

MLA Style Basics

To find out how to format or cite anything not covered in this handout, consult *MLA Handbook*. Ninth ed. (Call number LB 2369 .M52 2021) or the Online Writing Lab at Purdue University (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html).

Format

Papers should have margins of 1" on all sides and all text should be double spaced, using legible font in 12 pt. size. Each page should have a header with your last name and page number in the upper right hand corner. In the upper left of the first page, list your name, instructor's name, the course, and the date. Then, centered on the page, the title of the paper.

After the text of the paper, on a separate page, is the **Works Cited** list. Put "Works Cited" as a title on the page (no quotation marks), centered. List all sources **cited** in the paper, alphabetized by authors' last names, double spaced, and using hanging indents.

If a work has two authors, invert only the first author's name, follow it with a comma and "and", and then list the second author's name. For three or more authors, list the first one inverted, followed by a comma and "et al. For editors, translators, or compilers listed on the title page, their name should be followed by a comma and the appropriate title. If an author has more than one entry on your list, then the listing for the second entry should be replaced with three hyphens and a period. Items without an author are listed by title.

In-Text (Parenthetical) Citations

The author's last name and the page number(s) from which the quote is taken must appear in the text, and a complete reference should appear in the Works Cited list. If more than one author has the same last name, provide the author's initials (or even her/his full name if authors share initials) in your citation. If you cite more than one work by an author, include a shortened title for the source from which you are quoting. Examples of in-text citations:

Freud states that "a dream is the fulfillment of a wish" (154). Some argue that "a dream is the fulfillment of a wish" (Freud 154).

Short quotations (fewer than four typed lines of prose or three lines of verse) can be incorporated in your text, enclosed within double quotation marks. Place quotations longer than four typed lines in a free-standing block, and omit quotation marks. Start the quotation on a new line, indented half an inch from the left margin.

Works Cited

Source	Citation Format and Example
Print Book with one author	Author last name, First name. <i>Title of the Book</i> . Publisher, Publication Date. Henley, Patricia. <i>The Hummingbird House</i> . MacMurray, 1999.
Print Book with two authors	First author's last name, First name, and Full Name second author. <i>Title of the Book</i> . Publisher, Publication Date. Doris, Michael, and Louise Erdrich. <i>The Crown of Columbus</i> . HarperCollins Publishers, 1999.
Print book with three or more authors. Use et al. (Latin for "and others") after the first author	Author last name, First name, et al. <i>Title of the Book</i> . Publisher, Publication Date. Burdick, Anne, et al. <i>Digital Humanities</i> . MIT P, 2012.
Chapter or article in an anthology or book of essays.	Author last name, First name. "Title of the Chapter." <i>Title of the Collection</i> , edited by Editor's Name(s), Publisher, Year, page range of entry. Melville, Herman. "Hawthorne and His Mosses." <i>The Norton Anthology of American Literature</i> , edited by Nina Baym. Norton, 1989, pp. 5-25.
Second book by same author.	---. <i>AIDS: The Making of a Chronic Disease</i> . U of California P, 1992.
Article in magazine (print)	Author last name, First name. "Title of the Article." <i>Title of the Periodical</i> , Day Month Year, page(s). Whitaker, Mark. "Getting Tough at Last." <i>Newsweek</i> , 10 May 1993, p. 22.
Article in professional/scholarly/peer reviewed journal (print)	Author last name, First name. "Title of the Article." <i>Title of the Journal</i> , volume, issue, year, pages. Bagchi, Alaknanda. "Conflicting Nationalisms: The Voice of the Subaltern in Mahasweta Devi's Bashai Tudu." <i>Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature</i> , vol. 15, no. 1, 1996, pp. 41-50.

