

An Introduction to MLA Citation and Format



California State University, Fresno
Learning Center

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What is MLA?



It is the Modern Language Association's
standardized method for citing sources
and formatting papers

For more information visit: <http://www.mla.org/>

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Why use MLA?

- It is required in all English and Humanities courses
- It provides your readers with references so they can look up more information on your topic
- It helps integrate quotes and other source material
- Most importantly, it helps avoid plagiarism

Other Documentation Styles

- APA: The American Psychological Association's standard for documenting sources and formatting papers. (Typically used for Social Sciences.)
- Chicago Style: This is another style of documentation also used for Humanities and Social Sciences

Don't confuse these with MLA. Each style has specific documentation and formatting guidelines

The Basic Format

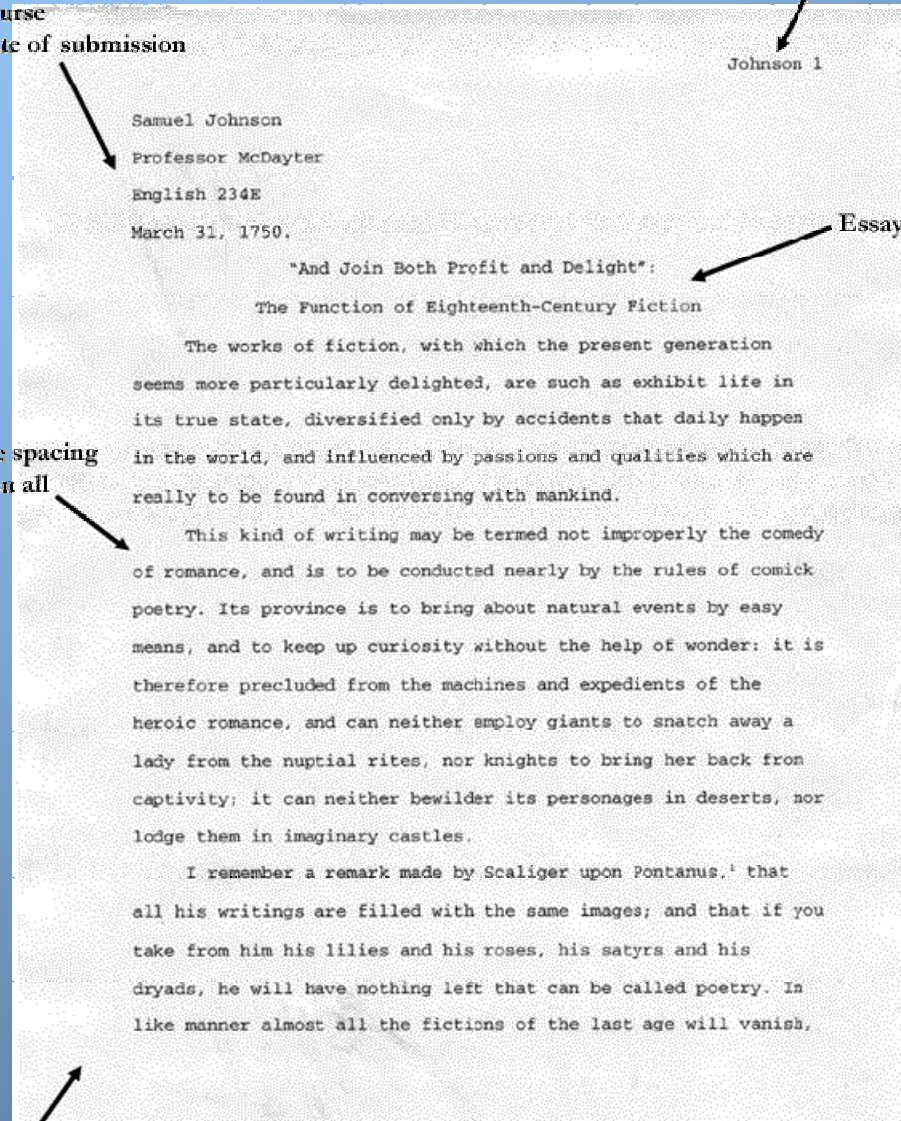
Identifying Information

- 1) Student name
- 2) Instructor
- 3) Course
- 4) Date of submission

Header: Name and page number
One half inch (1.27 cm) from top

Double spacing
between all
lines

One inch (2.54 cm)
margin on all sides



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In-text Citations

- According to MLA guidelines, you must cite any quotes or research used in an essay
- After using a quote, put the author's last name and page number in parentheses
- The first gambling Web site appeared in 1995, and online gambling has since become the most lucrative Internet business (Will 92).
- *or*, George Will reported that in 2002 Internet gambling surpassed pornography to become the Internet's most lucrative business (92).
- *In your Works Cited list:* Will, George F. "Electronic Morphine." Newsweek 25 Nov. 2002: 92. <http://hawaii.hawaii.edu/legacylib/mlahcc.html>

Note: Quotations should come at the beginning and end of the quote. A period should be placed after the author's name and page number in parentheses.

