MLA Citation Style QuickGuide

Last update: October 30, 2019

This guide is based on the 8th edition (2016) of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. For further explanation and for more examples, please consult the *Handbook*, which is available in print, and the *MLA Style Center*, which is online.

MLA style includes **in-text citations** throughout your work and a **works cited list** at the end of your work, which provides full details about your cited sources.

**Works Cited list**

Works Cited entries should be organized alphabetically and formatted with a hanging indent, like the example on the second-last page of this guide. See the *MLA Style Center* for formatting details.

Works Cited entries may contain the following elements:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Author/creator.</strong> E.g., writer, editor, artist, director.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Title of source.</strong> Titles of sources that are part of a larger work are in &quot;quotation marks.&quot; Titles of independent works are in <em>italics</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Title of container,</strong> E.g., a journal is the container for an article. A single source may have multiple containers. E.g., a journal article in a database has two containers: the journal and the database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Other contributors,</strong> E.g., editors, translators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Version,</strong> E.g., a specific edition of a book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Number,</strong> E.g., a volume of a book, or a volume and issue of a journal article.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Publisher,</strong> The organization responsible for producing the work or making it public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>Publication date.</strong> See the examples in this guide for date variations and formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>Location,</strong> E.g., page numbers, DOI (digital object identifier), URL. When a DOI is provided, it should be used instead of a URL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>Optional elements.</strong> E.g., the original date of publication for a republished work, the source type for &quot;unexpected&quot; formats such as lectures, the date of access for a webpage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The examples in this guide are **colour-coded** to match each of the elements above.

**Tip:** Use the *MLA Practice Template* to help assemble your Works Cited entries.

**In-text citations** (see p. 54-58 & sec. 3, *MLA Handbook*)

In-text citations are usually structured like this: (Author’s Last Name page(s) cited).

If your source has **no page numbers** (e.g. a sound recording or a webpage), then no page numbers can be given in your in-text citation. For time-based media such as sound recordings or videos, times or time ranges should be included.

