



# The Writing Center

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

## MLA Ninth Edition

This handout presents the rules of the Modern Language Association Ninth Edition in the following sections: **Formatting Guidelines**, **In-Text Citations**, and **References Page**.

### Formatting Guidelines

#### First Page

Typically, MLA essays do not have a separate title page. The first page of the document should be formatted as follows:

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Last Name 1

Student Name

Instructor Name

Class

31 Oct 2022

Essay Title

First paragraph starts here...

- 
- Upper right: Each page (including references) has a page number preceded by the writer's last name.
  - Upper left: The heading identifies author, instructor, class, and date.
  - Center: The full title of the essay is centered just below the heading, and the body of the paper begins on the very next line (no space).

## Font/Typeface

- Use 12-point Times New Roman.
- Italicize the names of books, journals, newspapers, and website titles.
- Use quotation marks for titles of articles, chapters, webpages, and other text found in larger works.

## Section Headings

MLA has 3 heading levels, each of which is left-aligned:

- **Heading Level 1** (major sections)
- **Heading Level 2** (subsections within major sections)
- *Heading Level 3* (subsections within subsections)

## In-Text Citations

In-text citations show where information was found and direct the reader to the matching reference entry on the Works Cited page. In-text citations accompany both direct quotations and paraphrases and typically indicate author and page number.

<b>One (1) Author</b>		
Standard Citation	Moreover, “Most modern television programs lack emotional depth” (Yuk 8).	- Note that sentence punctuation goes outside the parentheses.
Signal Phrase	Don Yuk states that “most modern television programs lack emotional depth” (8).	- If the author is in the sentence, only include the page number.
<b>Two (2) Authors</b>		
Parenthetical Citation	In fact, the Soviet Moon program “enjoyed significant victories in space travel over its lifetime” (Gorky and Jacobs 99).	- Separate two authors with “and.”
Signal Phrase	According to Gorky and Jacobs, the Soviet moon program had many successes (99).	- Always cite paraphrased evidence, not just quotations
<b>Three or More (3+) Authors</b>		
Parenthetical Citation	The study found that “most Americans believe that the moon landings occurred” (Varkland et al. 88).	- For three or more authors, use the first author followed by “et al.”
Signal Phrase	According to Varkland and colleagues, “most Americans believe that the moon landings occurred” (88).	- Use the first author’s name followed by “and colleagues” or “and others.”

<b>Exceptions</b>		
Sources with No Page Number	In fact, conspiracy theories that question America's landing on the moon have no merit (Fuller).	- If a source isn't numbered in any way, omit the location. (Don't count out paragraphs yourself.)
Sources with No Identifiable Author	Coronal mass ejections can disrupt communications on earth ("Coronal Mass Ejections" 22).	- For sources that do not list an author (e.g., some dictionaries, encyclopedias, or websites), cite the title of the article or entry.
<b>Other Considerations</b>		
Omitting Part of a Quotation	<p><u>Original text:</u> "Medical thinking, trapped in the theory of astral influences, stressed air as the communicator of disease" (Tuchman 101-2).</p> <p><u>Revised with omitted clause:</u> "Medical thinking [...] stressed air as the communicator of disease" (Tuchman 101-2).</p>	- If only part of a quotation is relevant to your argument, you can replace the unnecessary text with an ellipsis in brackets. However, never omit text that is essential to understanding the meaning of the author's original message.
Indirect Source (source within a source)	According to Karl Taylor, the union army "had a unique style of command" (qtd. in Franklin 24).	- Karl Taylor is the author of the quotation, but the quotation was found in Franklin's work.

## References Page (Works Cited)

### Formatting

An MLA references page contains complete reference entries for the sources you *cited* in the text (unlike a bibliography, which contains every source you *looked at* when researching).

- Center the title "Works Cited" at the top of the page in plain text.
- Alphabetize sources by the last name of the first author (or, if there is no author, by the title of the work).
- Use a hanging indent on all reference entries.

### Reference Entry Components

MLA uses a "container" system. Each entry in the Works Cited list uses the same pieces (when available) and follows the same order:

Author. Title of Work. Title of Container 1, version, number, publisher, publication date, location. Title of Container 2, Container 2 location.

Any time a source doesn't have a specific element (e.g., no page number or no version), simply omit it from the reference entry. Additionally, if an element would be exactly the same as another (often, publishers and websites), omit the second element listed.

