation.

Human beings have been described by Kenneth Burke as "symbol-using animals" (3).

In-text citations for print sources with no known author

When a source has no known author, use a shortened title of the work instead of an author name. Place the title in quotation marks if it's a short work (such as an article) or italicize it if it's a longer work (e.g. plays, books, television shows, entire Web sites) and provide a page number.

We see so many global warming hotspots in North America likely because this region has "more readily accessible climatic data and more comprehensive programs to monitor and study environmental change . . ." ("Impact of Global Warming" 6).

Citing a work by multiple authors

For a source with three or fewer authors, list the authors' last names in the text or in the parenthetical citation:

Smith, Yang, and Moore argue that tougher gun control is not needed in the United States (76).

For a source with more than three authors, use the work's bibliographic information as a guide for your citation. Provide the first author's last name followed by et al. or list all the last names.

Jones et al. counter Smith, Yang, and Moore's argument by noting that the current spike in gun violence in America compels law makers to adjust gun laws (4).

Citing indirect sources

Sometimes you may have to use an indirect source. An indirect source is a source cited in another source. For such indirect quotations, use "qtd. in" to indicate the source you actually consulted. For example:

Ravitch argues that high schools are pressured to act as "social service centers, and they don't do that well" (qtd. in Weisman 259).

Note that, in most cases, a responsible researcher will attempt to find the original source, rather than citing an indirect source.

Citing non-print or sources from the Internet

With more and more scholarly work being posted on the Internet, you may have to cite research you have completed in virtual environments. While many sources on the Internet should not be used for scholarly work (reference the OWL's [Evaluating Sources of Information](#) resource), some Web sources are perfectly acceptable for research. When creating in-text citations for electronic, film, or Internet sources, remember that your citation must reference the source in your Works Cited.

Sometimes writers are confused with how to craft parenthetical citations for electronic sources because of the absence of page numbers, but often, these sorts of entries do not require any sort of parenthetical citation at all. For electronic and Internet sources, follow the following guidelines:

- Include in the text the first item that appears in the Work Cited entry that corresponds to the citation (e.g. author name, article name, website name, film name).
- You do not need to give paragraph numbers or page numbers based on your Web browser's print preview function.
- Unless you must list the Web site name in the signal phrase in order to get the reader to the appropriate entry, do not include URLs in-text. Only provide partial URLs such as when the name of the site includes, for example, a domain name, like *CNN.com* or *Forbes.com* as opposed to writing out <http://www.cnn.com> or <http://www.forbes.com>.

MLA Works Cited Page: Basic Format

According to MLA style, you must have a Works Cited page at the end of your research paper. All entries in the Works Cited page must correspond to the works cited in your main text.

Basic rules

- Begin your Works Cited page on a separate page at the end of your research paper. It should have the same one-inch margins and last name, page number header as the rest of your paper.
- Label the page Works Cited (do not italicize the words Works Cited or put them in quotation marks) and center the words Works Cited at the top of the page.
- Double space all citations, but do not skip spaces between entries.
- Indent the second and subsequent lines of citations five spaces so that you create a hanging indent.
- List page numbers of sources efficiently, when needed. If you refer to a journal article that appeared on pages 225 through 250, list the page numbers on your Works Cited page as 225-50. Note that MLA style uses a hyphen in a span of pages.

Additional basic rules new to MLA 2009

New to MLA 2009:

- For every entry, you must determine the Medium of Publication. Most entries will likely be listed as Print or Web sources, but other possibilities may include Film, CD-ROM, or DVD.
- Writers are **no longer required** to provide URLs for Web entries. However, if your instructor or publisher insists on them, include them in angle brackets after the entry and end with a period. For long URLs, break lines only at slashes.
- If you're citing an article or a publication that was originally issued in print form but that you retrieved from an online database, you should type the online database name in italics. You do not need to provide subscription information in addition to the database name.

