MLA Documentation

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).

What are the newest updates?

The eighth edition of the MLA handbook was published in 2016. In this edition, scholars seek to remedy one of the weaknesses inherent to the seventh edition of the handbook: separate rules for each type of source. In the eighth edition, the focus shifts to core elements associated with sources, regardless of medium:

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

With the new rules, writers include these core elements as necessary or relevant, using the punctuation that has been indicated. Within the entry, elements should appear in this same order.

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, you may find a journal article in *JSTOR* that 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.
   <u>Container 1</u>
   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:
The Atlantic   (magazine)
Women's Work: An Anthology of African-American Women's Historical Writings from Antebellum America to the Harlem Renaissance   (anthology of Black women's writing)

Prison Policy Initiative   (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 - *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, 3rd ed., vol. 1
    Academic journal -   *Gender and Education,* 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 -   Bedford/St. Martin's

Website sponsor -   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 *New York Times* (website) -   6 Nov. 2014
Magazine article -   Oct. 2012
Publication date for a scholarly book -   2010

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 -   http://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.

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: *Betsey Brown*, and *Sassafrass, Cypress, and Indigo*. You quote from *Sassafrass, Cypress, and Indigo*: The sense of isolation Sassafrass felt continued to grow in San Francisco: "Her thin smocks for L.A.'s perpetual spring didn't have 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, *Sassafrass* 102).
Author not named	Use an abbreviated version of the title in place of an author's name: 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").
Website	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: 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).
Corporate author	Include the name of the group or entity followed by the page number, if available. The Black Lung Benefits Act will pay for medical services and benefits given to miners with the disease (US Department of Labor).
Long quotations	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. The growth of slavery in the South was fueled by Supreme Court decisions like Fletcher v. Peck (1810): > The principle that a contract is inviolable and that property is absolute was now the accepted conclusion of the federal constitution. In the *Fletcher* 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)

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

Books

- <u>Book, one author</u>

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

- <u>Book, two authors</u>

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

- <u>Book, three or more authors</u>

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

University of California Press, 1997.

- <u>Ebook</u>

Ebooks are often hosted in databases or other websites. List the publication information for the book itself, and then include information about the database, including the URL.

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=1087

9794.

- Selection from an anthology

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=9

fc8c310-60f0-4c76-95e3-23600b5f28a0%40sessionmgr4008&hid=4106.

- 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.

Film and Video

- <u>Television episode, streaming</u>

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

https://www.netflix.com/watch/80170695.

- <u>Film, found in database</u>

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.

Web, Media, Miscellany

- <u>Selection from online newspaper</u>

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/.

- <u>Academic Course</u>

McKie, Melanie Mims. *ENG 103-04: First-Year Composition. Spelman College,* Fall 2018,

      https://spelelearn.spelman.edu/course/view.php?id=15474/.

- <u>Song, streaming</u>

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/3pMoG6f9nHT8Q1xlUuGNdg.

- <u>A Tweet</u>

@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.

- <u>Work of art</u>

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

      https://lsimpsonstudio.com/paintings/ice-series-2016-present.

- <u>YouTube Clip</u>

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.

- Personal Interview

Authority, Noted. Personal Interview. 18 June 2018.

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

Works Cited

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.

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web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.auctr.edu:2051/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=9

fc8c310-60f0-4c76-95e3-23600b5f28a0%40sessionmgr4008&hid=4106.

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/3pMoG6f9nHT8Q1xlUuGNdg.

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/.

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=9f

c8c310-60f0-4c76-95e3-23600b5f28a0%40sessionmgr4008&hid=4106.

I am a Girl. Directed by Rebecca Barry, Women Make Movies, 2013. *Kanopy*,

https://auctr.kanopy.com/video/i-am-girl-2.

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/.

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 the

    Magazine Association of BC, 8 June 2018,

    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuaGPO6SG78&t=84s.

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=10879

    794.

@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.

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

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

    https://lsimpsonstudio.com/paintings/ice-series-2016-present.

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.

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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/.

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/.