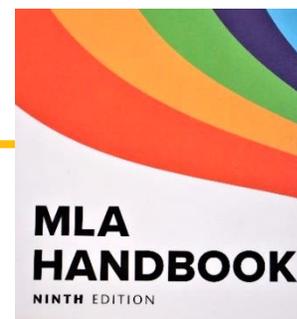


DOCUMENTING MLA STYLE



Overview of MLA Style

Where is it used? – MLA style is typically used in English and some humanities courses.

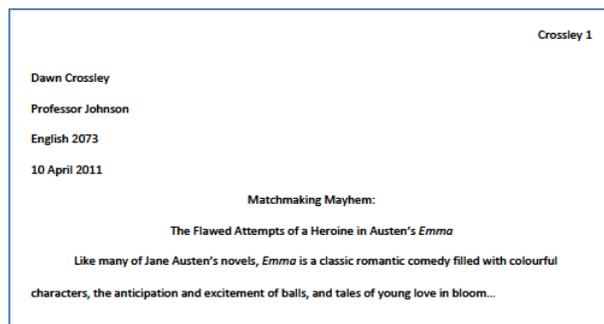
What is unique about this citation style? – MLA uses an author-page system for parenthetical citations (Smith 298) along with a Works Cited (list of sources) at the end of the document.

Can I use headings in MLA? – Headings are generally discouraged in shorter MLA-style papers. Longer projects may use headings where appropriate. There is no definitive structure to the format of headings in MLA, other than that headings of the same level should have consistent formatting.

Should I include a title page? – Title pages are discouraged in MLA. If your professor requests a title page, they will provide you with their formatting expectations.

General Formatting Tips

- In place of a title page, type your name, your instructor’s name, the course name and code, and the due date, all double-spaced on separate lines.
- Double-space and centre your title. Only use italics to emphasize words that you would also italicize in your paper, such as book titles or foreign terms.
- Number pages in the upper right corner preceded by your last name.



Integrating Sources into Papers

Whenever you integrate sources into your paper, whether as a quotation or a paraphrase, you must give credit where credit is due. There are two ways to do this in MLA. The first is as a parenthetical citation, where you include the author’s last name and page number in brackets at the end of the sentence (Lastname 25). The other method is as a narrative citation, where you include the author’s name as part of your sentence and then only the page number in brackets.

Parenthetical Citation (with quotation)	“[S]piritual mentoring does not belong only in the hands of the specialists. . . [S]piritual mentoring is the work of the community of faith just as friendship belongs to all people” (Anderson and Reese 56).
Narrative Citation (with paraphrase)	Rigoberta Menchu charges the Church with failing to understand the plight of Guatemala’s indigenous people (234).

Rules for Quoting Poetry and Drama (with line numbers)

For in-text citations of poetry, you should use line numbers instead of page numbers. Similarly, for plays that include line numbers (such as Shakespeare or ancient Greek plays), you should cite using act, scene, and line numbers as applicable (see Sample In-Text Citations below). Otherwise, use page numbers.

When quoting up to 3 lines of poetry or drama, enclose the exact words in quotations marks. Mark line breaks for 2-3 lines of poetry OR 2-3 lines of dialogue by one character in a play with line numbers using forward slashes (/).

Citing Lines from a Poem	Tennyson employs the techniques of alliteration and onomatopoeia to produce a chilling effect in <i>The Lady of Shalott</i> : “Willows whiten, aspens quiver, / Little breezes dusk and shiver” (10-11).
Citing Dialogue for One Character in a Play without Line Numbers	Sometimes the best metaphors are unexpected ones, like in <i>Death of a Salesman</i> : “The world is an oyster, but you don’t crack it open on a mattress!” (Miller 41). (This example uses page numbers)

Block Quotations

Block quotation formatting is required for quotations of more than 4 lines of prose, more than 3 lines of poetry, more than 3 lines of dialogue by one character in a play, or lines of dialogue between multiple characters in a play. Introduce the quotation with a signal phrase and a colon. Forgo quotation marks (except to note quotations within the quotation) and set off the quoted material with an indentation of 1 inch from the left margin. NOTE: Unlike in the example below, everything should be double spaced.