	<b>Element</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
1	Author	The author is the creator of the source. This can be an individual, institution, government body, corporation, or other organization. Sometimes, there is no author to list.
2	Title of Work	This is the title of the source.
3	Title of Container	The Container "contains" the source. This may be the journal containing the article, the website hosting the page, or the book containing the chapter. Most sources (besides standalone books) have containers.
4	Version	This means the specific edition of the source, if applicable.
5	Number	This refers to the volume and/or issue of the source, if applicable.
6	Publisher	This is the entity that produced or distributed the source.
7	Publication Date	The date that the information was published, or the most updated date if there are multiple dates.
8	Location	This is where the source appears within the container: page number for print, URL or DOI for online sources.
9	Container 2	Container 2 is where you found Container 1. This may be the database providing access to the journal (e.g., EBSCO) or the media website streaming the source (e.g., Netflix).
10	Container 2 Location	The URL or DOI

## Reference Entry Examples

<b>Document Type</b>	<b>Works Cited Entry</b>
Periodical	Connelly, Deborah S. "To Read or Not to Read: Understanding Book Censorship." <i>Community &amp; Junior College Libraries</i> , vol. 15, no. 2, 2009, pp. 83-90. - Notice the format: MLA uses specific abbreviations, punctuation, and spacing. - This source only has a year (rather than a full date) of publication.
Book	Heins, Marjorie and Ben Jones. <i>Not in Front of the Children: Indecency, Censorship, and the Innocence of Youth</i> . 10 <sup>th</sup> ed., Rutgers University Press, 2007.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For works with two authors, list them in the order in which they are listed in the source, and only reverse the name of the first author.</li> <li>- This work also has an edition, listed before the publisher.</li> </ul>
Article in an Anthology	Rosenblatt, Roger, et al. "We Are Free to Be You, Me, Stupid, and Dead." <i>Language Awareness</i> , edited by Paul Eschholz et al., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009, pp. 453-58.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For works with three or more authors, use the first author's name followed by "et al."</li> <li>- If more than one publisher is listed, put a forward slash between the two organizations (example: Oxford UP/Harvard UP).</li> </ul>
Corporate Author	The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). "COVID-19 ACIP Vaccine Recommendations." <i>Centers for Disease Control</i> , 8 Mar. 2022, <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/vacc-specific/covid-19.html">https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/vacc-specific/covid-19.html</a>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When the publisher and website are the same, omit the publisher (shown here).</li> <li>- When the corporate author and the publisher are the same, omit the author.</li> </ul>
Webpage	"Smarter Education: The Rise of Big Data in the Classroom." Mashable, <a href="https://www.mashable.com/2014/09/03/education-data-video/#hViqdPbFbqgH">mashable.com/2014/09/03/education-data-video/#hViqdPbFbqgH</a> .
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When a source has neither an author nor a date, omit both.</li> </ul>
Online Periodical	Rich, Motoko. "Amazon Ranking Errors Ignite a Twitter-Fed Outrage." <i>New York Times</i> , 14 Apr. 2009, p.1. EBSCO, <a href="http://www.ebsco.com">www.ebsco.com</a> .
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For one page, use p.; for more than one page, use pp. to indicate the page range.</li> <li>- This entry includes a Container 2 name and location.</li> </ul>
User Comment or Review	Not Omniscient Enough. Comment on "Flight Attendant Tells Passenger to 'Shut Up' After Argument Over Pasta." <i>ABC News</i> , 9 Jun 2016, 4:01 p.m., <a href="http://abcnews.go.com/US/flight-attendant-tells-passenger-shut-argument-pasta/story?id=39704050">abcnews.go.com/US/flight-attendant-tells-passenger-shut-argument-pasta/story?id=39704050</a> .
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Here, the author is the user that posted the comment, and "comment on" indicates the text is in the comments, not in the article itself.</li> </ul>
YouTube Video	Crazy Russian Hacker. "8 Hot Dog Gadgets put to the Test." <i>YouTube</i> , 6 June 2016, <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBlpjSEtELs">www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBlpjSEtELs</a> .
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If the user created the video content, list them as the author (shown here).</li> <li>- If the user did not create the video content, list them as the uploader: Giwa-Tubosun, Temie. "The Funding Gap in Start-up Investing," <i>YouTube</i>, uploaded by TED, 25 May, 2022, <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKZBvEekxvo">www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKZBvEekxvo</a>.</li> </ul>