**How to format author names** (see p. 21-22, 54-58, & sec. 3.1, *MLA Handbook*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author type</th>
<th>Start of Works Cited entry</th>
<th>In-text citation (parenthetical)</th>
<th>In-text citation (in your sentence)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 author</td>
<td>Allar, Cristina L.</td>
<td>(Allar 57)</td>
<td>Allar … (57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 authors</td>
<td>Stuessy, Joe, and Scott Lipscomb.</td>
<td>(Stuessy and Lipscomb 302)</td>
<td>Stuessy and Lipscomb … (302)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or more authors</td>
<td>Christopher, Kameron R., et al.</td>
<td>(Kameron et al. 61)</td>
<td>Kameron et al. … (61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No author</td>
<td>“Charlie Chaplin.”</td>
<td>(“Charlie Chaplin”)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Works Cited entry</td>
<td>In-text citation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Book**  
| **Book**  
Specified edition  
| **Ebook**  
With print publication data  
[Google Books](http://books.google.ca/books?id=fhUXAAAAYAAJ). | (Dickens 425) |
| **Ebook**  
Digital file  
NOTE: Give the type of ebook in the Version element of your citation. If you do not know what type of ebook you consulted, use “e-book” instead (see MLA Style Center). | (Slawenski ch. 3) |
| **Ebook**  
Organization as author,  
From a library database  
NOTE: If the organization is both author and publisher, start the citation with the title of the work, skipping the author element (see sec. 2.1.3, MLA Handbook). | (United Nations Human Settlements Programme 76) |
| **Edited book**  
| **Chapter, article, or essay**  
In an edited book  
| **Poem, short story, or other work**  
In an anthology  
NOTE: You may include the date of original publication of the work. This date goes directly after the title, as in the above example (see p. 50, MLA Handbook). | First citation (for a poem):  
(Vaughan lines 15-20)  
Subsequent citations:  
(Vaughan 17) |
| **Journal article**  
Print only  
| **Journal article**  
From a library database, with DOI  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Works Cited entry</th>
<th>In-text citation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Journal article</strong>&lt;br&gt;From a journal published only on the Web, with no DOI (see p. 48 and sec. 2.5.2, MLA Handbook)</td>
<td>Taber, Nancy. &quot;Detectives and Bail Bonds ‘Persons’ as Fairy Tale Heroes: A Feminist Antimilitarist Analysis of Grimm and Once Upon a Time.&quot; <em>Gender Forum</em>, no. 44, 2013, <a href="http://www.genderforum.org/index.php?id=731">www.genderforum.org/index.php?id=731</a>. &lt;br&gt;Note: If an article does not have a DOI, provide a stable URL, if available (see p. 48, MLA Handbook).</td>
<td>(Taber) Page numbers not available.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Questions? Ask us!**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Works Cited entry</th>
<th>In-text citation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>NOTE:</strong> Section numbers are used instead of page numbers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Film**               | **Like Water for Chocolate.** Written by Laura Esquivel, directed by Alfonso Arau, performance by Lumi Cavazos et al., Miramax, 1993.                                                                                | **(Like Water 00:06:10-21)**
|                        | **NOTE:** Cite the relevant time or range (see p. 57, MLA Handbook). For shortening titles in parenthetical citations, see sec. 3.2.1, MLA Handbook.                                                               |                   |
| **Sound Recording**    | **Stravinsky, Igor. The Essential Stravinsky.** Performance by Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, conducted by Neeme Järvi, Chandos, 2002.                                                                            | **(Stravinsky)**  |
|                        | **NOTE:** Cite the relevant time or range (see p. 57, MLA Handbook).                                                                                                                                             |                   |
| **Score**              | **Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflöte): In Full Score.** *1791. Dover, 1985.* Score.                                                                                                       | **(Mozart 93)**   |
|                        | **Page numbers not available.**                                                                                                                                                                                  |                   |
| **Presentation, speech, lecture, or reading** | **Turner, Chris.** "Sustainable Living and Sustainable Eating in the World We Need." From Field to Fork to Findings: A Multidisciplinary Conference, 29 Jan. 2009, U of Alberta Augustana Campus, Camrose. Keynote speech. | **(Turner)**
|                        | **Page numbers not available.**                                                                                                                                                                                  |                   |
| **Unpublished Interview** | **Smith, Sarah.** Interview. By John Doe. 27 Jan. 2014.                                                                                                                                                        | **(Smith)**
<p>|                        | <strong>Page numbers not available.</strong>                                                                                                                                                                                  |                   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Works Cited entry</th>
<th>In-text citation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Entire website | **Known date**  
Page numbers not available. |
| | **Unknown date**  
Page numbers not available. |
| | **Unknown author**  
Page numbers not available. |
| | **Known author, unknown date**  
Page numbers not available. |
| Online video | **Unknown “author”**  
"Chopin – Nocturne Op.9 No.2." *YouTube,* uploaded by Andrea Romano, 19 June 2013, www.youtube.com/watch?v=9E6b3swbnWg. | *("Chopin") 00:03:21-37*  
NOTE: Cite the relevant time or range (see p. 57, *MLA Handbook*). For shortening titles in parenthetical citations, see sec. 3.2.1, *MLA Handbook*. |
| | **Known “author”**  
NOTE: Cite the relevant time or range (see p. 57, *MLA Handbook*). |
| Social media post | @POTUS (Barack Obama). “Today is a big step in our march toward equality. Gay and lesbian couples now have the right to marry, just like anyone else. #LoveWins.” *Twitter,* 26 June 2015, 8:10 a.m., twitter.com/POTUS/status/614435467120001024. | *(@POTUS)*  
Page numbers not available. |
| Work of art | **Reproduced online**  
Page numbers not available. |
| | **Reproduced in a book**  
Page numbers not available. |
| Viewed at a museum | **Viewed at a museum**  
Page numbers not available. |
Sample List of Works Cited

Works Cited


@POTUS (Barack Obama). “Today is a big step in our march toward equality. Gay and lesbian couples now have the right to marry, just like anyone else. #LoveWins.” *Twitter*, 26 June 2015, 8:10 a.m., twitter.com/POTUS/status/614435467120001024.


Anatomy of a Citation

This example describes the elements of a citation. It is based on a journal article found online using one of the library’s databases.

Author/creator
First author’s name is inverted (last name followed by a comma then first name and middle name in full, if given).
For two authors, insert a comma and the word “and” after the first author’s name, then provide the additional author’s name in full (not inverted).
For three or more authors, provide the first author’s name, followed by “et al.”
End with a period.

Title of source
For a journal article, enclose the title in quotation marks. Titles of independent works are italicized.
Capitalize all principal words in the title (e.g. not words such as “of”, “the”, “is”).
End the title with a period.

Wimberly, Edward P. “Unnoticed and Unloved: The Indigenous Storyteller and Public Theology in a Postcolonial Age.”


Title of container (journal)
Italicize journal titles.
Capitalize all principal words (e.g. not words such as “of”, “the”, “is”).
End with a comma.

Number
For a journal article, give volume (vol.) and issue (no.).
End with a comma.

Publication date
Give the year of publication.
End with a comma.

Location (page range)
Provide the page range of a journal article, preceded by the abbreviation “pp.”
End with a period.

Title of container (database)
For a journal article from a database, the database is an additional container.
Italicize the database title.
End with a comma.

Location (DOI or URL)
If a journal article has a digital object identifier (DOI), include it in the citation.
If no DOI is provided, give a stable (permanent) URL instead.
End with a period.