



## MLA STYLE, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition

MLA style is the set of conventions for formatting papers and citations in most disciplines in the humanities. This guide outlines some of the basics, but for more detailed information, consult the *MLA Handbook (Reference 808.02 M699)* and <http://style.mla.org> or ask a librarian.

### How to format your paper

- Margins: 1"
- Justify: left
- Spacing: double-spaced
- Indent: indent paragraphs ½"; indent set-off quotations ½"; use hanging indent ½" for citations See [style.mla.org](http://style.mla.org) for more details and sample papers.

### Every citation has two parts:

1. the brief in-text citation right after the fact or quote, which refers to the Works Cited
2. the Works Cited, on a separate page at the end of your document, which provides full information about all the sources you cited.

### How to format your Works Cited list

- Title it "Works Cited" in the center
- Arrange entries in alphabetical order
- Use a hanging indent: every line after the first line should be indented ½".

### How to format "in-text" citations

- In general, put the author's name and the page number in parentheses. If there is no author or the author is an organization, use an abbreviated version of the title instead. If there is no page number, you can usually just list the author.
- If you are citing the work as a whole, rather than a quote or fact from a specific page, you do not need to include a page number.
- Another option is to mention the author's name in a signal phrase in your text, in which case you can just put the page number, if there is one, at the end of the sentence.

Work with author(s) and page number(s):	Women are more attuned to these metessages (Tannen 198). Johnson and Wright argue that this is a matter of privilege (44-46). ...become "a colonizer in its turn" (Ashcroft et al. 218). [3+ authors]
Work without page numbers (e.g., website):	Urban displacement has increased exponentially in the past decade (Singh and Zuk).
Work with neither an author nor page numbers:	As a <i>New York Times</i> editorial points out, the future of police reform is dependent on who is elected president later this year ("A Policing Culture"). [use an abbreviated title]
Author mentioned in signal phrase:	Achebe calls out Westerners' "desire—one might indeed say the need...to set Africa up as a foil in Europe" (783).

## Sample Partial Essay in MLA Style with Works Cited

(Additional essays can be found at [style.mla.org](http://style.mla.org))

Food policy professor Marion Nestle also points to the astronomical sums that junk food producers spend on advertising and supermarket marketing as a reason why messages about healthy eating go ignored or misunderstood (21-23). One of the results is that, even though the USDA recommends a daily sodium intake of less than 2,300 milligrams (or less than 1,500 milligrams for older and at-risk populations), the average daily sodium intake is an estimated 3,400 milligrams (US Department of Agriculture 11). Consumers' confusion is understandable though: one study of product packaging in Canadian supermarkets found many different unregulated references to "high" fiber content, implying to consumers that even junk foods are healthy (Sumanac, Sacco, and Tarasuk).

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## Works Cited

- Nestle, Marion. *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*, U of California P, 2013. *Ebrary*, [site.ebrary.com/lib/stmarysca/detail.action?docID=10704704](http://site.ebrary.com/lib/stmarysca/detail.action?docID=10704704).
- Sumanac, Jocelyn E., Dunja Sacco, and Valerie Tarasuk. "Front-of-Package References to Fiber on Foods in Canadian Supermarkets Highlight the Need for Increased Nutrition Knowledge among Consumers." *Journal of Nutrition Education & Behavior*, vol. 45, no. 6, 2013, pp. 518524. *ScienceDirect*, doi:10.1016/j.jneb.2013.02.003.
- United States, Department of Agriculture and Department of Health and Human Services. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010*. 7th ed., Government Printing Office, Dec. 2010, [health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2010/dietaryguidelines2010.pdf](http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2010/dietaryguidelines2010.pdf).

e-book

Journal  
article  
from a  
databaseGovt  
document  
from the  
web

# How to Format a Citation

A Journal Article from a Database:

**3** Title of container  
CONTAINER 2

**9** Location  
CONTAINER 2

**2** Title of source

**1** Author

**3** Title of container  
CONTAINER 1

**6** Number  
CONTAINER 1

**8** Publication date  
CONTAINER 1

**9** Location  
CONTAINER 1

**1** Author.  
Lorensen, Jutta.

**2** Title of source.  
"Between Image and Word, Color, and Time:  
Jacob Lawrence's *The Migration Series*."

## CONTAINER 1

**3** Title of container,  
*African American Review*,

**4** Other contributors,

**5** Version,

**6** Number,  
vol. 40, no. 3,

**7** Publisher,

**8** Publication date,  
2006,

**9** Location.  
pp. 571-86.

## CONTAINER 2

**3** Title of container,  
*EBSCOHost*,

**4** Other contributors,

**5** Version,

**6** Number,

**7** Publisher,

**8** Publication date,

**9** Location.  
search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&  
db=f5h&AN=24093790&site=ehost-live.

## Works Cited

Lorensen, Jutta. "Between Image and Word, Color, and Time: Jacob Lawrence's *The Migration Series*." *African American Review* vol. 40, no. 3. 2006, pp. 571-86. *EBSCOHost* search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=24093790&site=ehost-live.

