MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION (MLA) QUICK REFERENCE

The following guidelines and examples are from the Modern Language Association (MLA) Handbook for Writers of Research Papers 7th Edition. This set of guidelines, or “style sheet,” is preferred in English courses and other humanities courses here at SU. Again, check with your professor or instructor about which style is appropriate for your particular class. You can find the latest copy of this book in the reference department (Call Number: Ref. LB2369.G53 2009) of the library or you can visit the MLA website at http://www.mla.org.

Important Notes:
- MLA style requires double-spaced works cited. The following examples are single-spaced to conserve space.
- MLA style allows for the consistent use of either italics or underlining.
- Remember to remove the hyperlink when typing URLs.

Encyclopedias

Print Examples* Treat an encyclopedia article or dictionary entry as you would a piece in a collection. If the article is signed, give the author’s name first. If no author is given (unsigned article), begin with title.


Electronic Encyclopedias

Electronic Examples* If no author is given (unsigned article), begin with title.

Author. “Article Title.” Title of Encyclopedia. Publication Date. Web. Day Month Year of access.


PRINT REFERENCES

BOOKS

Books* If no author is given (unsigned article), begin with title.

Author’s name. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Print.


A Book by Two or More Authors


Dictionary


PERIODICALS (JOURNALS, MAGAZINES & NEWSPAPERS)

Print Examples * If no author is given (unsigned article), begin with title.

JOURNAL

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Journal* Volume.Number (Year): Page Number(s). Print.

A PERIODICAL PUBLICATION IN AN ONLINE DATABASE

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Journal* Volume.Number (Year): Page Number(s). Title of the Database. Web. Date of access (day, month, and year).


MAGAZINE

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Magazine Title* Date: Page Numbers. Print.

Electronic Magazine Example


MLA Newspaper

Newspaper

Author’s Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” Newspaper Title Date, Edition, Section: Page Numbers. Print.


Electronic Newspaper Example:

### Other MLA Electronic Sources

#### General Website

**GENERAL WEBSITE** *If no author is given (unsigned article), begin the title.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author’s Last Name, First Name. Title of Site. Name of institution or organization associated with the site. Web. Date of access.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**GOVERNMENT PUBLICATION** *If you do not know the writer of the document, cite the government agency as the author, followed by the name of the agency, using an abbreviation if the context makes it clear.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the government agency, Title. Place of publication: Publisher, Year of publication. Print.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**PAMPHLET** *Treat a brochure or pamphlet as you would a book.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author. Title. Place of publication: Publisher, Year of publication. Print.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
MLA Works Cited Page

The list of works cited appears at the end of the paper. Begin the list on a new page and number each page, continuing the page numbers of the text. For example, if the text of your research paper ends on page 10, the works-cited list begins on page 11. The page number appears in the upper right-hand corner, half an inch from the top and flush with the right margin (see fig. 12). Center the title, *Works Cited*, an inch from the top of the page. Double-space between the title and the first entry. Begin each entry flush with the left margin; if an entry runs more than one line, indent the subsequent line or lines one-half inch from the left margin. This format is sometimes called *hanging indentation*, and you can set your word processor to create it automatically for a group of paragraphs. Hanging indentation makes alphabetical lists easier to use. Double-space the entire list, both between and within entries. Continue the list on as many pages as necessary.

The top of the first page of a works-cited list.
Arrangement of Entries

Alphabetize entries in the list of works cited by the author’s last name, using the letter-by-letter system. In this system, the order of names is determined by the letters before the commas that separate last names and first names. Spaces and other punctuation marks are ignored.

Citing sources in the text

The list of works cited at the end of your research paper plays an important role in your acknowledgment of sources (see chapter 5 MLA), but the list does not in itself provide sufficiently detailed and precise documentation. **You must indicate to your readers not only what works you used in writing the paper but also what you derived from each source and where in the work you found the material.** The most practical way to supply this information is to insert a brief parenthetical acknowledgment in your paper wherever you incorporate another’s words, facts, or ideas. **Usually the author’s last name and a page reference** are enough to identify the source and the specific location from which you borrowed material.

**Example: Citing sources in text**

Medieval Europe was a place both of “raids, pillages, slavery, and extortion” and of “traveling merchants, monetary exchange, towns if not cities, and active markets in grain” (Townsend 10).

The parenthetical reference “(Townsend 10)” indicates that the quotations come from page 10 of a work by Townsend. Given the author’s last name, your readers can find complete publication information for the source in the alphabetically arranged list of works cited that follows the text of your paper.

**Example: Arrangement of works cited**


Readability

Keep parenthetical references as brief—and as few—as clarity and accuracy permit. Give only the information needed to identify a source, and do not add a parenthetical reference unnecessarily.

The paired sentences below illustrate alternative ways of identifying authors. Note that sometimes one version is more concise than the other.
If you are citing an entire work, for example, rather than a specific part of it, the author’s name in the text may be the only documentation required.

**EXAMPLE: Citing an entire work**

“Booth has devoted an entire book to the subject” needs no parenthetical documentation if the list of works cited includes only one work by Booth.

**REMEMBER:** The parenthetical reference “(Townsend 10)” indicates that the quotations come from page 10 of a work by Townsend. Given the author’s last name, your readers can find the complete publication information for the source in the alphabetically arranged list of works cited that follows the text of your paper.

**Author’s Name in Text**

Tannen has argued this point (178-85).

**Author’s Name in Reference**

This point has already been argued (Tannen 178-85).

**Authors’ Names in Text**

Others, like Jakobson and Waugh (210-15), hold the opposite point of view.

**Authors’ Names in Reference**

Others hold the opposite point of view (e.g., Jakobson and Waugh 210-15).

**Author’s Name in Text**

Only Daiches has seen this relation (2: 776-77).

**Author’s Name in Reference**

Only one scholar has seen this relation (Daiches 2: 776-77).

**Author’s Name in Text**

It may be true, as Robertson maintains, that “in the appreciation of medieval art the attitude of the observer is of primary importance . . .” (136).

A reference directly after a quotation follows the closing quotation mark.
In the late Renaissance, Machiavelli contended that human beings were by nature “ungrateful” and “mutable” (1240), and Montaigne thought them “miserable and puny” (1343).

Example: Defining a source in the text at the start.

According to Karl F. Zender, *Romeo and Juliet* presents an opposition between two worlds: “the world of the everyday,” associated with the adults in the play, and “the world of romance,” associated with the two lovers (138). Romeo and Juliet’s language of love nevertheless becomes “fully responsive to the tang of actuality” (141).

This technique can be useful when an entire paragraph is based on material from a single source.