

MLA Documentation MLA 9 (2021)

What is MLA Documentation?

The MLA style of documentation is used frequently in the humanities, especially in literature, language, and cultural studies courses. With the MLA style, writers document sources in two different places within the paper:

- A detailed entry on a list of works cited that is included at the end of the paper.
- A citation within the text as the writer refers to the source (in-text citation).

Core Elements

When citing your source, identify the follow elements. With each citation, write this information in the order listed with the punctuation shown:

1. Author.
2. Title of source.
3. Title of container,
4. Other contributors,
5. Version,
6. Number,
7. Publisher,
8. Publication date,
9. Location.

What do these categories mean, or how do I include these categories in my citation?

1. An **author** is a person (or persons) responsible for producing the work. The author's last name is listed first:
Brooks, Gwendolyn
West, Dorothy
 - **For sources with two authors**, list the authors in publication order. The first author's name should be written last name first, and the second author's name should be listed in the normal order:
Hacker, Diana, and Nancy Sommers
 - **For sources with 3 or more authors**, include the term et al. ("and others" in Latin) after the first author's name:
Suki, Ali, et al.
2. Include the **title** and subtitle of the source after the names of the author(s). Capitalize all words in the title except for articles (words like a, an, the), prepositions (words like

of, in, out, between), and conjunctions (words like and, for, but, so, yet, or nor), unless these words are the first or last words of the title or subtitle. Additionally,

- Italicize the titles of longer works like books, plays, television series, entire websites, and films.

Examples:

Gathering of Waters (novel)
Middle of Nowhere (film)
The Walking Dead (television series)

- Use quotation marks for shorter works like short stories, journal articles, magazine or newspaper articles, poems, single episodes of television series, and individual web pages.

Examples:

“Racial Disparities in Legal Outcomes: On Policing, Charging Decisions, and Criminal Trial Proceedings” (journal article)
 “This Is Not a Small Voice” (poem)
 “Knots Untie” (television episode)

3. Some sources are found in larger collections of sources. That larger source is the **container** for the source. For instance, the ADW reader is a container for different essays and book excerpts. (This container is known as an anthology.) Another example would be a single web page from a website. In this instance, the website would be the container.

Some electronic sources have more than one container. For example, a journal article from *JSTOR* was first published in an academic journal (container 1) and then hosted in the *JSTOR* database (container 2). In these instances, follow this format:

1. Author.
 2. Title of source.
- Container 1
3. Title of container,
 4. Other contributors,
 5. Version,
 6. Number,
 7. Publisher,
 8. Publication date,
 9. Location.
- Container 2
3. Title of container,
 4. Other contributors,
 5. Version,

6. Number,
7. Publisher,
8. Publication date,
9. Location.

When writing the title of the container, follow the same rules for listing the title of the source.

Examples:

<i>The Atlantic</i>	(magazine)
<i>Women's Work: An Anthology of African-American Women's Historical Writings from Antebellum America to the Harlem Renaissance</i>	(anthology of Black women's writing)
<i>Prison Policy Initiative</i>	(website)

4. List **other contributors** such as editors and translators, especially if they are relevant to your research.

Examples:

Editor -	edited by Natasha Tarpley
Illustrator -	illustrated by Rachel Isadora
Translator -	translated by Gregory Rabassa

5. If your source is a specific edition or **version** of a work, list this information.

Examples:

Specific edition -	8th ed.
The Bible -	New Revised Standard Version
Film version -	director's cut

6. Include the **number** of a particular volume in a multi-volume work, or the volume and number of an academic journal.

Examples:

Multi-volume work -	<i>The Norton Anthology of African American Literature</i> , 3 rd ed., vol. 1
Academic journal -	<i>Gender and Education</i> , vol. 22, no. 6

7. List the **publisher's** name for sources other than periodicals, self-published works, and databases. For websites, list the publisher or sponsor's name if it differs from the title of the website.

Examples:

Book publisher -
Website sponsor -

Bedford/St. Martin's
Univision Communications

8. Include the **publication date** for print and electronic sources. When sources are published in more than one medium, indicate the publication date relevant to your use of the source. For example, if you analyzed an episode of *The Walking Dead* that you viewed on *AMC.com*, include the date the episode was published to the website, not the date it aired on television.

Examples:

Article from the <i>New York Times</i> (website) -	6 Nov. 2014
Magazine article -	Oct. 2019
Publication date for a scholarly book -	2021

9. A source's **location** depends on its medium. For a print source that appears in a larger collection, include page numbers. For a web source, include the URL (or DOI for journal articles).

