MLA (Modern Language Association) style is most commonly used to write papers and cite sources within the liberal arts and humanities, especially in the field of language and literature. MLA uses brief parenthetical citations in the text, with an alphabetical list of works cited at the end.

See the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* (3rd ed.)

EndNote for Windows and Macintosh is a valuable all-in-one tool used by researchers, scholarly writers, and students to search online bibliographic databases, organize their references, and create bibliographies instantly. There is now an EndNote output style available if you have access to the software in your library (please visit http://www.endnote.com/support/enstyles.asp and look for TF-E MLA).

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22. **Personal communication**
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1. **How to cite references in your text.**

In MLA style, references to the works of others are by parenthetical citation. Immediately after a quotation from a source or a paraphrase of a source’s ideas, you place the author’s name followed by a space and the relevant page number(s).

Tannen has argued this point (178–85).

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. If more than one work by the author is in the list of works cited, a shortened version of the title is given, but this too may be omitted if the title appears in the text.

Lightenor has argued that computers are not useful tools for small children (“Too Soon” 38), though he has acknowledged elsewhere that early exposure to computer games does lead to better small motor skill development in a child’s second and third year (“Hand-Eye Development” 17).

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 Place the title in quotation marks if it’s a short work, part-work, or unpublished work, and italicize it if it’s a longer independent work.

The following should be italicized:

Books, plays, long poems published as books, pamphlets, periodicals, films, radio and TV programmes, compact discs, audiocassettes, ballets, operas, paintings, works of sculpture, ships, aircraft and spacecraft.

The following should be in quotation marks:

Articles, essays, short stories, short poems, chapters, individual episodes of TV and radio programmes, short musical compositions, e.g. songs, unpublished works such as lectures, conference papers, manuscripts and dissertations.

You do not need to give sources for familiar proverbs, well-known quotations or common knowledge. To cite multiple sources in the same parenthetical reference, separate the citations by a semi-colon.

**Citing authors with same last names**

If two or more authors have the same last name, provide both authors’ first initials (or even the authors’ full name if different authors share initials) in your citation.

Although some medical ethicists claim that cloning will lead to designer children (R. Miller 12), others note that the advantages for medical research outweigh this consideration (A. Miller 46).

**Citing more than one work in a single parenthetical reference**

Use semicolons to separate the references

(Kaku 42; McRae 101–33)

(National Research Council 2535; Fitzgerald 330–43)
Keep in mind that a long parenthetical reference may prove intrusive and disconcerting to the reader, so you may consider citing multiple sources in a note.

**Citing indirect sources**

An indirect source is a source cited in another source. For such indirect quotations, use *qtd. in* to indicate the source you actually consulted.

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.

2. **How to organize the reference list (Works cited).**

This list contains all the works that are cited in the text, in alphabetical order by the author’s last name, using the letter-by-letter system. Works listed under the same name are alphabetized by title. This system used the letters before the comma between last and first name, and ignores spaces and punctuation:

Descartes, René

De Sica, Vittorio

MacDonald, George

McCullers, Carson

Morris, Robert

Morris, William

Morrison, Toni

Saint-Exupéry, Antoine de

St. Denis, Ruth

**Author with co-authors**

If two or more entries citing co-authors begin with the same name, alphabetize by the last names of the second authors:

Scholes, Robert, and Robert Kellogg

Scholes, Robert, Carl H. Klaus, and Michael Silverman
Scholes, Robert, and Eric S. Rabkin

**Unknown author**

If the author’s name is unknown, alphabetize by title, ignoring any initial *An, A,* or *The.*

**Multiple authors**

If a single author cited in an entry is also the first of multiple authors in the following entry, repeat the name in full.


**Cross-references**

To avoid unnecessary repetition in citing two or more works from the same collection, you may create a complete entry for the collection and cross-reference individual pieces to the entry. In a cross-reference, state the author and title of the piece, last name of the editor, and inclusive page numbers. If the piece is a translation, add the name of the translator after the title or collections as appropriate.


If you list two or more works under the editor’s name, add the title or shortened title to the cross-reference.


