

MLA Documentation

In-Text Citations

MLA style uses parenthetical references to cite sources in the text of a paper. The parentheses are always placed between the last word of the sentence being cited and the period. However, the information contained in the citation differs depending upon circumstances and the type of source used.

Author's name NOT given in the text. If the author's name is not given in the sentence, cite the information by putting the author's last name and the page number in parentheses. Example: Recent discoveries in Utah have given scientists a better understanding of dinosaurs (Schultz 42).

Author's name GIVEN in the text. If the author's name is included in the sentence, put only the page number into parentheses. Example: Schultz said, "Utah has many dinosaur fossils still undiscovered" (57).

Two or more works by the same author. If you use two or more sources by the same author, put a comma after the author's last name and include a shortened version of the title and a page number: (Foulkes, Sleep 144). If the author's name is in the text, use only the title and page: (Dreams 90).

Two or Three Authors. Use both names: (Schmidt and Johnson 112). If the authors' names are given in the text, just use the page number: (112).

More than Three Authors. Use the first author's last name followed by *et al.* when in the text, or list all the names in the citation if you do not use the author's name in the text. Example: Martin et al. said, "Hamlet is good" (36). Or (Martin, Uber, Blanks, and Dunn 36).

Unknown Author. Use a shortened form of the title and page number: (Literary 4).

Corporate Author or Government Document. Use the full name of the Corporation or government agency, shortened if possible, and page number: (United Nations 45). Try to include the name in the sentence to avoid a long citation. Example: The United Nations Commission on Aging said, "People are living longer" (45).

An Entire Work. If you refer to an entire work, use the author's name in the text. No page number is needed because the entire work is being referred to.

A Literary Work. For classic novels or books available in several editions, include a chapter number along with the page number to help locate the reference in other editions of the book. If the author is NOT mentioned, it looks like this: (Machiavelli 23; ch. 4). If the author is mentioned in the text, just use (23; ch. 4).

For plays use act, scene, and line numbers: (Carver II.iv.22-24). For poems use a line reference: (Donne lines 26-27). NOTE: Use the word "lines" only the first time you cite a play in the paper; omit it when citing the same play later in the paper.

A Multivolume Work. Cite the author, volume number and page number like this: (Younghouse 3:745-767). Write (3:745-767) if the author is mentioned in the text.

Indirect Source. If you are citing another author quoted in your source, use the abbreviation “qtd. in” to denote that the source is an indirect source. Example: Gurnett said, “Dinosaurs are always captivating!” (qtd. in Schultz 33).

Two or More Sources. If you cite more than one work in a single parenthetical reference, separate the sources by a semicolon. (Costanza 22; Bach 35).

Works Cited List

MLA style uses what is called a “hanging indent” which means that the first line of each citation is aligned at the left margin; the second, third, and so on lines are indented five spaces before they are typed. Generally each source is listed the same way with three parts each followed by a period and one space: Author Name(s). Title of source. Publishing information (place published and publishing company). The entire list is arranged alphabetically according to the first word in each citation, for example: Schultz, Eric comes before Uber, Gilbert.

Books

One Author

Hertz, Martin. The Last World of The First New Republic. New York: Harcourt, 1975.

Two or three authors: Reverse name of first author listed only.

Duggan, Stephen, and Betty Degler. The Cows of Wisconsin. New York: Macmillan, 1946.

More than three authors

Spiller, Daniel, et al. History of Rome. London: Oxford Press, 1987.

More than one work by the same author: Use author’s name in first title only, then use three hyphens and a period, and arrange alphabetically by title.

Newman, Edwin. A Civil Tongue. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967.

---. Strictly Speaking. New York: Warner Books, 1974.

Work that names an editor Use the abbreviation *ed.* for one editor and *eds.* for more than one editor.

Kinkead, Joyce B., and Jeanette Harris, eds. Writing Centers in Context. Urbana: NCTE, 1993.

Work with an author and an editor If there is an editor or editors listed with an author, put the editor’s name after the title with an *Ed.* or *Eds.*

Frankfurter, Felix. The Diaries of a Frankfurter. Ed. Thomas Gould. Boston: Norton, 1987.

Work that names a translator Use the abbreviation *Trans* for translated by.

Sastre, Alfonso. Sad Are the Eyes of William. Trans. Leonard Park. New York: New York UP, 1970.

Work by a corporate author

United States Capitol Society. We the People. Washington, National Geographic Soc., 1964.

Work by an unknown author Use the title of the book.

Report of the Commission on Tests. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1970.

Work in an anthology Give author and title of the work first, then the anthology information including the page numbers on which the work is printed.

Dymvok, George. "Vengeance." Poetry in the Modern Age. Ed. Jason Vincent. San Francisco: New Books, 1998. 56-57.

Article in a reference book, encyclopedia or dictionary If the article is signed, then give the author first; if it is not, give the title. Also give the edition number.

"Bioluminescence." New World Encyclopedia. 1983 ed.

Government Publication Use the abbreviation GPO for publications from the Government Printing Office.

United States. Office of Education. Tutor Resource Book. Washington: GPO, 1976.

Periodical Articles

Newspaper article

Strout, Richard. "Another Year." New York Times 10 Nov. 1999, late ed.: A9.

Magazine Article

Diamond, Jarod. "The Lost Mask." Time 27 Feb. 1998: 22-23.

Scholarly Journal Be sure to give volume, year, and page.

Delbrook, James. "The Worst Mistake in Biology." American Scholar 47 (1978): 339-340.

Unsigned Article

"Trading Places." Newsweek 21 Apr. 1999: 87-89.

Articles On-Line

For information found online use this general format:

Author's last name, first name. "Title of Document." *Title of complete work*. (if given) Version or file number. (if given) Document date or date of last revision. Protocol address, access path or directories (date of access).

Klein, Mark. "The Tiger." *Modern Poetry*. 14 Dec. 1997.

<http://www.newpoetry.com/markklein/13553.546.html> (21 Nov. 2000).

This guide was compiled with information from Prentice Hall Reference Guide to Grammar and Usage. Third Edition. and MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Fourth Edition.

By E.A. Klein 2000