

MLA STYLE

Why Should I Reference?

References are used to record or document the source of each piece of information in your paper obtained from other researchers and writers. If you fail to document information that is not your own, you have committed plagiarism, a form of stealing.

What Should I Reference?

- Direct quotations
- Paraphrases of material
- Summaries of opinions, ideas and interpretations obtained from other sources

It is not necessary to document information that is common knowledge, but remember that it is always better to overdocument than to underdocument.

You may be concerned that, if you reference too much, your instructors will think the paper is not your own work. That is not so. The method of organization is yours, as well as the purpose that ties the material together, the topic sentences, concluding sentences, analytical and evaluative comments which allow the reader to make sense out of the reference material, and probably most of the introductory and concluding paragraphs.

What Style Should I Use?

Always ask the professor which documentation style is required for the assignment. Styles can vary greatly between journals even within one field. If no specifics are given, this Fastfacts can serve as a guide to one of the standard formats, the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (known as MLA style), established by the Modern Language Association for referencing in the arts. MLA style is used in most arts and humanities research, including English literature, history, philosophy and languages.

How Do I Reference?

MLA style uses parenthetical documentation for citations within the text. In this method, you will need an in-text citation (also called a parenthetical reference) in the text as close as possible to the information (e.g., title, word, or phrase) that is being referenced, as well as an entry in the Works Cited list. Footnotes or endnotes are now usually used only for content that supplements or elaborates on important information in the text (see section C), although people familiar with previous versions of MLA style might use them for referencing as well.

About this Fastfacts

This Fastfacts is based on the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed.

A. In-Text Citations

In-text parenthetical references include the author's last name and the location where the information appears. Parenthetical references should be placed where a pause in the sentence would naturally occur but as close as possible to the relevant idea or quotation.

INTEGRATING TEXT & CITATIONS

The following examples show how to punctuate around quotations and citations. Note that if you provide the author's name in the sentence, you don't have to include it in the parentheses.

- When using a direct quote within your sentence, use quotation marks around the words of the quotation, but place commas and periods *after the citation* — not within the quotation — regardless of whether there is a comma or period at the end of the original material:

Miranda justifies her actions as “fair play” (Shakespeare, *The Tempest* 5.1.175).

In the days when doctors “stressed air as the communicator of disease” (Tuchman 102), they were unaware of other factors.

In exposing the myth of freedom of the press, Rivers notes that “[p]residential control reached its zenith under Andrew Jackson” (7).

- Question or exclamation marks that appear in the original source, however, stay within the quotation marks:

The more appropriate question is, “have we gone too far to reverse the environmental damage caused by reckless deforestation?” (Jones 187).

Lear protests “O, reason not the need!” (2.4.258) when Regan insists on eliminating her father’s retinue.

- If the quotation is longer than four lines, set it off as a separate block, eliminate the quotation marks, and always put the final punctuation *before* the citation:

It is important to keep in mind, however, that these two “arguments” ... are really two faces of a single argument, an argument defining democracy, in part, as that form of government which recognizes the necessity of certain luxuries. (Bogel 172)

FORMATTING TITLES OF ARTICLES & BOOKS

MLA style always uses “double quotation marks” for the title of an article, chapter, or short poem. The *MLA Handbook* specifies underlining for the titles of periodicals, books, or plays, but does accept *italics* as an alternative. This handout uses italics rather than underlining, but you should always respect your instructor’s format preferences.

The following list explains what to include in various situations in a parenthetical citation. These formats apply to both electronic and print sources.

ONE OR TWO AUTHORS

... when the narrator claims that “[w]e live, as we dream — alone” (Conrad 82), he affirms the impossibility of understanding...

... in our nuclear age (Science for Peace 83).
... the situation could be contained “because the transfer was replicated within Canada’s borders” (Toner and Doern 471).

THREE OR MORE AUTHORS

Either list all authors, or list only the first author followed by et al., but make sure the entry in the Works Cited matches the format in your parenthetical reference.

... to clarify the purpose of the paragraph (Donald, Moore, Morrow, Wargetz, and Werner 38-40).

... to clarify the purpose of the paragraph (Donald et al. 38-40).

ANONYMOUS AUTHOR / NO AUTHOR

Use the title of the work in place of the author.

... (*Beowulf* 42).

CORPORATE OR GOVERNMENT AUTHOR

If no personal author is named, consider the organization the primary author. If the name is long, it may be better to incorporate it into the text itself.

