



Tips for Writers • MLA Style Sheet

This style sheet has been compiled by the staff of The Tutoring Center. It highlights major elements of MLA that COM students are likely to use in their assignments. It is **not** intended to be inclusive of all MLA elements. For more detailed information, please consult the most current edition of the MLA Handbook, visit Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (the Purdue Owl), or ask a tutor for assistance.

Students should be aware that individual instructors, even within the same departments, may alter their requirements from the standard MLA guidelines. Students should always follow the instructor's preferences. Questions about those requirements should be brought to the instructor.

Format

The basic format of an MLA paper includes the following:

- ✓ The font Times New Roman, size 12, alignment flush left
- ✓ Double-spaced text, including the heading
- ✓ 1-inch margins all sides
- ✓ Paragraph indentations of ½ inch
- ✓ Header with last name and page number, flush right and ½ inch from top of page

Heading

The basic heading of an MLA paper includes the following:

John Smith (Student Name)
Professor Bernie Smiley (Instructor name with title: Dr./Professor)
English 1301.102 (Course name & number; section optional)
15 January 2014 (Date)

In-Text Citations

Standard in-text citations include the author's last name and the page number on which the cited information was found. Punctuation comes after the citation:

The research showed that students often skimmed over information too quickly (Smith 125).

Page numbers only may be given if the author's name is mentioned in the same sentence or section of the text.

Smith's research showed that students often skimmed over information too quickly (125).

Block Quotes

Quotations that exceed four lines of prose or three lines of poetry must be in block format, which includes the following:

- ✓ Additional ½ inch indent from existing left margin
- ✓ Double-spaced text
- ✓ No quotation marks necessary
- ✓ Citation given after punctuation
- ✓ Additional ½ inch indentation if multiple paragraphs
- ✓ Poetry should maintain original line breaks, if possible

(Works Cited Information on Back)



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General Works Cited Information

All of the research used in your text should be appropriately listed in the Works Cited page. This allows instructors to see the research used, and also gives them the information needed to retrieve those sources, if need be. Failure to turn in a Works Cited page is considered plagiarism. Today, there are many websites and applications that will help you construct your Works Cited page. These can be time saving and helpful, but writers should always be cautious when using them because they are not 100% infallible.

Core Elements

Apply the following information to any source you plan on using to build your Works Cited entries. These core elements should be listed in the order presented here. Note the punctuation which links the elements together. If you're sure that your source is missing any of these elements, simply leave that information out.

Author. (If a source has three or more authors, list the first name present, followed by "et al." Example: Smith, Ryan, et al.)

Title of Source. (In quotation marks if source is part of a larger work, such as an article, essay, poem, etc.; italics if source is self-contained or an independent whole, such as titles of magazines, books, anthologies).

Title of Container, (Use this when your source is part of something larger, such as a journal.)

Other Contributors, (Includes editors, translators, etc.)

Version, (Most often for sources which have gone through multiple printings, such as books.)

Number, (Common for journals, which are printed as part of a larger set. Example: vol. 64, no. 1.)

Publisher, (Often found at the bottom of web pages, near the copyright year.)

Publication Date, (If several dates are present, use the most recent and/or relevant.)

Location. (Page numbers go here, as well as URLs and DOIs; DOIs are preferred to URLs.)

Example Works Cited Page

Cited below are several common examples of sources, in the following order: scholarly journal, page on a government website, and book.

Shane, Dan, and Padmaja Ayyagari. "Spillover Effects of the Affordable Care Act? Exploring the Impact on Young Adult Dental Insurance Coverage." *Health Services Research*, vol. 50, no. 4, Health Research and Educational Trust, Aug. 2015, pp. 1109- 1124, doi: 10.1111/1475-6773.12266.

U. S. Department of Labor. "Occupational Outlook Handbook: Mechanical Engineers." *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Dec. 2015, <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/architecture-and-engineering/mechanical-engineers.htm>.

MLA Handbook. 8th ed., The Modern Language Association of America, 2016.