Examples:

Page numbers of an essay in an anthology -	pp. 466-79
URL of a television episode -	www.amc.com/shows/the-walking-dead/season-6/episode-11-knots-untie

Style points

- In the list of works cited, page numbers are prefaced by "p." for a single page and "pp." for multiple pages.
- With journals, volume and issue number are referenced in this manner – vol. 6, no. 2.
- Listing the city of publication is no longer necessary unless the work was published before the 20th century.
- The 9th edition of the MLA handbook includes a recommendation for including the date of access for online sources since these addresses may change.

In-text Citations

- Include an in-text citation each time you quote, paraphrase, summarize, or borrow ideas from a source in your paper.
- Provide the author's name when you introduce the borrowed material, or place the author's name within parentheses before the ending punctuation in your sentence.
- Include page numbers for all print sources or electronic reproductions of print sources.
- Check to see that the in-text citation matches the corresponding works cited entry. The first word(s) of the works cited entry should be used for the in-text citation that refers to the source.

Examples of in-text citations

Author named in the signal phrase	Tan asserts that "the language spoken in the family, especially in immigrant families which are more insular, plays a large role in shaping the language of the child" (807).
Two authors	Media portrayals of Michelle Obama "helped feminize her husband and solidified her connection to many of the negative Black female stereotypes" (Tyree and Jones 12).
Three or more authors	Often, depictions of Michelle Obama reflected "the more comfortable sexist and racist constructions of Black womanhood" (Smith-Jones et al. 7).
Multiple citations	. . . stereotypical, anti-Black, misogynist imagery associated with Michelle Obama (Tyree and Jones 12; Smith-Jones et al. 7).
Secondary source	For a source cited in another source, include the original author's name and the words "qtd. in" before the rest of the citation: According to sociologist Stewart Tolnay, African Americans who left the South in the 1940s and 50s "averaged nearly two more years of completed schooling than those who remained in the South" (qtd. in Wilkerson 262).
Two or more works by the same author	Either include the title in the signal phrase or include an abbreviated title in the parenthetical reference. Example - You include two works by Ntozake Shange in your paper: <i>Betsey Brown</i> , and <i>Sassafrass, Cypress, and Indigo</i> . You quote from <i>Sassafrass, Cypress, and Indigo</i> : The sense of isolation Sassafrass felt continued to grow in San Francisco: "Her thin smocks for L.A.'s perpetual spring didn't have

	<p>the stuff in them to cope with the dense fog and chill of northern California; the cold she felt continually reminded her that she was alone – forsaken, she liked to believe” (Shange, <i>Sassafrass</i> 102).</p>
Author not named	<p>Use an abbreviated version of the title in place of an author’s name:</p> <p>One form of tidal energy, tidal fences, “can reach across channels between small islands or across straits between the mainland and an island. The turnstiles spin via tidal currents typical of coastal waters. Some of these currents run at 5–8 knots (5.6–9 miles per hour) and generate as much energy as winds of much higher velocity” (“Tidal Energy”).</p>
Website	<p>Many electronic sources do not include page numbers. List page numbers only if they are included with the original source. If the sections or paragraphs of a web page are numbered, provide that information:</p> <p>African Americans “are experiencing . . . a kind of privilege previously withheld—seeing our most sacred cultural practices and tropes validated in the world’s highest office” (Coates).</p>
Corporate author	<p>Include the name of the group or entity followed by the page number, if available.</p> <p>The Black Lung Benefits Act will pay for medical services and benefits given to miners with the disease (US Department of Labor).</p>
Long quotations	<p>Block quotations that are more than four lines of your text by indenting the entire quotation ½ inch. Eliminate the quotation marks and include the citation within parentheses after the ending punctuation.</p> <p>The growth of slavery in the South was fueled by Supreme Court decisions like <i>Fletcher v. Peck</i> (1810):</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The principle that a contract is inviolable and that property is absolute was now the accepted conclusion of the federal constitution. In the <i>Fletcher</i> decision, the chief justice never mentioned slavery. But the Court’s decision made possible the survey and sale of more than 20 million acres for slavery’s expanding footprint. Marshall’s ruling also gave every future defender of slavery and its expansion an incredible tool. (Baptist 33)</p>

List of Works Cited

- On a separate page at the end of your paper, compose the list of works cited.
- Include an entry for each work you quote, paraphrase, summarize, or borrow ideas from in your text.
- Double-space the list and include the title “Works Cited” for multiple entries or “Work Cited” for a single entry.
- Alphabetize the list by the first word in the entry. (For example, if the source includes an author, alphabetize the entry by the author’s last name. If an author is not named in the source, you will most likely alphabetize the source by the first word of the title.)
- Include a hanging indent for each line of the entry after the first.