...(United Nations Commission on Human Rights 14)

MULTIPLE SOURCES BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Add a short form of the title to distinguish between works.

... (Frye, *Anatomy* 71).

... (Berton, *Spike* 18).

... (Shelley, “Ozymandias” 6).

DIFFERENT AUTHORS, SAME LAST NAME

Add a first name or initial to differentiate them.

... (N. Frye 47).

... (C. Frye 110).

CITING A WORK LISTED BY TITLE

Use the full title or a shortened version, beginning with the word it is alphabetized by.

...(Glossary 3).

ONLY ONE WORK BEING CITED

When all citations will be to the same work, as in a close reading, for example, omit the author's name and give only the page or act/scene/line references.

ACT/SCENE/LINE REFERENCES

Use division (act, scene, canto, book) and line numbers instead of page numbers when citing classic verse plays or poems. Unless your instructor specifies otherwise, use arabic numerals for these references.

- ... Sebastian calls the ending "A most high miracle!" (5.1.177).
- ... "Now to the shores we bend, a mournful train," Odysseus urges his men (11.1).
- ... "That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,/
Looking as if she were alive" (1-2).

NO PAGE NUMBERS (E.G., WEBSITES)

When there are no page numbers, as in an electronic source, for example, you may describe the location of a reference using section titles and/or paragraph numbers only if these are labelled in the source. Otherwise, cite the source in its entirety. Note punctuation in examples below.

- Hypertext, as one theorist puts it, is "all about connection, linkage, and affiliation" (Moulthrop, par. 19)
- ...Several examples of superstition have been traced back as far as primitive men (Washburn, sec. 9).
- ...A recent blog notes that semicolons are on the decline ("Punctuation Paranoia").

A MULTIVOLUME WORK

If you are citing specific pages in more than one of the volumes of a multivolume work, specify the volume before the page number.

- ... Hughes's work is written in "the rhythms, inflections, and slang of African-American speech" (Scrimgeour 2: 237).

CITED MATERIAL WITHIN A SOURCE

Limit your use of this method by obtaining the original source (e.g., Johnson) whenever possible.

- ... Johnson considered Burke an "extraordinary man" (qtd. in Boswell 2: 450).

COURSE AND LECTURE MATERIALS

Course readers: Treat these as works published in an anthology, citing the instructor as editor (unless another editor is indicated). Use the page numbers of the reader, not the page numbers of the original source, even if they are reproduced in the reader.

Course manual: Treat these as books with the instructor as author (unless another author is indicated).

Lecture notes: Treat these as books with the instructor as author if they are published. Course or lecture notes may be considered "published" if they have been copied and distributed in print or on the web *with the instructor's permission*. If they are unpublished, cite them using the instructor's name and the date of the lecture.

... (Brown 22 Jan. 2004).

B. List of Works Cited

The "Works Cited" page comes at the end of your paper and provides the full bibliographic information for materials you have cited within your paper. If you want to include references for material you used but didn't cite, they would appear in a "Works Consulted" page.

All bibliographic references should be listed in alphabetical order by author's last name and formatted using a hanging indent and **double spacing** (examples are shown here **single-spaced to save space**). Do not place an extra space between entries. The first example shows the order of all elements relevant in a print book entry.

ORDER OF ELEMENTS FOR BOOK REFERENCE

A Works Cited entry for a print book should include as many of the elements below as are relevant, in the order shown.

Author(s). "Title of Part." Title of Book. Ed(s)./ Trans./Comp(s). Edition. Volume(s). Series Name. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date. Pages. Medium of Publication.

BASIC BOOK REFERENCE

Last, First. Title of Work. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date. Medium of Publication.

Pennee, Donna Palmateer. *Moral Metafiction: Counterdiscourse in the Novels of Timothy Findley*. Toronto: ECW Press, 1991. Print.

MORE THAN ONE AUTHOR

List the first author in “Last Name, First Name” order, but all other authors’ names as “First Name Last Name” in the order they are given on the book’s title page. Separate authors’ names with commas and add “and” before the last author’s name. If there are more than three authors, you can choose to list only the first author, followed by et al., as long as your Works Cited list matches the in-text citation.

Fischlin, Daniel, and Martha Nandorfy. *Eduardo Galeano: Through the Looking Glass*. Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2002. Print.

