

MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION (MLA) HANDBOOK FOR WRITERS



INTRODUCTION

Modern Language Association (MLA) style is one of several types of standardized citation formats. MLA format is typically the standard citation format in the humanities, versus American Psychological Association (APA) style, which is used primarily in the humanities. The MLA Handbook is currently in its seventh edition. We strongly encourage you to use MLA citation when citing formal works. Examples of formal works include journal articles, books, and professionally made multimedia. Exercise your personal discretion when citing works that may be less formal, such as social media, YouTube videos, and casual conversations.

A CLOSER LOOK

In academic works, citations are important to show readers how current arguments are informed with supporting materials from previous research. Proper citation enables those reading (or viewing) academic works to accurately trace argumentation back to original sources. Some form of citation format is usually required for a paper or project that is submitted for academic peer review.

CITATION EXAMPLES (EXAMPLES FROM OWL.ENGLISH.PURDUE.EDU)

Below are citation formats for some of the more widely used sources:

Single Author

Lastname, Firstname. Title of Book. City of publication: Publisher, Year of publication. Medium of publication.

Two or More Authors

All format remains the same, except first author has the last name, first name format and all subsequent authors are listed first name last name.

Mitchell, Joe, and Tom Servo. The Ballad of Mitchell. Boston: Routledge, 2000. Print.

Work in an Anthology, Reference, or Collection

Lastname, Firstname. "Title of Essay." Title of Collection. Ed. Editor's Name(s). City of publication: Publisher, Year. Page range of entry. Medium of publication.

Article in Journal

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Journal Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication.

Article in a Magazine

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Periodical Day Month Year: pages. Medium of publication.

Article in a Newspaper

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Periodical Day Month Year: edition pages. Medium of publication.

Article from Online Periodical

Follow this format If the publication you want to cite is available only online. If the publication is available in print, use the regular print format. Use n. pag. to say no pagination.

Dolby, Nadine. "Research in Youth Culture and Policy: Current Conditions and Future Directions." Social Work and Society: The International Online-Only Journal 6.2 (2008): n. pag. Web. 20 May 2009.

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CITATION RESOURCES

There are many books, websites, and computer software products that help authors accurately use MLA citation format. Below is not an exhaustive list, but rather a good starter guide.

Books

[Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009.](#)

Websites

[Purdue Owl *MLA Style Guide*](#) – Exhaustive guide to MLA formatting and rules. The Purdue OWL also has both a [YouTube Channel](#) and a video series specifically related to [MLA formatting](#).

[Citation Machine](#) – Citation-generating website that allows for different formats and types of citations.

[Citefast](#) – Another citation-generating website.

Software

[EndNote](#) – Cross-platform citation manager that has a social media function for open collaboration.

[Mendeley](#) – Free cross-platform citation manager that also has a searchable database of references.

[Papers](#) – Pay cross-platform citation manager. Able to download papers from 25+ databases.

[Zotero](#) – Free cross-platform citation manager that also has Linux functionality.