

MLA 8th Edition Works Cited and In-Text Citations

In-Text Citations

The in-text citation is a brief reference within your text that indicates the source you consulted. It should properly attribute any ideas, paraphrases, or direct quotations to your source, and should direct readers to the entry in the list of works cited. For the most part, an in-text citation is the **author's name and the page number (or just the page number, if the author is named in the sentence) in parentheses**:

Imperialism is “the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory” (Said 9).

or

According to **Edward W. Said**, imperialism is defined by “the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory” (9).

When creating in-text citations for media that has a runtime, such as a movie or podcast, include the range of hours, minutes and seconds you plan to reference, like so (00:02:15-00:02:35).

Again, your goal is to attribute your source and provide your reader with a reference without interrupting your text. Your readers should be able to follow the flow of your argument without becoming distracted by extra information.

Works Cited

MLA is a style of documentation based on a general methodology that may be applied to many different types of writing. Since texts have become increasingly mobile, and the same document may often be found in several different sources, following a set of rigid rules doesn't work.

Thus, the current system is based on a few guiding principles, rather than an extensive list of specific rules. While the handbook still describes how to cite sources, it is organized according to the process of documentation, rather than by the sources themselves. Once you are familiar with the method, you can use it to document any type of source, for any type of paper, in any field.

Here is an overview of the process:

When deciding how to cite your source, start by consulting the list of core elements. These are the general pieces of information that MLA suggests including in each Works Cited entry. In your citation, the elements should be listed in the following order, using the indicated punctuation marks.

1. Author.
2. Title of source.
3. Title of container,
4. Other contributors,
5. Version,

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

Author

Begin the entry with the author's last name, followed by a comma and the rest of the name, as presented in the work. End this element with a period.

Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. Knopf, 1994.

Title of source

The title of the source should follow the author's name. Depending upon the type of source, it should be listed in italics or quotation marks.

Title of container

Containers are the larger wholes in which the source is located. For example, if you want to cite a poem that is listed in a collection of poems, the individual poem is the source, while the larger collection is the container. The title of the container is usually italicized and followed by a comma, since the information that follows next describes the container.

Kincaid, Jamaica. "Girl." *The Vintage Book of Contemporary American Short Stories*, edited by Tobias Wolff, Vintage, 1994, pp. 306-07.

In some cases, a container might be within a larger container. You might have read a book of short stories on *Google Books*, or watched a television series on *Netflix*. You might have found the electronic version of a journal on JSTOR. It is important to cite these containers within containers so that your readers can find the exact source that you used.

"94 Meetings." *Parks and Recreation*, season 2, episode 21, NBC, 29 Apr. 2010. *Netflix*, www.netflix.com/watch/70152031?trackId=200256157&tctx=0%2C20%2C0974d361-27cd-44de-9c2a-2d9d868b9f64-12120962.

Other contributors

In addition to the author, there may be other contributors to the source who should be credited, such as editors, illustrators, translators, etc. If their contributions are relevant to your research, or necessary to identify the source, include their names in your documentation.

Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. Translated by Richard Howard, Vintage-Random House, 1988.

Woolf, Virginia. *Jacob's Room*. Annotated and with an introduction by Vara Neverow, Harcourt, Inc., 2008.

Version

If a source is listed as an edition or version of a work, include it in your citation.

Crowley, Sharon, and Debra Hawhee. *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students*. 3rd ed., Pearson, 2004.

Number

If a source is part of a numbered sequence, such as a multi-volume book, or journal with both volume and issue numbers, those numbers must be listed in your citation.

Dolby, Nadine. "Research in Youth Culture and Policy: Current Conditions and Future Directions." *Social Work and Society: The International Online-Only Journal*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2008, www.socwork.net/sws/article/view/60/362. Accessed 20 May 2009.

Publisher

The publisher produces or distributes the source to the public. If there is more than one publisher, and they are all relevant to your research, list them in your citation, separated by a forward slash (/).

Klee, Paul. *Twittering Machine*. 1922. Museum of Modern Art, New York. *The Artchive*, www.artchive.com/artchive/K/klee/twittering_machine.jpg.html. Accessed May 2006.

Women's Health: Problems of the Digestive System. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2006.

Note: the publisher's name need not be included in the following sources: periodicals, works published by their author or editor, websites whose titles are the same name as their publisher, websites that make works available but do not actually publish them (such as *YouTube*, *WordPress*, or *JSTOR*).

Publication Date

When the source has more than one date, it is sufficient to use the date that is most relevant to your use of it. If you're unsure about which date to use, go with the date of the source's original publication. In the following example, *Mutant Enemy* is the primary production company, and "Hush" was released in 1999. This is the way to create a general citation for a television episode.

"Hush." *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, created by Joss Whedon, performance by Sarah Michelle Gellar, season 4, *Mutant Enemy*, 1999.

Location

You should be as specific as possible in identifying a work's location. An essay in a book, or an article in journal should include page numbers.

Adiche, Chimamanda Ngozi. "On Monday of Last Week." *The Thing around Your Neck*, Alfred A. Knopf, 2009, pp. 74-94.

The location of an online work should include a URL. Remove any "http://" or "https://" tag from the beginning of the URL.

Wheelis, Mark. "Investigating Disease Outbreaks Under a Protocol to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention." *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, vol. 6, no. 6, 2000, pp. 595-600, wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/6/6/00-0607_article. Accessed 8 Feb. 2009.

A physical object that you experienced firsthand should identify the place of location.

Matisse, Henri. *The Swimming Pool*. 1952, [Museum of Modern Art, New York](#).

Optional Elements

Date of original publication:

If a source has been published on more than one date, the writer may want to include both dates if it will provide the reader with necessary or helpful information.

City of publication:

This is only necessary in particular instances, such as in a work published before 1900. Since pre-1900 works were usually associated with the city in which they were published, your documentation may substitute the city name for the publisher's name.

Date of access:

When you cite an online source, the *MLA Handbook* recommends including a date of access on which you accessed the material, since an online work may change or move at any time.

Bernstein, Mark. "10 Tips on Writing the Living Web." *A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites*, 16 Aug. 2002, alistapart.com/article/writeliving. Accessed 4 May 2009.

DOIs:

A DOI, or digital object identifier, is a series of digits and letters that leads to the location of an online source. Articles in journals are often assigned DOIs to ensure that the source is locatable, even if the URL changes. If your source is listed with a DOI, use that instead of a URL.

Alonso, Alvaro, and Julio A. Camargo. "Toxicity of Nitrite to Three Species of Freshwater Invertebrates." *Environmental Toxicology*, vol. 21, no. 1, 3 Feb. 2006, pp. 90-94. *Wiley Online Library*, doi: [10.1002/tox.20155](https://doi.org/10.1002/tox.20155).

Note: The above instructions are from owl.purdue.edu. We also recommend Valencia's Library guides to MLA, APA, and Chicago.