Donald, Robert B., James D. Moore, Betty Richmond Morrow, Lillian Griffith Wargetz, and Kathleen Werner. *Writing Clear Paragraphs*. 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999. Print.

Donald, Robert B., et al. *Writing Clear Paragraphs*. 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999. Print.

GOVERNMENT AUTHOR

Issuing Agency. Title. Personal author(s) if any. Place of publication: Publisher, Date. Medium of Publication.

Health Canada. *Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating*. Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services, 1997. Print.

ANONYMOUS AUTHOR/NO AUTHOR

Start with the title, ignoring articles (A, An, The) for alphabetizing. Your in-text citation would use a short version of the title.

Beowulf. Trans. E. Talbot Donaldson. Ed. Nicholas Howe. New York: Norton, 2001. Print.

AN EDITION

For classics or works that appear in multiple editions, include the edition number and/or editor’s name after the title of the work.

Last, First. Title of Work. Edition Information. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date. Medium of Publication.

Rae, Douglas W. *The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws*. Rev. ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971. Print.

Austen, Jane. *Sense and Sensibility*. Ed. Claudia Johnson. New York: Norton, 2001. Print.

A TRANSLATION

If you’re primarily referencing the work itself, start with the original author’s name.

Author Last, First. Translated Title. Trans. Name of Translator(s). Place of Publication: Publisher, Date. Medium of Publication.

Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *Beyond Good and Evil*. Trans. Marianne Cowan. Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1955. Print.

If you’re analyzing the comments and choices made by the translator, start with the translator’s name.

Translator Last, First, trans. Translated Title. By Name of Author(s). Place of Publication: Publisher, Date. Medium of Publication.

Cowan, Marianne, trans. *Beyond Good and Evil*. By Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche. Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1955. Print.

PART OF AN ANTHOLOGY

If the part is a short poem or story, put it in quotation marks.

Last, First. “Title of Part.” Title of anthology. Editor. Edition/Volume. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date. Pages of the part. Medium of Publication.

Joyce, James. “From Ulysses.” *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Ed. M. H. Abrams. 4th ed. Vol. 2. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996. 2374-2413. Print.

If the part is a longer poem or play and/or has been published independently (not in an anthology), format it like a book title.

Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun. Black Theater: A Twentieth-Century Collection of the Work of Its Best Playwrights*. Ed. Lindsay Patterson. New York: Dodd, 1971. 221-76. Print.

REFERENCE BOOK

If the article is signed, start with the author's name; otherwise, start with the entry title. When you are citing familiar reference books, you only need to provide the edition, year of publication, and medium of publication.

Ehrlich, Blake, and Eugene Vanderpool.
"Athens." *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Macropedia*. 15th ed. 1995. Print.

"Noon." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. Print.

When the reference book is less familiar, provide the full publication information.

Hintzen, Percy C. "Dessalines, Jean-Jacques." *Biographical Dictionary of Latin American and Caribbean Political Leaders*. Ed. Robert J. Alexander. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988. Print.

MULTIVOLUME WORK

If you are citing from only one volume, provide only the publication information for that volume.

Scrimgeour, J. D. "Langston Hughes." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Literature*. Ed. Jay Parini. Vol. 2. New York: Oxford UP, 2004. Print.

If you cite from multiple volumes, provide the total number of volumes just before the publication information. Make sure your in-text citation specifies the correct volume (see under "In-Text Citations").

Nairn, Bede, Geoffrey Serle, and Russel Ward, eds. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. 13 vols. Melbourne: Melbourne UP, 1972. Print.

ARTICLE IN A PERIODICAL

Last, First. "Article Title." *Journal Title* Volume. Issue (Date): page-page. Medium of Publication.

Pesciarelli, Enzo. "Aspects of the Influence of Francis Hutcheson on Adam Smith." *History of Political Economy* 31.3 (1999): 525-45. Print.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

Last, First. "Article Title." *Newspaper Title* Date, Edition information: Page. Medium of Publication.

Coyle, Jim. "50 Years Underground: 12 stops. 16 minutes. All of humanity." *Toronto Star* 27 Mar. 2004: A23. Print.

If the article threads through several non-continuous pages, you can use a "+" instead of listing all the pages.

Hennenberger, Melinda. "The Leonardo Cover-Up." *New York Times* 21 Apr. 2002, late ed., sec. 6:42+. Print.