Works Cited examples

- Book, one author

Thurston, Baratunde. *How to Be Black*. Harper, 2012.

- Book, two authors

Shange, Ntozake, and Ifa Bayeza. *Some Sing, Some Cry*. St. Martin’s. 2010.

- Book, three or more authors

Moglen, Helene, et al. *Female Subjects in Black and White: Race, Psychoanalysis, Feminism*.

University of California Press, 1997.

- Ebook

Ebooks are often hosted in databases or other websites. Use the format for multiple containers with these sources.

Reed, T. V. *Digitized Lives: Culture, Power, and Social Change in the Internet Era*. Routledge, 2014, ProQuest Ebrary, <http://site.ebrary.com.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2051/lib/atlunivctr/reader.action?docID=10879794>. Accessed 3 Nov. 2023.

- Selection from an anthology

An anthology is a book or published collection of selected writings by different authors, usually on the same or similar topic or theme.

McElroy, Colleen J. "Jesus and Fat Tuesday." *Calling the Wind: Twentieth-Century African-American Short Stories*, edited by Clarence Major, HarperPerennial, 1993, pp. 466-79.

Sources Found in Databases

- Article originally published in an academic journal

Journal articles found in databases are examples of works with multiple containers. List the publication information for the article and then include information about the database, including the URL.

Ali, Suki, et al. "Intersectionality, Black British Feminism and Resistance in Education: A Roundtable Discussion." *Gender and Education*, vol. 22, no. 6, Nov. 2010, pp. 647-61. *Academic Search Complete*, web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2051/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=9fc8c310-60f0-4c76-95e3-23600b5f28a0%40sessionmgr4008&hid=4106. Accessed 15 Sept. 2023.

- Article originally published in a monthly magazine

Magazine articles found in databases are examples of works with multiple containers. List the publication information for the article and then include information about the database, including the URL.

Coates, Ta-nehisi. "Fear of a Black President." *The Atlantic*, Sept. 2012, pp. 76-90. *Academic Search Complete*,
 web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2051/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=5&sid=9
 fc8c310-60f0-4c76-95e3-23600b5f28a0%40sessionmgr4008&hid=4106. Accessed 14
 Feb. 2022.

Film and Video

- Television episode, streaming

"Witness." *Better Call Saul*, season 3, episode 2, AMC, 17 Apr. 2017. *Netflix*,
<https://www.netflix.com/watch/80170695>. Accessed 14 Feb. 2022.

- Film, found in database

Begin with the title of the film. Include the name of the director, the distributor, and the year of release. You may also include the names of other important contributors.

I am a Girl. Directed by Rebecca Barry, Women Make Movies, 2013. *Kanopy*,
<https://auctr.kanopy.com/video/i-am-girl-2>. Accessed 14 Feb. 2022.

Web, Media, Miscellany

- Selection from an online newspaper

Burke, Lauren Victoria. "Movement for Black Lives Coalition Lobbies on Capitol Hill." *The Root*, Univision Communications, 15 Sept. 2016,

www.theroot.com/articles/culture/2016/09/movement-for-black-lives-capitol-hill/
 . Accessed 2 Nov. 2021.

- Academic Course

McKie, Melanie Mims. *ENG 103-04: First-Year Composition*. Spelman College, Fall 2018,
<https://spelelearn.spelman.edu/course/view.php?id=15474/>. Accessed 20 October
 2019.

- Song, streaming

Allen, Geri. "God's Ancient Sky." *Flying Toward the Sound (A Solo Piano Excursion Inspired
 by Cecil Taylor, McCoy Tyner and Herbie Hancock)*, Motema Music, 2010. Spotify,
<https://open.spotify.com/track/3pMoG6f9nHT8Q1xIUuGNdg>. Accessed 14 Feb.
 2022.

- A Tweet

@rgay. "My main observations of Michelle Obama are that she is fiercely intelligent, as
 gracious as I imagined, and not to be trifled with." *Twitter*, 27 Sept. 2017, 12:12 p.m.,
<https://twitter.com/rgay/status/913073788492959744>. Accessed 9 Sept. 2020.

- Work of art

Simpson, Lorna. "Ice 1, 2017." *lsimpsonstudio.com, liveBooks*,
<https://lsimpsonstudio.com/paintings/ice-series-2016-present>. Accessed 14 Feb. 2022.

- YouTube Clip

If the information is available, identify the author and the person who uploaded the video.