The Works Cited Page

- Works Cited pages must be included on a separate sheet of paper at the end of an essay
- Each source you reference in your paper must be listed on the Works Cited page



Sample Works Cited Page

Daly 7

Works Cited

Besthoff, Len. "Cell Phone Use Increases Risk of Accidents, but Users Willing to Take the Risk." WRAL Online. 11 Nov. 1999. 12 Jan. 2001 <<http://www.wral-tv.com/news/wral/1999/1110-talking-driving>>.

Farmers Insurance Group. "New Survey Shows Drivers Have Had 'Close Calls' with Cell Phone Users." Farmers Insurance Group. 8 May 2000. 12 Jan. 2001 <http://www.farmersinsurance.com/news_cellphones.html>.

Haughney, Christine. "Taking Phones out of Drivers' Hands." Washington Post 5 Nov. 2000: A8.

Ippolito, Milo. "Driver's Sentence Not Justice, Mom Says." Atlanta Journal-Constitution 25 Sept. 1999: J1.

Layton, Lyndsey. "Legislators Aiming to Disconnect Motorists." Washington Post 10 Dec. 2000: C1+.

Lowe, Chan. Cartoon. Washington Post 22 July 2000: A21.

Pena, Patricia N. "Patti Pena's Letter to Car Talk." Cars.com. Car Talk. 10 Jan. 2001 <<http://cartalk.cars.com/About/Morgan-Pena/letter.html>>.

Redelmeier, Donald A., and Robert J. Tibshirani. "Association between Cellular-Telephone Calls and Motor Vehicle Collisions." New England Journal of Medicine 336 (1997): 453-58.

Stockwell, Jamie. "Phone Use Faulted in Collision." Washington Post 6 Dec. 2000: B1+.

Sundeen, Matt. "Cell Phones and Highway Safety: 2000 State Legislative Update." National Conference of State Legislatures. Dec. 2000. 9 pp. 27 Feb. 2001 <<http://ncsl.org/programs/esnr/cellphone.pdf>>.

Heading is centered.

List is alphabetized by authors' last names (or by title when a work has no author).

First line of each entry is at the left margin; extra lines are indented 1/2" (or five spaces).

Double-spacing is used throughout.

The URL is broken after a slash. No hyphen is inserted.

Source: Diana Hacker (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006).

A Simple Way to Cite Sources

No matter what type of source you used, you will always include the following information on your works cited page:

- Author
- Title 1 (article, poem, story, etc. in a larger work)
- Title 2 (volume, book, or website)

Example: Fairbanks, Jesse. “Getting the Most out of Microsoft Power Point.” Microsoft For Dummies.

Books

After you've included author and title information, you'll need to add:

- Editors, translators, or compilers
- Publication place
- Publishing House
- Publication Date



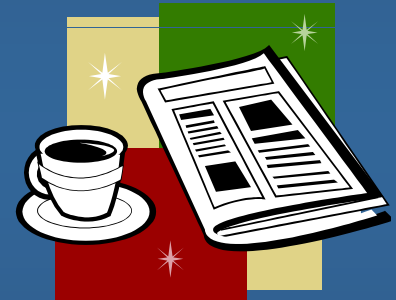
<http://www.csufresno.edu/library/>

Example: Allende, Isabel. Daughter of Fortune. Trans. Margaret Sayers Peden. New York: Harper, 2000.

Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers

After you've included author and title information, you'll need to add:

- Volume or issue
- Publication date
- Relevant pages



Example: Kaplan, Robert D. “History Moving North.” Atlantic Monthly. Feb. 1997: 21-3.

Web Pages

After you've included author and title information, you'll need to add:

- Journal number or web page edition
- Date of publication
- Relevant pages
- Date of access
- URL



Example: Shiva, Vandana. “Bioethics: A third world issue.”
Native Web. 15 Sept. 2001. 18 Dec. 2003
<<http://www.nativeweb.org/pages/legal/shiva.html>>.

Online Databases

After you've included author and title information, you'll need to add:

- Volume, number, date, and page (the same information as a journal citation)
- Subscription database name (Proquest, etc.)
- Source of database (Clovis Center Library, Clovis)
- Date of access
- URL

Example: Young, Jennifer. "The Health Perils of Freshman English Classes." JAMA. 65.3 (2008): 43. Proquest Direct. Clovis Center Library, Clovis. 10 Oct. 2009.
<http://www.umi.com/proquest>

Further MLA Citation Information

To cite other types of texts on a Works Cited page see:

~ The Bedford Handbook

~ <http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

Things to Remember about MLA

- MLA does not require a cover sheet
- Sources listed on the Works Cited page must be in alphabetical order
- All quotes must be cited even if you've cited the source earlier in the paper
- Do not insert an extra space between paragraphs