REVIEW ARTICLE

Begin with information about the review article, followed by "Rev. of" and information about the source being reviewed.

Last, First. "Title of Review." Rev. of *Title of Original Work*, by Author Name. *Title of Review Periodical* Publication Information. Medium of Publication.

Updike, John. "No Brakes." Rev. of *Sinclair Lewis: Rebel from Main Street*, by Richard Lingeman. *New Yorker* 4 Feb. 2002: 77-80. Print.

If the review is of a performance or production, include the production information before the publication information.

Conlogue, Ray. "No Words Minced in Revised Hedda." Rev. of *Hedda Gabler* by Henrik Ibsen, dir. by Judith Thompson. Shaw Festival, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON. *The Globe and Mail* 10 Aug. 1991: C10. Print.

PAINTING, SCULPTURE, OR PHOTOGRAPH

To reference a print reproduction of a work, use the following format.

Last, First. Title of Work. Year of Composition (if not known, use "N.d."). Institution where original is housed or name of private owner. City. Title of Book. By Author. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date. Page or location description. Medium of Publication.

Cassatt, Mary. *Mother and Child*. 1890. Wichita Art Museum. *American Painting: 1560-1913*. By John Pearce. New York: McGraw, 1964. Slide 22. Print.

To reference a web-based reproduction of a work, add the access date after the medium information:

Evans, Walker. *Penny Picture Display*. 1936. *MOMA.org*. Web. 24 Apr. 2007.

FILM, VIDEO OR DVD

In a general discussion of a film:

Title of Film. Dir. Name of Director. Distributor, Year of Release. Medium (Film).

Bubba Ho-Tep. Dir. Don Coscarelli. Silver Sphere Corp., 2003. Film.

To include additional pertinent information, insert it between the title and distributor.

Like Water for Chocolate [*Como agua par chocolate*]. Screenplay by Laura Esquivel. Dir. Alfonso Arau. Perf. Lumi Cavazos, Marco Lombardi, and Regina Torne. Miramax, 1993. Film.

Possession. Adapted by Laura Jones and Neil LaBute. By A. S. Byatt. Dir. Neil LaBute. Perf. Gwyneth Paltrow, Aaron Eckhart, Jennifer Ehle, and Jeremy Northam. Focus/Warner Bros. 2002. Film.

When you're focussing on the contribution of a particular person, start with that person's name.

Jhabvala, Ruth Prawer, adapt. *A Room with a View*. By E. M. Forster. Dir. James Ivory. Prod. Ismail Merchant. Perf. Maggie Smith, Denholm Eliot, Helena Bonham Carter, and Daniel Day-Lewis. Cinecom Intl. Films, 1985. Film.

Cite a video or DVD release like the original film, but add the **original release date and medium** before the name of the distributor.

Possession. Adapted by Laura Jones and Neil LaBute. By A. S. Byatt. Dir. Neil LaBute. Perf. Gwyneth Paltrow, Aaron Eckhart, Jennifer Ehle, and Jeremy Northam. 2002. Film. Universal Studios, 2003. DVD.

COURSE AND LECTURE MATERIALS

Course readers: Treat articles in a course reader as reprints in a collection compiled by the instructor (unless another compiler is indicated).

Author. "Title of Part." Title of Original Book/Periodical. Original Publication Information. Rpt. in Title of Course Reader. Comp. Instructor's Name. Publication Information of Reader. Pages in Reader. Medium of Publication.

Boyd, C. G. "Making Peace with the Guilty: The Truth About Bosnia." *Foreign Affairs* 74.5 (1995): 22-38. Rpt. in *POLS*4920 Selected Topics in International Relations Course Reader*. Comp. I. Spears. Guelph, ON: University of Guelph Bookstore, 2004. 255-64. Print.

Course manuals: Treat these as books or non-periodicals, with the instructor as author (unless another author is indicated).

Stengos, T. *ECON*4640 Applied Econometrics Course Manual*. Guelph, ON: University of Guelph, 2003.

Lecture notes: Treat these as books or non-periodicals if they are published. Lecture notes are considered published if they have been copied and distributed in print or on the web **with the instructor's permission**.

Stengos, T. *ECON*4640 Applied Econometrics Course Notes*. Guelph, ON: University of Guelph, 2001. Web. 28 Mar. 2003.

If they are unpublished, cite the lecturer, course information and date of the lecture.