3. **Abbreviations used in MLA style.**

MLA makes full use of abbreviations. Some examples are given here.

**Time**

Months should be spelled out in the text, but abbreviated in the list of works cited, except for May, June and July, e.g. Apr., Aug., Nov.
**Geographic names**

Standard two-letter designations are used for US states. Here are others:

Aus. = Australia, Astr. = Australia, Belg. = Belgium, Braz. = Brazil, Bulg. = Bulgar-i-a,

**Publishers’ names**


**Missing publication information**

n.p. = no place of publication given:


n.p. = no publisher given:


n.d. = no date of publication given:


n. pag. no pagination given:


4. **Abstract.**

*In an abstracts journal*


*Online*


5. **Advertisement.**

List the company, business or organization; the publication, broadcast network or Web address where the advertisement appeared:


6. **Audiovisual material.**

**Sound recording**

Italicize titles of recordings, but not titles of musical compositions.


**Song**


**Spoken word**


7. **Bible and other sacred writings.**

The convention of using italics for titles does not usually apply to sacred writings including all books and versions of the Bible. But italicize titles of individual published editions of sacred writings and treat the editions in the works cited list like any other published book. The titles of books of the Bible are often abbreviated

1 Chron. 21.8

Rev. 21.3

8. **Book.**

Entries for books and other nonperiodical print publications include Name, Title, Edition, Number of volume, Publisher details, Year of publication, Medium of publication consulted, Supplementary bibliographic information.

**No author**

If the book has no author’s or editor’s name on the title page, begin the entry with the title. Do not use *Anonymous* or *Anon*. Alphabetize by title, ignoring any *An*, *The* or *A*.

**One author**

Such an entry has three main divisions, each followed by a full stop (period) and a space, except the last.
Author's name. Title of the Book. Publication information.


Reverse the author’s name, adding a comma after the last name. Give the name as it appears on the title page, but omit titles, affiliations and degrees (e.g. Sister, Sir, Lady). Never abbreviate a name given in full, but use initials if the title page does.

Eliot, T.S.

McLuhan, H. Marshall

A suffix that is part of the name, e.g. Jr. or a roman numeral, appears after the first name, preceded by a comma:

Rockefeller, John D., IV

Rust, Arthur George, Jr.

Two or three authors

To cite a book by two or three authors, give the names in the same order as on the title page. Reverse the name of the first author, add a comma, and give the other names in normal form. If the authors have the same last name, give each name in full. If the persons listed on the title page are editors, translators or compilers, place a comma after the final name and add the appropriate abbreviation.


More than three authors

Name only the first and add et al. (roman, not italic), or give the names in full in the order of the title page.


or


or


If a single author cited in an entry is also the first of multiple authors in the following entry, repeat the name in full. Repeat the name in full whenever you cite the same person as part of a different authorship.


**Corporate author**

A corporate author may be a commission, a committee, or any group whose individual members are not identified on the title page.


**Title**

State the full title, including any subtitle, as on the title page of the book, not the cover or top of a page. The title is in italics. Place a colon between a title and a subtitle, unless the title ends in a question mark, exclamation mark or dash. Extremely long titles or titles that are usually condensed may be shortened. In shortening a title include the beginning words of the title up to the first noun and the words by which the work is customarily known. Indicate any omissions by an ellipsis in square brackets.

**Capitalization rules**

In the title and subtitle, capitalize the first word, the last word, and all principal words, including those that follow hyphens in compound terms. By principal words, we mean nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, subordinating conjunctions (e.g. *after, if, unless, when*). Do not capitalize articles, prepositions, coordinating conjunctions (e.g. *and, but, yet*) or the *to* in infinitives.
Publication information

Give the city, publisher’s name, and year of publication. Take these facts directly from the book. Use a colon between place of publication and publisher, and a comma between publisher and date. If the book doesn’t indicate the publisher, place or date of publication, supply as much of the missing information as you can, using square brackets.

Place of publication

If several cities are listed in the book, give only the first. Give an abbreviation of the country, state or province if it may be ambiguous or unfamiliar to the reader (a full list of abbreviations is given in the Abbreviations section above):

Athens, Gr.
Sherbrooke, PQ.
Cambridge, MA.
Victoria, Austral.