## How to Format a Citation

### A Chapter in an Anthology:

1	Author. Copeland, Edward.
2	Title of source. "Money."
CONTAINER 1	
3	Title of container, <i>The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen,</i>
4	Other contributors, edited by Copeland and Juliet McMaster,
5	Version,
6	Number,
7	Publisher, Cambridge UP,
8	Publication date, 1997,
9	Location. pp. 131-48.

Copeland, Edward. "Money." *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, edited by Copeland and Juliet McMaster, Cambridge UP, 1997, pp. 131-48.

### A Video on the Web:

1	Author.
2	Title of source. "Curiosity Rover Report (August 2015): Three Years on Mars!"
CONTAINER 1	
3	Title of container, <i>NASA's Journey to Mars: Videos,</i>
4	Other contributors, edited by Sarah Loff,
5	Version,
6	Number,
7	Publisher, National Aeronautics and Space Administration,
8	Publication date, 30 July 2015,
9	Location. <a href="http://www.nasa.gov/topics/journeymars/videos/index.html">www.nasa.gov/topics/journeymars/videos/index.html</a>

"Curiosity Rover Report (August 2015): Three Years on Mars!" *NASA's Journey to Mars: Videos*, edited by Sarah Loff, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 30 July 2015, [www.nasa.gov/topics/journeymars/videos/index.html](http://www.nasa.gov/topics/journeymars/videos/index.html).

\*MLA now refers to the thing a source is published in as a "container." So if an article is from a magazine, the magazine is the container. If you accessed that magazine article through a database, the database is *another* container, "container 2."

These images from:

Modern Language Association. "Works Cited: A Quick Guide." *The MLA Style Center*, 2016, <https://style.mla.org/works-cited-a-quick-guide/>.

## More examples

(In your Works Cited, these should be double-spaced and in alphabetical order.)

Article from the web <sup>‡</sup>	Manne, Kate. "Why I Use Trigger Warnings." <i>The New York Times</i> , 19 Sept. 2015, <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/20/opinion/sunday/why-i-use-trigger-warnings.html">www.nytimes.com/2015/09/20/opinion/sunday/why-i-use-trigger-warnings.html</a> .
Book	Moore, Jamillah. <i>Race and College Admissions: A Case for Affirmative Action</i> . McFarland, 2005.
Custom course text or other anthology	Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. Excerpt from <i>The Social Contract</i> . Translated by Maurice Cranston, 1968. <i>Western Tradition II</i> , Saint Mary's College of California, 2014, pp. 130-44.
Document from the web	United States, National Institutes of Health. <i>Cancer and the Environment: What You Need to Know, What You Can Do</i> . National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, 2003, <a href="http://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/cancer_and_the_environment_508.pdf">www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/cancer_and_the_environment_508.pdf</a> .
E-book (3+ authors) from a database	Safir, Marilyn P., et al., editors. <i>Future Directions in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment</i> . 3rd ed., Springer, 2015. <i>SpringerLink</i> , <a href="http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-1-4899-7522-5">link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-1-4899-7522-5</a> .
Encyclopedia article from a database	Debinski, Diane M., and Molly S. Cross. "Conservation and Global Climate Change." <i>The Princeton Guide to Ecology</i> , edited by Simon A. Levin et al., 3rd ed., Princeton UP, 2012. <i>Credo Reference</i> , <a href="http://stmmarys-ca.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://literati.credo-reference.com/content/entry/prge/conservation_and_global_climate_change/0">stmmarys-ca.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://literati.credo-reference.com/content/entry/prge/conservation_and_global_climate_change/0</a> .
Journal article from a database*	Pope, H. Lavar. "Hyphy Rap Music, Cooptation, and Black Fanatics in Oakland, CA." <i>Souls</i> , vol. 16, no. 3-4, 2014, pp. 242-268. <i>Taylor &amp; Francis Online</i> , doi: 10.1080/10999949.2014.970471.
Webpage or blog	Hollmichel, Stefanie. "The Reading Brain: Differences between Digital and Print." <i>So Many Books</i> , 25 Apr. 2013, <a href="http://somanycbooksblog.com/2013/04/25/the-reading-brain-differences-between-digital-and-print">somanycbooksblog.com/2013/04/25/the-reading-brain-differences-between-digital-and-print</a> .
YouTube (or other online) video	"Rudy Giuliani Doubles Down on Clinton Health Conspiracy." <i>Fox News Sunday</i> , 21 Aug. 2016. <i>YouTube</i> , uploaded by TP Clips, 21 Aug. 2016, <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3pKTn_rNBI">www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3pKTn_rNBI</a> .
Tweet	@persiankiwi. "We have report of large street battles in east & west of Tehran now - #Iraelection." <i>Twitter</i> , 23 June 2009, 11:15 a.m., <a href="https://twitter.com/persiankiwi/status/2298106072">twitter.com/persiankiwi/status/2298106072</a> .

Put article or page titles in "quotation marks," and book, journal, series, and website titles in *italics*. <sup>‡</sup>Note that in MLA style, you do not include the *http://* in the URL.

\*This is the format when an article has a digital object identifier, or doi. If it has one, the database and article will list it. If there is no doi, provide the URL like you would for any web source.

*Got questions about a format not covered here? See the MLA Handbook, 8th ed., at Ref 808.02 M699, visit [style.mla.org](http://style.mla.org), or ask a librarian.*