Stengos, T. *ECON*4640 Applied Econometrics*. University of Guelph. 23 Nov. 2003. Lecture notes.

REFERENCING ELECTRONIC SOURCES

Remember to acknowledge electronic sources and to evaluate them critically since much of the material on the Internet is inappropriate for use in an academic paper. For example, information found on Wikipedia may be useful for general information about a topic, but is not considered a scholarly source. Ask yourself:

- Is this reference current?
- Has the work been critically evaluated and if so, by whom?
- Who is the publisher or sponsoring organization? Does the work cite sources?

For information about how to evaluate a Web site, go to the library's home page and click on Online Tutorials.

ARTICLE IN AN ONLINE PERIODICAL

The MLA no longer requires writers to include URLs in their works cited entries, unless a reader cannot be reasonably expected to find the source without it. Use this template for a basic format guide.

Last, First. "Title of Document." Name of Periodical Volume:Issue (Year): Pages. Medium of publication. Date Accessed.

Butler, Darrell L., and Martin Sellbom. "Barriers to Adopting Technology for Teaching and Learning." *Educause Quarterly* 24.2 (2002): 22-28. Web. 3 Aug. 2002.

If the journal does not number pages, use "n. pag." instead of inclusive page numbers.

Smith, J. "Writing About Sports." *Writing Matters* 2.2 (2006): n. pag. Web. 12 May 2007.

WEBSITE DOCUMENT

Use this template for a basic format guide. Note all items are followed by a period, except for the publisher's name. Date of access follows medium information.

Last, First. "Title of Document." Name of Website. Name of website publisher/ organization, date published. Medium of publication. Date accessed.

Danielson, Stentor and David Braun. "Shark 'Photo of the Year' Is E-Mail Hoax." *National Geographic News*. National Geographic Society, 8 Mar. 2005. Web. 23 May 2005.

WEBSITE DOCUMENT (NO AUTHOR)

"Seniors Care Highlights Health Spending." *CBC.ca*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 24 Apr. 2008. Web. 30 Apr. 2008.

ONLINE GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT

Canada. *Service Canada Government On-Line 2005 Public Report*. Dec. 2006. Web. 29 Apr. 2008.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

For e-mail messages:

Author of Message. "Subject Line." Message to Recipient's Name. Date Sent. Medium.

Stevens J. "Methods of Electronic Referencing." Message to John Smith. 28 Mar. 2003. E-mail.

For discussion lists:

Author of Message. "Title of Document on Subject Line." Name of Forum. Date of Posting. Medium. Date of Access.

Merrian, Joanne. "Spinoff: Monsterpiece Theatre." Shaksper: The Global Electronic Shakespeare Conf. 30 Apr. 1994. Online posting. 23 Sept. 2002.

If only a screen name is provided, include it as the author's name.

C. Footnotes and Endnotes

Official MLA style no longer recommends using footnotes or endnotes for citations and referencing; however, notes may be used to add supplementary comments or additional references at key points in the text.

The only difference between footnotes and endnotes is their placement: footnotes appear at the bottom of the page where the citation occurs, while endnotes appear at the end of your paper.

To use footnotes or endnotes, insert a superscripted number at the place in the text where you would like to add a comment. Repeat that number as the first element in the note reference, and indent the first line.

THE IN-TEXT CITATION

...Others have strongly disagreed with Johnson's point of view⁴ ...

THE NOTE

4. For a comprehensive discussion of opposition to Johnson see Lewis.

Need Advice or More Information?

Additional Relevant Fastfacts

- Using Quotations in Your Essay
- Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

About Writing Services

[Writing Services](#), located in the Learning Commons on the 1st floor of the Library, is the best source on campus and online for advice and information on writing issues.

- All University of Guelph students — undergraduate and graduate — are entitled to three free individual writing consultations per semester with our professional staff. Appointments are recommended. Students can book appointments online at www.writingservices.uoguelph.ca.
- Walk-in consultations are available weekdays during fall and winter semesters at Writing Central.
- Peer Helpers from a variety of disciplines offer individual writing assistance to first-year students.
- Visit the [Learning Commons](#) home page to find out about all our writing programs and services, or e-mail questions to writing@uoguelph.ca.
- Fastfacts handouts (like this one) provide information on a range of learning, writing, and academic computing issues and are free to

registered students. The complete range of Fastfacts is available on the [Learning Commons Web site](#).

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