

Augusta University Writing Center
MLA Citation Guide

All information taken from the MLA Handbook, 8th edition (2016)

MLA style was developed to ease reading comprehension of writing in the humanities and some social sciences. The style is published by the Modern Language Association. Scholars and researchers in fields such as English, Theology, and Philosophy use MLA style. The Augusta University Writing Center offers many handouts on MLA style. This handout offers advice on citing sources in your text and on the works cited page.

When do I cite in MLA?

Provide an in-text parenthetical citation after you use an idea that is not your own or general knowledge. You must provide in-text citations after every sentence that paraphrases, summarizes, or directly quotes from a source. Every source cited parenthetically in the text must have a corresponding full bibliographic entry on the works cited page at the end of your paper.

Where do I cite in MLA?

MLA style requires that all sources used be cited in two places: in the text and on the works cited page.

In-text citations

To cite sources in the text of your essay, you need two pieces of information: the author's last name and the page, paragraph, or section number from which the information was taken. You can put this information in different places in your sentence—either in the body of the sentence or in a closing parenthetical citation. If there are no page numbers, abbreviate paragraph to “par.” and section to “sec.” in your parenthetical citation. Note that there is no comma between the author's last name and the page or paragraph number in parenthetical citations. Spell out the word “and” when you have two or more authors both in the sentence and in parenthetical citations. If there are three or more authors, you can always use the first author's last name followed by “et al.,” both in the sentence and in parenthetical citations. If you have an organization as an author, spell out the full name in the sentence, but you can use standard abbreviations in the parenthetical citation. If directly quoting, place quotation marks around quoted material. Quotation marks go before the parenthetical citation with punctuation following the closing parentheses as shown in the samples below.

Sample one (source with page numbers):

Apples are used to make “apple juice” (Smith and Jones 4).

Sample two (source with page numbers):

According to Smith and Jones, apples are used to make “apple juice” (4).

Sample three (source with multiple paragraphs but no page numbers):

Apples are used to make “apple juice” (Smith and Jones par. 4).

Sample four (source with multiple sections but no page numbers):

Apples are used to make “apple juice” (Smith and Jones sec. 4).

Works cited page citations

For works cited page citations, you will need the following information for each source cited in the paper: author; title; title of larger work (if your source is included in a larger collection, such as a webpage within a larger website or a journal article within a journal); editor, translator, director, or performer if applicable; version if applicable; volume and issue numbers if applicable; publisher and/or sponsor; date of publication; location of the source (i.e. page numbers, URL, DOI, etc.). The works cited page begins on a new page after the body of the paper. Type the words “Works Cited” at the top of the page, centered. Do not bold, italicize, or underline “Works Cited.” The works cited page should be double-spaced throughout, with no extra lines between entries. The first line of each entry should begin flush left, with subsequent entry lines indented. Organize entries alphabetically by first author’s last name.

How do I cite a journal article?

Include the authors’ last and first names (if you have three or more authors, list the first author followed by a comma and “et al.”), the title of the article in quotation marks using standard capitalization, the title of the journal in italics using standard capitalization, the volume and issue numbers (use abbreviation “vol.” before the volume number and “no.” before the issue number), the date of publication, the page range (place “pp.” before the pages), and the URL or DOI. If you found the article in a database, also include the name of the database in italics before the URL or DOI. Note that when listing author names, you include the first author’s last name first, followed by their first name, but then you switch to normal sequencing for the second author.

Sample:

Smith, Ann and Eric Jones. “Uses of Apples.” *Apple Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 2, Spring 2016, pp. 1-12. *Academic Search Premier*, <http://useofapples.asp.5343>.

How do I cite a book?

Include the authors’ last and first names (if you have three or more authors, list the first author followed by a comma and “et al.”), the book’s title and subtitle in italics using standard capitalization, the publisher, and the latest date of publication. If you are only using a chapter in a book, add the chapter title in quotation marks before the book title, and include the page range for the chapter after the date of publication (see sample two). Note that when you cite only one chapter, the period after the book title becomes a comma.

Sample one:

Smith, Ann and Eric Jones. *Uses of Apples: New Approaches*. Centaur, 2016.

Sample two (chapter in a book):

Smith, Ann and Eric Jones. “Apple Juice.” *Uses of Apples: New Approaches*, Centaur, 2016, pp. 1-12.

How do I cite a page on a website?

Include the authors’ last and first names (if you have three or more authors, list the first author followed by a comma and “et al.”), the title of the page, the title of the larger website in italics, the publisher or sponsor of the site, the update date, the URL, and the date of access (if no update date).

Sample:

Smith, Ann and Eric Jones. “Apple Juice.” *Uses of Apples*, AppleInc., 12 May 2016, www.applejuice.com.