Oluo, Ijeoma. "Race, Culture, and the Gatekeepers of Language." *YouTube*, uploaded by the Magazine Association of BC, 8 June 2018,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuaGPO6SG78&t=84s>. Accessed 12 Feb. 2022.

Personal Interview

Authority, Noted. Personal Interview. 18 June 2018.

See the sample list of works cited on the next page.

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- Ali, Suki, et al. "Intersectionality, Black British Feminism and Resistance in Education: A Roundtable Discussion." *Gender and Education*, vol. 22, no. 6, Nov. 2010, pp. 647-61. *Academic Search Complete*, web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2051/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=9fc8c310-60f0-4c76-95e3-23600b5f28a0%40sessionmgr4008&hid=4106. Accessed 15 Sept. 2023.
- Allen, Geri. "God's Ancient Sky." *Flying Toward the Sound (A Solo Piano Excursion Inspired by Cecil Taylor, McCoy Tyner and Herbie Hancock)*, Motema Music, 2010. *Spotify*, <https://open.spotify.com/track/3pMoG6f9nHT8Q1xIUuGNdg>. Accessed 14 Feb. 2022.
- Authority, Noted. Personal Interview. 18 June 2018.
- Burke, Lauren Victoria. "Movement for Black Lives Coalition Lobbies on Capitol Hill." *The Root*, Univision Communications, 15 Sept. 2016, www.theroot.com/articles/culture/2016/09/movement-for-black-lives-capitol-hill/. Accessed 2 Nov. 2021.
- Coates, Ta-nehisi. "Fear of a Black President." *The Atlantic*, Sept. 2012, pp. 76-90. *Academic Search Complete*, web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2051/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=5&sid=9fc8c310-60f0-4c76-95e3-23600b5f28a0%40sessionmgr4008&hid=4106. Accessed 14 Feb. 2022.

- I am a Girl*. Directed by Rebecca Barry, *Women Make Movies*, 2013. *Kanopy*,
<https://auctr.kanopy.com/video/i-am-girl-2>. Accessed 14 Feb. 2022.
- McElroy, Colleen J. "Jesus and Fat Tuesday." *Calling the Wind: Twentieth-Century African-American Short Stories*, edited by Clarence Major, HarperPerennial, 1993, pp. 466-79.
- McKie, Melanie Mims. *ENG 103-04: First-Year Composition*. *Spelman College*, Fall 2018,
<https://spelelearn.spelman.edu/course/view.php?id=15474/>. Accessed 20 October 2019.
- Moglen, Helene, et al. *Female Subjects in Black and White: Race, Psychoanalysis, Feminism*.
 University of California Press, 1997.
- Oluo, Ijeoma. "Race, Culture, and the Gatekeepers of Language." *YouTube*, uploaded by
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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuaGPO6SG78&t=84s>. Accessed 12 Feb. 2022.
- Reed, T. V. *Digitized Lives: Culture, Power, and Social Change in the Internet Era*. Routledge,
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<http://site.ebrary.com.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2051/lib/atlunivctr/reader.action?docID=10879794>. Accessed 3. Nov. 2023.
- @rgay. "My main observations of Michelle Obama are that she is fiercely intelligent, as
 gracious as I imagined, and not to be trifled with." *Twitter*, 27 Sept. 2017, 12:12 p.m.,
<https://twitter.com/rgay/status/913073788492959744>. Accessed 9 Sept. 2020.
- Shange, Ntozake, and Ifa Bayeza. *Some Sing, Some Cry*. St. Martin's. 2010.

Simpson, Lorna. "Ice 1, 2017." *lsimpsonstudio.com, liveBooks,*

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Thurston, Baratunde. *How to Be Black*. Harper, 2012.

"Witness." *Better Call Saul*, season 3, episode 2, AMC, 17 Apr. 2017. *Netflix,*

<https://www.netflix.com/watch/80170695>. Accessed 14 Feb. 2022.

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ACC Library Services Information Literacy Team. "MLA Documentation 8th Edition, 2016."

Austin Community College Library Services, Austin Community College, 11 Aug. 2016,

<http://library.austincc.edu/help/mla/>. Accessed 12 Feb. 2022.

Caldwell University. Research Guides (LibGuides): Citation Guide: MLA 9th Edition.

<https://libguides.caldwell.edu/citations/MLA9>. Accessed 14 Feb. 2022.

MLA Handbook. 8th ed., The Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

Palmquist, Mike. *Joining the Conversation: A Guide for Writers*. 3rd ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017.

Russell, Tony, et al. "MLA Style and Formatting Guide." *The Purdue OWL*, Purdue University, 12

Sept. 2016, <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>. Accessed 14 Feb.

2022.

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