Publisher’s name

Shorten the publisher’s name according to these guidelines: omit articles (e.g. The), business abbreviations (Co., Ltd.), and descriptive words (Press, Publishers, House, Books, Verlag). When citing a university press, however, always add the abbreviation P (Ohio State UP) because the university may publish independently of its press (Ohio State U).

If the name includes the name of a person (e.g. John Wiley, W.W. Norton), cite the surname alone. If the names of more than one person are included, cite only the first. If the publisher’s name is commonly abbreviated with capital letters and likely to be familiar to the reader (e.g. MLA), use the abbreviation. More examples are given in the Abbreviations section above. If the title page lists two or more publishers, include all of them in the order given.


Edition


The term Edition can also be used to denote a work prepared for publication by an editor. To cite an edition, begin with the author if you refer primarily to the text itself; give the editor’s name, preceded by Ed. (edited by), after the title. You can give the original date of publication if you wish.

If your citations are generally to the work of the editor (e.g. the introduction, notes, etc.), begin the entry with the editor’s name, followed by a comma and the abbreviation ed. (editor) and give the author’s name, preceded by the word By, after the title.


**Online book**

Sometimes it is important to indicate that a work consulted on the Web also appears in another medium. For nonperiodical publications only on the Web, include the following: Author name, Title, Title of website, Version or edition, Publisher or sponsor of the site, Date of publication, Medium of publication, Date of access.


If the nonperiodical work also appears in print, it may be important to include the bibliographic data. Instead of ending the reference with Print, record the title of the database or Web site, the medium of publication consulted, and the date of access.


**Book in a language other than English**


If it seems necessary to clarify the title, provide a translation in square brackets. Similarly, you may give a translation of the city in the same way.

**Translation**

State the author’s name first if you refer primarily to the work itself.


If your citations are mostly to the translator’s comments or choice of wording, begin the entry with the translator’s name.


**Multivolume work**

If you are using two or more volumes of a multivolume work, cite the total number of volumes in the work, after the title, if the volumes were published over a period of years, give the inclusive dates at the end of the citation.


If the work is still in progress, write *to date* after the number of volumes (3 vols. to date) and leave a space after the en dash that follows the beginning date (1982–)


If you are using only one volume, state the number of the volume and give information for that volume alone.


If the volume has an individual title, you may cite the book without referring to the other volumes.

**Book in a series**


**Anthology or collection**

List by editor or compiler, followed by a comma and *ed.*, *eds.* or *comp*.


**A work in an anthology**

If you are citing an essay, short story, poem or similar, you add the following information to the book entry: author, title and (if relevant) translator of the part of the book being cited. The title is normally in quotation marks, but if the work was originally published independently, use italics for the title instead. If the anthology contains the work of more than one translator, give the name of the translator next. If all the works in the collection have the same translator, or if the book has an editor or compiler, write *Trans, Ed.* or *Comp.* as appropriate (NB: these mean translated by,
edited by, compiled by, so if you have two editors, you still use Ed.). Give the inclusive page numbers of the piece you are citing.


If you wish to inform your reader of the date when a previously published piece other than a scholarly article first appeared, you may follow the title of the piece with the year of original publication:


Article in a reference book

Treat an encyclopaedia or dictionary entry as a piece in a collection, but do not cite the editor. If the article is signed, give the author first; if it is unsigned, give the title first. If entries are arranged alphabetically, you may omit volume and page numbers. When citing familiar reference books, especially those with frequent new editions, do not give full publication information. For such works, list only the edition and year of publication.


If you are citing a specific definition, among several, add the abbreviation Def. and the appropriate designation (e.g. number, letter)

When citing less familiar reference books, give full publication information.

**Introduction, preface, foreword, afterword**


**Republished book**


**Book published before 1900**

You may omit the name of the publisher and use a comma after the place of publication.

9. **CD-ROM.**


10. **Conference proceedings.**

Treat published proceedings like a book, but add information about the conference.


See also Speech, lecture, talk.