In a tribute to Helen Keller, Alden Whitman reflects on her steadfast character and faith amidst a life of challenge:

Despite the celebrity that accrued to her and the air of awesomeness with which she was surrounded in her later years, Miss Keller retained an unaffected personality and a certainty that her optimistic attitude toward life was justified. "I believe that all through these dark and silent years, God has been using my life for a purpose I do not know," she said recently, adding, "But one day I shall understand and then I will be satisfied." (1)

Works Cited

- Centre and title your list of sources Works Cited. Alphabetize entries by authors' last names. Double-space the entire page, start entries at the left margin, and use a hanging indent of one-half inch.
- To cite more than one work by the same author(s), include the name(s) in the first entry. In subsequent entries, replace the name(s) with three hyphens and a period (---). Proceed with the standard format for that entry.

Sample In-Text Citations (Parenthetical References)

One author	Bullock explains that writing functions as a vehicle “to explore our thoughts and emotions” (3). OR Writing functions as a vehicle “to explore our thoughts and emotions” (Bullock 3).
Two authors	“We each write for different reasons and for different audiences” (Rampton and Lynch 325).
3+ authors	For three or more authors, name the first author and replace the others with “et al.” E.g., (Mason et al. 57)
The Bible	Jeremiah saw “a boiling pot, tilting away from the north” (<i>New International Version</i> , Jer. 1.13). -You may omit the version in subsequent parenthetical references to the same edition.
Play with Line Numbers	Shakespeare’s protagonists express mutual contempt in a witty exchange: BENEDICK. What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living? BEATRICE. Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence. (Shakespeare 1.1.106-110) -You do not need to include the speakers’ names if quoting only one speaker.
Unknown Author	Next to Belfast, the site of the ship’s construction, Halifax may in fact be “the second most important Titanic city in the world” (“Titanic”). Use a short form of the title and the page or paragraph number if available.
Something Someone Else Cited	William Zinsser reveals that “[t]he secret of good writing is to strip every sentence to its cleanest components” (qtd. in Levin, Rampton, and Lynch 325). -Works Cited will only cite the source you have access to (i.e., not Zinsser). But please note: The use of indirect sources is discouraged. If you can find the original source, it is better to use that.

Indent each character's name 1 inch from the left margin. Indent subsequent lines in the same speech an additional quarter-inch.

Sample Works Cited Entries (See Appendix 2 of the MLA Handbook for more samples)

One author (5.6)	Bullock, Richard. <i>The Norton Field Guide to Writing</i> . Norton, 2006. (Include City of Publication with a colon (Toronto:) before publisher for books published before 1900 or if you are using an “unexpected” version – such as a British edition when you are in Canada).
Two authors and edition of book (5.7, 5.50)	Adler, Mortimer J. and Charles Van Doren. <i>How to Read a Book: A Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading</i> . Rev. ed., Simon and Schuster, 1972.
3+ authors (5.8)	Levin, Gerald, et al. <i>Prose Models</i> . 3 rd Cdn ed. Harcourt, 1997.
eBook (5.84)	Meyers, Jeffrey. <i>Orwell: Life and Art</i> . University of Illinois Press, 2020. search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=nlebk&AN=569640&site=ehost-live&scope=site&custid=s9775827 *Since URLs from the address bar can change, use “Permalinks” or “Stable URL” when available. Do not include http:// in your URL.
The Bible (6.25)	<i>The Holy Bible: New International Version</i> . Zondervan, 1984. (List each edition.)
Single work with an editor (like a play) (5.39)	Shakespeare, William. <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> . Edited by Tucker Brooke. Yale UP, 1917. (UP replaces “University Press.”)
Work in an anthology (5.39)	Weller, Archie. “Going Home.” <i>Australian Literature: An Anthology of Writing From the Land Down Under</i> , edited by Phyllis Fahrie Edelson, Ballantine Books, 1993, pp. 68-82.
Short work online (5.33-5.34)	“Sir Philip Sidney.” <i>Poetry Foundation</i> , https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/philip-sidney . (Include the Author’s name as usual at the beginning of the entry if there is one)
Article in an online (academic) journal (5.37)	McVey, Christopher. “Reclaiming the Past: Michael Ondaatje and the Body of History.” <i>Journal of Modern Literature</i> , vol. 37, no. 2, 2014, pp. 141-160. <i>JSTOR</i> , www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/jmodelite.37.2.141 . (Do not include http:// in your URL. Use DOI instead of URL when available)
Lecture	Farrell, Margaret. Lecture. “Revising the Essay,” 16 Oct. 2009, Tyndale University.

For info on these and other sources, email us at writing@tyndale.ca or visit https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html.