MLA uses the author-page method of in-text citation. This means that the author’s last name and the page number from which the quotation or paraphrase was found must appear in your paper as an in-text citation. If the source has no page numbers, just include the author’s last name. Sometimes a source is authored by an organization (for example, a report issued by a government agency), in which case you list the organization as the author. If the author is unknown, use the title of the article within the citation. When citing multiple sources from the same author, be sure to include a shortened version of the title within the in-text parenthetical citation to distinguish between the sources.

The way that you format the in-text citation depends on the length of the quote:

**SHORT QUOTATIONS**

For quotations that are fewer than four typed lines of prose or three lines of poetry, enclose the quotation within double quotation marks. Give the page number, or in the case of poetry, the line numbers, in the parenthetical citation.

> When writing your personal statement, concentrate on the opening paragraph because that is “generally the most important” (Stelzer 8).

> Wang wrote in the poem, “The brightest thing in all of heaven / Is dull compared to thee” (17-18).

**LONG QUOTATIONS**

When your quotation is four or more lines, place the quotation in an indented block of text without quotation marks. The quotation will still be double spaced. Place your parenthetical citation after the last punctuation mark (this is different from short quotations). When citing long sections of poetry, keep the formatting as close to the original as possible, including the original line breaks.

Sylvia Barnet presents numerous issues to consider when writing about art. When discussing portraits, for example, she tells us that a portrait is not simply a representation; it is also a presentation. In a given portrait, how much of the figure does the artist show, and how much of the available space does the artist cause the figure to occupy? What effects are thus gained? (23)

> Although she uses physical characteristics, Maya Angelou presents a non-superficial view of women’s strengths in her poem, “Phenomenal Woman”:

> But when I start to tell them
> They think I’m telling lies.
> I say,
> It’s in the reach of my arms,
> The span of my hips,
> The stride in my step... (1-8)
According to MLA, you must have a Works Cited page at the end of your paper. The entries in the Works Cited page should match the signal word or phrase in your in-text citation (the signal word or phrase is typically the author’s last name; this is what appears in parentheses in your in-text citation and is the first thing listed on the Works Cited entry).

**GENERAL FORMAT**

- Begin the Works Cited page on a separate page at the end of your paper. It will have the same margins and header as the rest of the paper.
- Label the page as Works Cited (or Work Cited, if only one item is cited) just as you titled the paper: regular font, title caps, no underline, no italics, and no quotation marks.
- Double space!
- Use hanging indents. (See the sample Works Cited at the end of the handout for an example.)
- Titles of major works (books, journals, magazines, etc.) should be italicized. Titles of minor works (articles, poems, chapters, etc.) should be enclosed in quotation marks.
- Include the format of the work at the end of the citation (Print, Web, DVD, etc.)

**EXAMPLES**

**BOOK BY ONE AUTHOR**

Author, A. Title of Book. Edition (if any). City of publication: Publisher, Year of publication. Medium.


**BOOK BY TWO OR MORE AUTHORS**

Author, A, and B Author. Title of Book. Edition (if any). City of publication: Publisher, Year of publication. Medium.


**BOOK WITH NO KNOWN AUTHOR**

Institutional author. Title. City of publication: Publisher, Year of publication. Medium.

A WORK IN AN ANTHOLOGY OR COLLECTION


ARTICLE IN A SCHOLARLY JOURNAL


WEBSITE OR PAGE ON A WEBSITE

“Title of page.” Title of Website. Publisher (organization that publishes the website), date of publication. Medium. Date of access.


ARTICLE IN A NEWSPAPER

Author, A. “Title of Article.” Title of Newspaper Date of publication: Section. Medium.


CLASS LECTURE/NOTES

Speaker, A. “Title of Speech/Lecture (if any).” Meeting name/organization. Location, Date. Medium.


FILM

Title. Dir. Director. Perf. Performers. Film studio, Release year. Medium of publication (DVD, VHS, BluRay, etc)


ONLINE VIDEO

Author’s Name or Poster’s Username. “Title.” Media Type. Name of Website. Name of Website’s Publisher, date of posting. Medium. Date retrieved.

Works Cited


This handout includes information on how to create in-text citations and works cited entries using MLA format. Only the most common types of sources are represented here; for other examples, visit the Purdue OWL MLA resource (owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/) or consult the MLA Handbook (available in the Writing and Communication Center or the Campus Library).