MLA Style: Works Cited and In-Text Citations

This guide is adapted with permission from the University of Georgia’s MLA Style: Works Cited and In-Text Citations, based on MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 8th edition (2016).

NOTES: There are changes from the MLA 7th edition to the newly-released 8th edition. For an overview of changes, see the Purdue Owl’s web page: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/22/. The Middle Georgia State University Libraries offer this handout as a guide only. Please refer to The MLA Handbook or your professor for clarifications.

Works Cited List Guidelines: MLA provides a set of guidelines that apply to any source:

- Core elements to include (when known) in each work cited entry are author, title of source, title of container, other contributors, version, number, publisher, date, and location.
- Containers are the larger whole resource where you found the smaller, specific source—such as the anthology containing a poem or the journal and the database containing an article.
- Italicize titles that are self-contained (books, films, journal titles, websites). Use quotation marks around titles that are contained in larger works (article, book chapter, poem in anthology, episode from TV series).
- MLA recommends including URLs for online resources, but the decision rests with the instructor. Omit http.
- If an article is not printed on consecutive pages, use the first page number followed by the plus sign (8A+).

Works Cited Examples

Book, single author: place of publication is not required; omit business words like “Company” or “Incorporated” and abbreviate “University” as “U” and “Press” as “P.”


Book, more than one author: list authors’ names in the order they are listed on the book. For three or more authors, use the first named author followed by et al.


Work in an anthology/essay in an edited collection


Edited book


Translated book


If your focus is on the translation, put the translator’s name first:


Journal Article

The same article from an online database: include name of database and DOI or permalink/stable URL if available.


Newspaper article (unsigned):

Newspaper article (signed)

Magazine article

Article from a website

Entire website: include publication date or date range if known.

Film or TV show (on DVD or in theatre): if your focus is on an individual such as the director or an actor, begin the entry with that person’s name and role (Garland, Judy, performer). If not, begin with the title.

TV show (streaming): include original network and air date followed by platform you watched it on.

In-Text Citation Guidelines: Use short parenthetical citations to point the reader to the complete information about your sources in your Works Cited list. Since the Works Cited list is ordered alphabetically, the element that comes first in your Works Cited list is also the element used in the in-text citation.

- The in-text citation usually includes the author’s last name and the page number cited: (Kenner 125).
- Don’t repeat the author or title in the in-text citation if you use it in your sentence: “Hugh Kenner defines Joyce’s practice in terms of the Pound vortex (125).”
- If your Works Cited list includes more than one work by an author, the parenthetical should also include a short form of the title: (Kenner, Pound 141).
- If a work has more than one author, use the authors’ last names as used in the Works Cited list: (Graham and Cook 53) or (Smith et al. 82).
- If the work does not have an author, the parenthetical should include the first one or two words from the title: (“Venue’s” 8A).
- If the source doesn’t have page numbers or part numbers, you omit them: (Adichie).
- Include the time or time range for audio and video with hours, minutes, and seconds: (“Eyes” 00:21:02-45).