11. **Digital file.**


12. **Dissertation or thesis.**

**Unpublished**

Published

Cite a published dissertation as you would a book, but add pertinent dissertation information before the publication facts.


13. Email.


Harnem, James L. Message to the author. 20 Aug. 1996. E-mail.

14. Film.

List films by their title, and include the name of the director, the film studio or distributor and its release year. If other information, like names of performers, is relevant to how the film is referred to in your paper, include that as well. If you view a digitized version of a film on the Web, include the title of the database or Web site, medium of publication and date of access.


If the film is referred to in terms of the role or contribution of a director, writer, or performer, begin the entry with that person’s name, last name first.


Cite the author of the publication if the author is identified. Otherwise start with the name of the government, followed by the agency and any subdivision.


Include the artist’s name, the title, the year the work was created, the medium of composition, and the institution (gallery or museum) that houses the work (if applicable), followed by the city where it is located.

**Painting, sculpture or photograph**

Include the artist’s name, the year the work was created, and the institution (e.g., a gallery or museum) that houses it, followed by the city where it is located.


If you are referring to a photographic reproduction, include the information as above, but also include the bibliographic information for the source in which the photograph appears, including a page or other reference number (plate, figure, etc.).


**Online**

Include the complete information for the site where you found the image, including the date of access.


17. Internet.

In the past, the *MLA Style Manual* recommended including URLs of Web sources, but these can change and are also prone to errors. You should now include a URL as supplementary information only when the reader won’t be able to find the source without it. If you do give it, place it immediately after the date of access, enclosed in angle brackets.


**Work cited only on the Web**

For a nonperiodical publication on the Web, include the following components: Name of the author, Title of the work, Title of the Web site, Version or edition, Publisher or sponsor of the site, Date of publication, Medium of publication, Date of access.


**18. Interview.**

*Published or recorded*


*Personal*

List by the name of the person you have interviewed.


Reed, Ishmael. Telephone interview. 3 Dec. 2006.

**19. Journal article.**


In addition to the volume number, the journal may include an issue number or a month or season. You may ignore the issue number and the month or season if the journal’s pages are numbered consecutively throughout each volume.


If the journal does not have volume numbers, treat the issue number as a volume number.

*Special issue (inc. published as book)*

Online


Periodical in an online database


Article included in an anthology

Give the complete data for the publication and then add Rpt. in (reprinted in), the title of the collection, and the new publication details.


If the article was originally published under a different title, first state the new title and publication details, followed by Rpt. of (reprint of), the original title and the original publication facts.

20. Microfilm, microfiche.


21. Newspaper or magazine article.

In the name of a periodical, an initial the is not treated as part of the title (the Washington Post). Capitalize the word series or edition only when part of a title.

No author


With author

Author(s). “Title of Article.” Title of Periodical Day Month Year: pages. Medium.

When writing the date, list day before month; use a three-letter abbreviation of the month (e.g., Jan., Mar., Aug.).


To cite a magazine published every week or every two weeks, give the complete date, followed by a colon and the page numbers of the article. If the article is not on consecutive pages, give the first page number and a +. Do not give the volume and issue numbers.

To cite a magazine published every month or two months, give the month and year.


*Editorial*


*Letter to the Editor*


*Online*

For the online version of a periodical, add the date of access.


22. **Personal communication.**

Author. “Title of the message (if any).” Personal interview. Date of the message.

*Published letter*


*Letter received by you*


23. **Review.**

To cite a review, give the reviewer’s name and the title of the review if there is one; then ‘Rev. of’, the title of the work reviewed, a comma, the word ‘by’ and the author. For a review of a performance, add pertinent information about the production. If the review is titled but unsigned, begin the entry with the title of the review.


*Online*

24. **Software.**


25. **Speech, lecture, talk.**

Include speaker name, title of the speech (if any) in quotes, details about the meeting or event where the speech was given, including its location and date of delivery. In lieu of a title, label the speech according to its type, e.g., Guest Lecture, Keynote Address, State of the Union Address.


26. **TV or radio.**


27. **Unpublished work.**

*Manuscript or typescript*

