

## Formatting an MLA Paper

Papers in MLA format should follow these basic guidelines:

- All parts of the paper should be double spaced, including headings and the Works Cited page.
- Each page should have a header 1/2 inch from the top of the page with the author's last name and the page number.
- Except for the header, all parts of the paper should have a 1 inch margin on all sides of the paper.

**Example:** Top of the First Page of a Report

Tyson 1
Mike Tyson Professor King English 2010 2 November 2009
A Taste for Ears
Understandably, our society is not a canabalistic one. While I believe . . .

### Notes About the First Page

- Page numbers should begin on the first page of the paper in the page header.
- MLA format does not require a separate title page. Instead, the author's name, professor's name, course number, and date should be typed in top left corner and double spaced.
- The title of the paper should be centered and typed two spaces below the date.
- Some teachers may have their own guidelines for formatting a paper, it is always best to follow your teachers directions.

## Citing Sources in a Paper

Each time a source is quoted directly or paraphrased in a paper, it needs to be accurately cited and listed in the Works Cited page. Follow these basic guidelines when citing sources:

- Most citations consist of the author's last name and the page number where the information was found.
- If the author's name is mentioned in the sentence, only include the page number in the citation.
- Always place quotations around direct quotes.
- Citations go after quotation marks, but the period goes after the citation. "Like this" (Name 389).

### Common Citations in the Text of a Paper.

#### One Author:

(MacLean 1).

#### Two Authors:

(Witte and Faigley 239).

#### Three Authors:

(Witte, Faigley, and House 97).

#### More Than Three Authors:

(Thompson et al. 23).

#### No Author: (Use the first two or three words from title)

"Black hair is better" ("Black Hair" 37).

#### More Than One Work by the Same Author:

(Add title to citation)

(Bartholomae, "Inventing the University" 635).

#### Indirect Sources:

(qtd. in Neuhaus 65).

#### Online Sources: (see back panel for more information about online sources.)

#### Block Quotes

When a quote runs longer than four lines, use the block quote format. Block quotes usually begin by introducing the source. Double space the quote and start it on a new line, usually after a colon:

Indent the entire quote one inch, or two tab spaces as seen here. Do not use quotation marks. Place the citation after the period. (Westing 88)

If the author's name is in the sentence introducing the quote, it does not need to be in the citation.

## Citing Sources on the Works Cited Page

Each source that is quoted or paraphrased in a paper should be listed on the Works Cited page. Entries should be in alphabetical order, double spaced, and formatted with a hanging indent.

**Example:** Top of a Works Cited Page

Tyson 15
Works Cited
Bouder, Marcus. "Typhoon." Boston: Houghton, 2002.

### Common Entries on a Works Cited Page.

#### Book with One Author:

Jackson, Molly. *Good Timing*. Boston: Penguin, 2000.

#### Book with Two or Three Authors:

Jackson, Molly, and Janet Hess. *Going Crazy*. New York: Doubleday, 1999.

(In sources with more than three authors, either list each author's name or put **et al.** after the first author's name.)

#### Book with an Editor or Translator:

Gomi, Taro. *Everyone Poops: My Body Science*. Trans. Amanda Mayer. La Jolla, CA: Kane/Miller, 1997.

#### Work in an Anthology:

Dreiser, Theodore. "Typhoon." *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*. Ed. Paul Lauter. 4th ed. 2 vols. Boston: Houghton, 2002.

#### Journal Article:

Hagi, George. "Famous Romanian Footballers." *The Wheston Review* 10.2 (1994): 12-17.

#### Newspaper Article

Wilson, Tim. "Nitwit Hunt." *The Salt Lake Tribune* 24 Jan. 1982: B1+.

#### Magazine Article:

Connor, Tom. "Writing in Style." *Writer's Digest*. 12 Aug. 2005: 25-29.

#### Personal Interview

Lincoln, Abraham. Personal Interview. 12 Feb. 2003.

## Using Online Sources

There are a variety of useful resources available online to use in papers. Before using online sources, however, it is important to confirm that the information is reputable and reliable.

Because of the wide variety of material available electronically and online, citations and references can often be challenging and a little confusing. The following are examples of some possible references. It is important to note, however, that each element of a reference is not always available for each source. If the Internet Site or electronic source doesn't have all the necessary information, simply omit the missing elements and continue with the information available.

### An Article in an Online Periodical:

If the article you found online was also printed, first cite it like a printed article and then add information about the electronic version. The reference should include the following:

- Author's Name
- "The Title"
- Information about Print Publication
- Information about Electronic Publication (date and name of any sponsoring organization)
- Access Information (date and URL)

White, Sean. "Typing Fast." *Computer World* 9 Feb. 2000: 2-7. *Computers Online* 2001. 1 May 2001 <<http://www.computers.com>>.

### An Article in a Newspaper Accessed Online:

Similar to an article in an online periodical, when citing a newspaper article that was found online, first cite the print information and then cite the electronic information.

Stone, Charles. "Volcano Erupts." *The Indiana Times*. 2 Nov. 2003. 10 Dec. 2003 <<http://www.volcano.com>>.

### An entire Internet Site:

Look for the following information about Internet Sites. If you can't find everything, cite what is available.

- Title of the Site (underlined)

- Name of the Editor of the Site (if given)
- Information about Electronic Publication
- Access Information (date and URL)

*FOXNEWS.com*. 2006. Fox News Network. 3 May 2006 <<http://www.foxnews.com/>>.

### Online Subscription Source:

For online subscriptions, such as databases, begin with the standard information about print publication: author's name, title, name of magazine/newspaper, date. Then list electronic publication information.

- Name of the Database
- Name of the Service
- Name of the Library (with city and state if useful)
- Access Information (date and URL if available)

Ford, Kate. "Ceilings." *Money* Nov. 2005: 66-67. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. Stewart Lib., Ogden, UT. 2 Nov. 2005 <<http://serach.epnet.com>>.

### An Online Book:

First list the information about printed version (if given): author's name, title, editor, and publication information. Then list electronic publication information.

- Title of Internet Site (underlined)
- Editor of the Site (if given)
- Version Number
- Date of Electronic Publication
- Name of any Sponsoring Organization
- Access Information (date and URL)

Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. Ed. Henry Churchyard. 1996. *Jane Austen Information Page*. 6 Sept. 2002 <<http://www.permberley.com/janeinfo/pridprej.html>>.

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MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 6th ed.

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