Capitalization and punctuation

- Capitalize each word in the titles of articles, books, etc, but do not capitalize articles (the, an), prepositions, or conjunctions unless one is the first word of the title or subtitle: *Gone with the Wind*, *The Art of War*, *There Is Nothing Left to Lose*.
- **New to MLA 2009:** Use italics (instead of underlining) for titles of larger works (books, magazines) and quotation marks for titles of shorter works (poems, articles)

Listing author names

Entries are listed alphabetically by the author's last name (or, for entire edited collections, editor names). Author names are written last name first; middle names or middle initials follow the first name:

Burke, Kenneth

Levy, David M.

Wallace, David Foster

Do not list titles (Dr., Sir, Saint, etc.) or degrees (PhD, MA, DDS, etc.) with names. A book listing an author named "John Bigbrain, PhD" appears simply as "Bigbrain, John"; do, however, include suffixes like "Jr." or "II." Putting it all together, a work by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would be cited as "King, Martin Luther, Jr.," with the suffix following the first or middle name and a comma.

Basic Style for Citations of Electronic Sources (Including Online Databases)

Here are some common features you should try and find before citing electronic sources in MLA style. Not every Web page will provide all of the following information. However, collect as much of the following information as possible both for your citations and for your research notes:

- Author and/or editor names (if available)
- Article name in quotation marks (if applicable)
- Title of the Website, project, or book in italics. (Remember that some Print publications have Web publications with slightly different names. They may, for example, include the additional information or otherwise modified information, like domain names [e.g. .com or .net].)
- Any version numbers available, including revisions, posting dates, volumes, or issue numbers.
- Publisher information, including the publisher name and publishing date.
- Take note of any page numbers (if available).
- Medium of publication.
- Date you accessed the material.
- URL (if required, or for your own personal reference; MLA does not require a URL).

Citing an Entire Web Site

It is necessary to list your date of access because web postings are often updated, and information available on one date may no longer be available later. If a URL is required or you chose to include one, be sure to include the complete address for the site. (Note: The following examples do not include a URL because MLA no longer requires a URL to be included.)

Remember to use *n.p.* if no publisher name is available and *n.d.* if no publishing date is given.

Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). *Name of Site*. Version number. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available). Medium of publication. Date of access.

The Purdue OWL Family of Sites. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2008. Web. 23 Apr. 2008.

Felluga, Dino. *Guide to Literary and Critical Theory*. Purdue U, 28 Nov. 2003. Web. 10 May 2006.

A Page on a Web Site

For an individual page on a Web site, list the author or alias if known, followed by the information covered above for entire Web sites. Remember to use *n.p.* if no publisher name is available and *n.d.* if no publishing date is given.

"How to Make Vegetarian Chili." *eHow*. Demand Media, n.d. Web. 24 Feb. 2009.

An Article from an Online Database (or Other Electronic Subscription Service)

Cite articles from online databases (e.g. LexisNexis, EBSCO, ProQuest, JSTOR, ScienceDirect) and other subscription services just as you would print sources. Since these articles usually come from periodicals, be sure to consult the appropriate sections of the Works Cited: Periodicals page, which you can access via its link at the bottom of this page. In addition to this information, provide the title of the database italicized, the medium of publication, and the date of access.

Note: Previous editions of the MLA Style Manual required information about the subscribing institution (name and location). This information is no longer required by MLA.

Cite by listing the article's author, putting the title of the article in quotations marks, and italicizing the periodical title. Follow with the date of publication. Remember to abbreviate the month. The basic format is as follows:

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical* Day Month Year: pages. *Name of Website*. Web. Date of access.

Junge, Wolfgang, and Nathan Nelson. "Nature's Rotary Electromotors." *Science* 29 Apr. 2005: 642-44. *Science Online*. Web. 5 Mar. 2009.

Langhamer, Claire. "Love and Courtship in Mid-Twentieth-Century England." *Historical Journal* 50.1 (2007): 173-96. *ProQuest*. Web. 27 May 2009.