Introduction to MLA

Style, Format, and Documentation
Today we will discuss...

• Formatting your paper in MLA
• Creating your Works Cited page
• Citing your sources in text
MLA Formatting – The Basics

• Times New Roman, 12-point font

• One inch (1”) margins on all sides
  • Select Page Layout > Margins > Normal

• Double-space the entire document
  • Select Page Layout > Paragraph > Set Before and After Font to Zero > Go to Line Spacing > Set to Double space > Click ok

• Indent the first line of each paragraph ½ inch using TAB key

• Left aligned text.
MLA Formatting – Heading

- Header: Last name page number
  - Upper right side of your paper
  - Insert > Header
- Heading: Flush with left margin
  - Your Name
  - Instructor’s Name
  - Course Name and Number
  - Date

- Title of your paper will be centered on line under heading
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ENGL 4351
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A Migrating Culture: Okinawa in the Wake of the U.S. Occupation

The island of Okinawa has endured centuries of colonization and foreign influence.

These experiences have created a migrating culture for the natives of Okinawa and their
Why do I have to cite?

• Your Works Cited page provides your reader with the information you consulted to write your paper.
• Your in-text citations tell your reader where you are using this information in your paper.
• The information in the in-text citation (or signal phrase) must match the corresponding entry on your Works Cited list.

Cellular phones have become more popular and problematic in the last decade (Violanti 519).

Works Cited Page

• Works Cited is the title and should be centered
  • If there is only one citation – Work Cited

• The Works Cited list should:
  • be in alphabetical order
  • have a hanging indent
  • be double-spaced

• Works Cited will be placed at the end of the paper.
  • Begin Works Cited on a new page following the text of your document.
  • Page numbers and header should continue from previous pages.
Sample Works Cited

Works Cited entries

• Book or book chapter
• Work in an anthology
• Scholarly journal article
  • print, online, or database
• Magazine article
• Newspaper article
• Web source
Book - by one author

Last name, First name. *Title of Book*. Publication City: Publisher, year. Publication medium.


- If the city is not easily recognized, include the abbreviated state
- *Italicize* book title
Book – by more than one author

Last name, First Name, and First Name Last Name. *Title of Book*. Publication City: Publisher, Year. Publication Medium.


• With more than one author, the first author will be listed Last name, First name and all other authors will be listed First Name Last Name.

• If more than three authors, list first author followed by et al.
  • Or list all authors in the order they appear on the title page.

Section 5.5.4. *MLA Handbook*
Work in an Anthology (or chapter in a book)

Last name, First name. “Title of Chapter or Selection.” *Title of Book or Anthology*. Ed. Editor Name. Publication City: Publisher, Year. page-page. Publication Medium.


• Even if you have more than one editor, use Ed.
Article in Scholarly Journal (Online Database)


Date is written DD Month YYYY

Abbreviate all months other than May, June, July
Article in Magazine

Last name, First name. “Article Title.” Title of Magazine Day Month Year: page-page. Publication Medium.


• If the magazine is published monthly, you are not required to list a day.
• If you retrieved the source online, Publication Medium will be Web.
  • Include Date of Access
  • No page number(s) necessary
Article in Newspaper

Last name, First name. “Article Title.” Title of Newspaper Day Month Year, edition: page number. Publication Medium.


• If you retrieved the source online, Publication Medium will be Web.
  • Include Date of Access
  • No page number(s) necessary

• If there is no author, begin with “Article Title..”
• If no date of creation, type n.d. (for no date).
• If citing the entire website (or collection of pages), italicize the name of the site.
Other Types of Sources

• If you need to cite a type of source that we haven’t covered today, stop by the Writing Center and we can find the answer.
  • The OWL @ Purdue - http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/
Citing Sources in Your Paper

• When citing a source in your paper, you have two options available to you:

  • Name author(s) in sentence
    Erika Lindemann asserts, “Writing is a process of communication that uses a conventional graphic system to convey a message to a reader” (10).

  • Name author(s) in parenthetical citation
    “Writing is a process of communication that uses a conventional graphic system to convey a message to a reader” (Lindemann 10).
Citing Source In Text

• You should always indicate the source material every time information is borrowed and used in the text of your paper.

• Be sure to indicate the author in your citation (or signal phrase) when using multiple sources within the same paragraph.

• You can cite using the page number from where the material was taken if using the same source within the paragraph and no other sources.
  • Signal phrasing can help clarify for the reader.
In-text Citations: Basics

• Basic in-text citation
  • (Author Last Name page number).
  • (Langhamer 235).

• Two or three authors
  • (Author Last Name and Author Last Name page number).
  • (Langhamer and Cruz 345).

• More than three authors
  • (Jones et al. 345)

• If citing multiple sources in one citation, use semicolons to separate the citations.
  • (Fukuyama 42; McRae 101-33).

We see so many global warming hotspots in North America likely because this region has “more readily accessible climatic data and more comprehensive programs to monitor and study environmental change . . .” (“Impact of Global Warming” 6).
Signal Phrases

• A signal phrase is a word, phrase, or sentence that indicates to the reader that you will be including material from a source.

• Signal phrasing can help with in-text citations:

  • Human beings have been described by Kenneth Burke as "symbol-using animals" (3).
  • Burke contends humans use symbols to interpret the messages in their environment (3).

• Signal phrases help with flow and to break up a string of citations in the body of the paper.
WC Recommendations

• Use the MLA Handbook (7th ed.) when writing.

• Ask your professor if you have specific questions!

• The CASA Writing Center has copies of this handbook that can be used in the WC.

• The CASA Writing Center has helpful MLA handouts.

• The OWL @ Purdue
  • http://owl.english.purdue.edu/