# MLA Style

This handout describes basic citation and referencing style as laid out in the **MLA Handbook Eighth Edition**. For additional information, consult the *MLA Handbook* or style.mla.org. Always check with your instructor for course-specific guidelines.

Formatting

Choose a standard, easily readable typeface and font size such as **Times New Roman, 12. Double-space the entire document** including quotations and the list of works cited**.** Your name, the instructor's name, the course number,

1"

½"   Smith 1

Jane Smith

1"   Dr. A. Brown

ENGL 100

1 January 2010

½"

The Attitude toward Violence in *A Clockwork Orange*

In studying the influence of violence upon social structures across many eras, historians

tend to discuss prominent figures such as Alexander the Great and . . .

1"

and the date are placed on separate lines at the top left of the first page; a separate title page is not required. Center the **title** and capitalize major words; do not underline or bold the title.

Place your last name and the page number in the top right hand corner of each page in the header, without any abbreviations or punctuation.
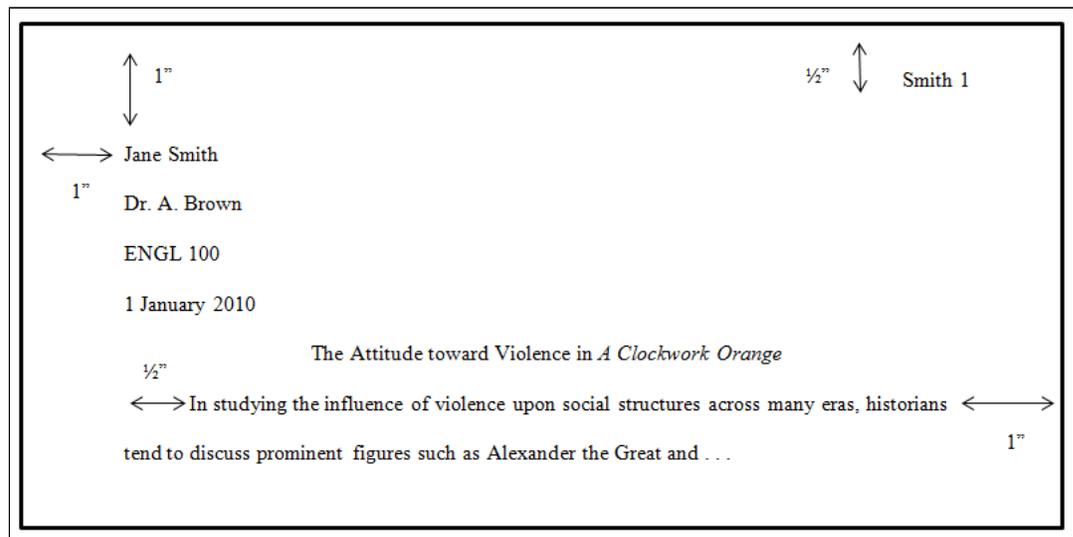
In-text citations

Citations must be used for all borrowed material, including quotations and paraphrases. They typically include the author's last name and a page number in parentheses.

E.g.   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).

E.g.   Though a reputation of violence and extortion was common in Medieval Europe, it also had a growing reputation for its strong economy (Townsend 10).

If the **author's name is mentioned in the sentence** it does not need to be repeated in the citation.

E.g.   Townsend explains that though a reputation of violence and extortion was common in Medieval Europe, it also had a growing reputation for its strong economy (10).

If a single author or work is referenced **multiple times in the same paragraph**, you only need provide a single citation after the last borrowing.

E.g.   Though a reputation of "raids, pillages, slavery and extortion was common in Medieval Europe," it also had a growing reputation for its strong economy. It became known as a place of "traveling merchants, monetary exchange, towns if not cities, and active markets in grain" (Townsend 10, 13).

When using a **block quotation** (longer than four lines), it must be set off from the text by indenting half an inch. Do not indent the first line an extra amount, and do not add quotation marks not present in the original. Double space the quotation. The citation is placed *after* the concluding punctuation mark of the quotation.

E.g.   In a discussion about writing across the disciplines, Comley et al reach the following conclusion:
    But setting aside the mysteries of human nature, it is possible to identify and define a set of different purposes for writing, which we refer to as "Reflecting," "Reporting," "Explaining," and "Arguing," one or another of which predominates in most academic and professional writing. . . . these are convenient, but not rigid, modes of classification. (xxviii)

If a work is anonymous or **the author is an organization**, the in-text citation should contain the title or corporate author, with abbreviations or commonly abbreviated terms, before the page number in the parenthesis.

E.g.   While citing and referencing requires consistency, "there is often more than one correct way to document a source" (*MLA* 4).

or   While citing and referencing requires consistency, the *MLA Handbook Eighth Edition* indicates that "there is often more than one correct way to document a source" (4).

If a source uses **explicit numbering** instead of page numbers, use a comma after the name and the applicable labels:
- par. or pars. for paragraph numbers, E.g. (Brown and Cullum, par. 13)
- sec. or secs. for sections, E.g. (Jones et al., secs. 1-2)
- ch. or chs. for chapters, E.g. (M. Smith, ch. 1)
  Note: In the above example the author's first initial has been included because there is more than one author with the same last name being cited.

If a source has **no page numbers or any other kind of numbering**, do not use a number in a parenthetical citation.

Note:
- When a fact or idea is attributable to **more than one source**, list all of the sources in a parenthetical citation, separating them with semicolons: (Brown 26; Jones 152).
- When citing a quotation from an **indirect source**, use the following format: (qtd. in Franklin 57).
- If you alter a quotation, explain why in the citation: (Sawatsky 237; my emphasis).

