

MLA Documentation System—Quick Guide

The MLA documentation system consists of two parts:

- 1. Parenthetical Citations**—At the end of **each** passage in the text that requires documentation, insert the last name of the author and the page number (if available) in parentheses.
 - The citation follows the last word of the passage (or the closing quotation marks) and comes before the final punctuation:

The new law would be an effective solution to the problem (Jones 234).
“These factors will no longer be an issue” (Jones 235).
 - If the name of the author is introduced in the text of the paper, it’s deleted from the citation to avoid unnecessary repetition:

Jones has a similar view of the problem; he believes the new law would be an appropriate solution (223).
 - If the author of the source is unknown, the citation consists of the title (abbreviated if necessary) and the page number:

The situation has changed considerably (“Surprising Solution” 8).
- 2. Works Cited Page:** At the end of the paper a complete bibliographical entry is provided for each source. These entries are arranged alphabetically on a separate page under the heading **Works Cited**. This page should be double-spaced with reverse indentation (see the examples below taken from *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, *The Little Seagull Handbook*, and *The Purdue OWL*).

Examples of Works Cited page entries for common online sources

Information required for citing works from websites:

- 1 Last name of author, First name (if available).
- 2 “Title of the Section or Article.”
- 3 *Title of Website* (referred to by MLA as a “container”),
- 4 Publisher of the Site (if the publisher is the same as the title of the website, only list it once),
- 5 Date of publication (if available),
- 6 URL.
- 7 Date of access (optional but usually recommended).

Individual section of a website (no author provided):

“Global Minnesota: Immigrants Past and Present.” *Immigration History Research Center*, U of Minnesota, 2015, cla.umn.edu/ihr. Accessed 25 May 2016.

Individual section of a website (author provided, publisher same as title of website):

McIlwain, John. “Housing in America: Integrating Housing, Health, and Resilience in a Changing Environment.” *Urban Land Institute*, 28 Aug. 2014, uli.org/report/housing-in-america-resilience. Accessed 17 Sept. 2015.

Blog post:

Wise, Hannah. “An American Mystery.” *The Scoop Blog*, Dallas Morning News, 28 Mar. 2016, 4:31 p.m., thescoopblog.dallasnews.com/2016/03/an-american-mystery.html/. Accessed 23 Sept. 2016.

Twitter or Facebook post:

@tombrokaw. "SC demonstrated why all the debates are the engines of this campaign." *Twitter*, 22 Jan. 2012, 3:06 a.m., twitter.com/tombrokaw/status/160996868971704320. Accessed 23 Jan. 2012.

Online video (from a site such as YouTube):

"*Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Unaired Pilot 1996.*" *YouTube*, uploaded by Brian Stowe, 28 Jan. 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=WR3J-v7QXXw. Accessed 31 Oct. 2016.

Streaming movie (from a site such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, or Hulu):

Interstellar. Directed by Christopher Nolan, Paramount, 2014. *Amazon Prime Video*,

www.amazon.com/Interstellar-Matthew-McConaughey/dp/B00TU9FTS. Accessed 2 May 2015.

Streaming episode of a TV show (from a site such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, or Hulu):

"Cops Redesign." *Portlandia*, directed by Jonathan Krisel, season 2, episode 5, IFC, 3 Feb. 2012. *Netflix*,

www.netflix.com/watch/70236274. Accessed 2 May 2015.

Article from a database (such as Academic Search Complete, JSTOR, or ProQuest):

(Note: The periodical title, volume, number, date, pages, and doi [digital object identifier] can usually be found at the beginning of the article. If no doi is provided, use the URL.)

Stalter, Sunny. "Subway Ride and Subway System in Hart Crane's 'The Tunnel.'" *Journal of Modern Literature*, vol. 33, no. 2, Jan. 2010, pp. 70-91. *JSTOR*, doi: 10.2979/jml.2010.33.2.70. Accessed 30 Mar. 2015.

Newspaper article from a database (such as LexisNexis):

(Note: If no volume and number are provided for a newspaper article, skip these items.)

Memmott, Carol. "Risky Behavior: New Survey Chronicles USA's Bad Health Habits." *USA Today*, 5 July 1990, p. 6A. *LexisNexis Academic*, www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?. Accessed 6 Apr. 2003.

Examples of Works Cited page entries for other common sources**Book by one author:**

Oyeyemi, Helen. *Mr. Fox: A Novel*. Riverhead Books, 2012.

Book by two authors (only the first name is reversed):

Welsh, Roger, and Linda K. Welsch. *Cather's Kitchens: Foodways in Literature and Life*. University of Nebraska Press, 1987.

Essay originally published in an anthology:

Diaz, Junot. "Aurora." *The Ecco Anthology of Contemporary American Short Fiction*, edited by Joyce Carol Oates and Christopher R. Beha, Harper Perennial, 2008, pp. 213-26.

Personal interview:

McConnell, Judith. Personal interview. 26 June 2015.