MLA Citations Quick Guide

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MLA Style Citations

The standard citation style for the humanities, especially languages and literature, is the MLA Handbook Ninth Edition, 2021. The Modern Language Association of America (MLA) publishes the manual.

The English department at IRSC recommend MLA format for papers written in these fields.

Two types of citations are in included in most research papers:
1) citations within the text of the document and 2) a list of reference citations at the end of the paper.

In-text Citations:
In-text citations appear in the body of your paper. They identify your use of an idea or quotation from one of your sources. The MLA Handbook uses the author-page citation system for in-text citations.

Reference Citations:
Information about the sources you use in your work are included as a separate list at the end of your paper. The MLA Handbook says to title this page Works Cited.

Any source information that you provide in an in-text citation must correspond to a source on your Works Cited page.

MLA Works Cited Core Elements

Works Cited references are made up of a list of Core Elements. The Core Elements allow writers to create reference citations for any type of source, regardless of the medium.

1) **Author.** Personal author(s), editor(s), corporate author, director

2) **Title of source.** Book title, article title, chapter title, title of TV episode, film title

3) **Title of container,** Book title, journal title, title of TV series

4) **Contributors,** Translators, performers

5) **Version,** Edition, abridged/unabridged, director's cut

6) **Number,** Volume and issue numbers, season and episode numbers

7) **Publisher,** Publishers, university presses, organizations, governments, production companies

8) **Publication date,** Use the date most pertinent to you, full dates are given in this format: 24 Aug. 2016. For sources with a season and year, give the season in lowercase letters: spring 2003.

9) **Location.** Page number(s), web address, DOI, stable URL, time on a recording, DVD disc number

Recent Updates to MLA Style

- If a core element does not exist or cannot be found, simply omit the element from the Works Cited entry. Placeholders including "n.d." for "no date" and "n.p." for "no publisher" are no longer used.
- Include a DOI (digital object identifier) when available using the prefix https://doi.org/xxxxxxxx.
- The URL, without http:// or https://, should be included for Web sources.
- The source's medium (Print., Web., etc.) is no longer included.
- Some sources are whole and some are part of one or two containers and require the repetition of some core elements for each container. Add the elements to your reference entry from Author through to Location, then add any second elements in that same order. For example, journal articles from databases have two containers: the first is the journal in which the article is contained and the second is the database which contains the journal.
- In the Works Cited entry, "p." is used before citing a page number and "pp." is used before citing a page range.

Examples:

Material Type	In-text Citation	Works Cited
Book with one author	(Brinkley 525)	Brinkley, Alan. *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People.* 7th ed., McGraw Hill, 2014, p. 525.
Electronic book (Login required)	(Hardy 58-60)	Hardy, Thomas. *Far From the Madding Crowd.* The Floating Press, 2009. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost).*
Chapter/essay from a book/anthology	(O'Brien 689)	O'Brien, Tim. "The Things They Carried." *Literature: Reading Fiction, Poetry, and Drama,* edited by Robert DiYanni, 6th ed., McGraw Hill, 2007, pp. 684-97.
Article from a scholarly journal in a database with a DOI	(Tucker et al. 159)	Gleeson-White, Sarah. "A Peculiarly Southern Form of Ugliness: Eudora Welty, Carson McCullers, and Flannery O'Connor." *Southern Literary Journal,* vol. 36, no. 1, fall 2003, pp. 46-57. *Literary Reference Center Plus.* https://doi.org/10.1353/slj.2003.0032. In this example, [Literary Reference Center Plus] is the database and second container so it is italicized.
One page of a website/one blog post	(Meade)	Meade, Rita. "It's Not Too Late to Advocate." *Screwy Decimal,* June 2016, www.screwydecimal.com/2016/06/its-not-too-late-to-advocate.html.

More Resources

Ask a librarian! One-on-one assistance is available in-person, by phone, or via email.
Phone: (772) 462-7600   **Text:** (772) 410-5662   **Email:** library@irsc.edu

IRSC Libraries MLA Style LibGuide: https://irsc.libguides.com/mla See explanations and more examples to help you master MLA Ninth Edition. Submit your paper for review by a librarian.

MLA Style Center: https://style.mla.org View sample papers, FAQs, and downloadable practice templates at the MLA Style Center.

In-Text Citations

In-text citations provide a means for you to give credit when using others' words, facts, or ideas. MLA style uses parenthetical notations to identify the source (author's surname) and the specific location (page reference) from which you borrowed material.

Place the parenthetical citation where a natural pause would occur, as near as possible to the material documented. In-text citations are typically placed at the end of a quote, sentence, or paragraph.

Example:

According to B.F. Skinner, behavior analysis is necessary for society because "almost all major problems involve human behavior" (24).

or

Behavior analysis is necessary for society because "almost all major problems involve human behavior" (Skinner 24).

Work Cited

Skinner, B.F. *Beyond Freedom and Dignity.* Alfred A. Knopf, 1971, p. 24.