Works Cited

Place the list of **works cited** at the end of the paper on a separate page formatted as below:
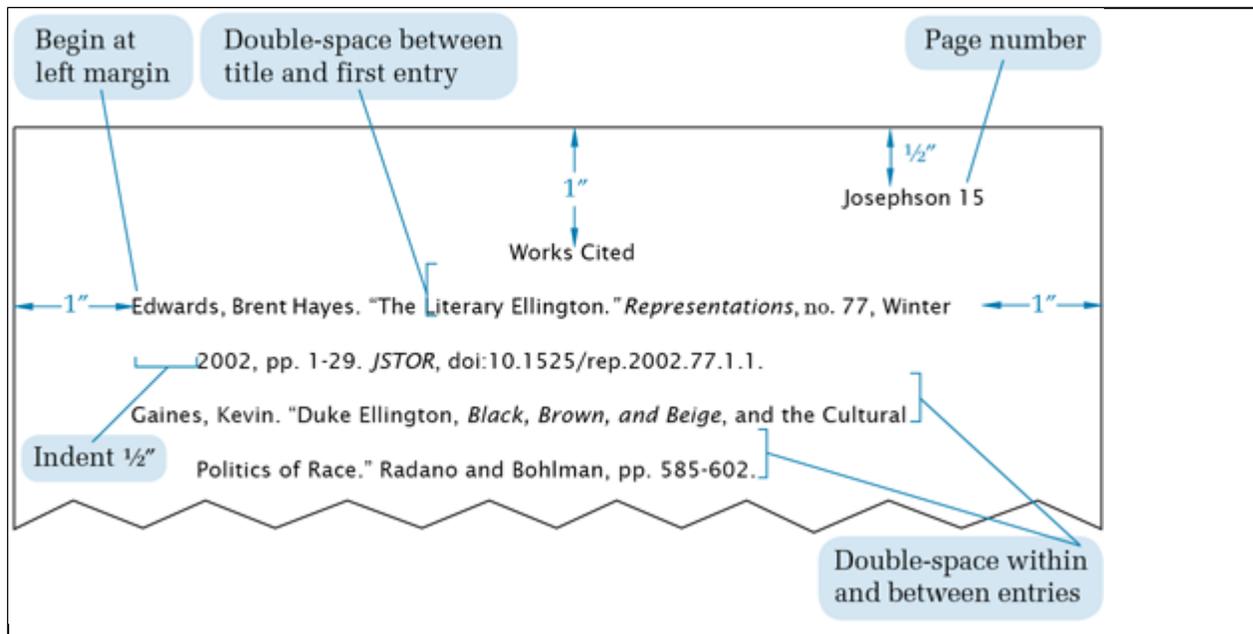
(Diagram reprinted from style.mla.org/formatting-papers/)

The core elements of each work are compiled in the specific order as indicated below. A "container" refers to a larger whole that contains a source, such as a periodical (journal, magazine, newspaper), a book collection, a digital platform, etc. If an element is not relevant to a specific work, simply omit it. Each element indicates appropriate punctuation; the final element should end with a period. See the list of works cited examples on the next page.

1) Author.	
2) Title of source.	
Container 1:	Container 2:
3) Title of container,	3) Title of container,
4) Other contributors,	4) Other contributors,
5) Version,	5) Version,
6) Number,	6) Number,
7) Publisher,	7) Publisher,
8) Publication date,	8) Publication date,
9) Location.	9) Location.

- Alphabetize entries by the authors' last names; if unknown, alphabetize by the title, ignoring any articles (*a, an,* or *the*).
- The titles of journal articles, short stories, and poems are placed in quotation marks. Books, journals, encyclopedias, films, and plays are *italicized*.

Sample References

Only common references are included here. For additional examples, please refer to the *MLA Handbook Eighth Edition* or style.mla.org.

Book by a single author (print):

Taves, Brian. *The Romance of Adventure: The Genre of Historical Adventure Movies*. UP of Mississippi,
    1993.

Book by two authors (print):

Merriam, Sharon B., and Laura L. Bierema. *Adult Learning: Linking Theory and Practice*. Jossey-Bass,
    2014.

Book by three or more authors (print):

Hughes, Elaine, et al. *Finding Answers: A Guide to Conducting and Reporting Research*. Harper Collins
    College Publishers, 1994.

Book by a corporate author (print):

Public Agenda Foundation. *The Health Care Crisis: Containing Costs, Expanding Coverage*. McGraw,
    1992.

Edited collection (documented as a whole):

Comley, Nancy R., et al., editors. *Fields of Writing: Reading across the Disciplines.* 4th ed., St. Martin's P,
    1994.

Piece from an edited collection:

Allende, Isabel. "Toad's Mouth." Translated by Margaret Sayers Peden. *A Hammock beneath the
    Mangoes: Stories from Latin America*, edited by Thomas Colchie, Plume, 1992, pp. 83-88.

Journal article (print):

Santa, Tracy. "Listening in/to the Writing Center: Backchannel and Gaze." *WLN: A Journal of Writing
    Center Scholarship*, vol. 40, no. 9-10, May/June 2016, pp. 2-9.

Journal article (from a database):

Trumpener, Katie. "Memories Carved in Granite: Great War Memorials and Everyday Life." *PMLA*, vol.
    115, no. 5, Oct. 2000, pp. 1096-103. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/i219858.

Web site:

Barron, Lee. "Back on record—the reasons behind vinyl's unlikely comeback." *The Conversation:
    Academic Rigor, Journalistic Flair*, 17 Apr. 2015, theconversation.com/back-on-record-the-
    reasons-behind-vinyls-unlikely-comeback-39964.

Online work:

Walthausen, Abigail. "The E-Reader: The Most Daunting Anthology." *The Atlantic*, 22 July 2016,
    www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/07/the-e-reader-the-most-daunting-
    anthology/492476/.