

MLA Formatting Basics

Video and Sample Paper: Go to www.blueletters.com → Writing Shop → Formatting a Paper in MLA

- 12-point font; double-spaced; 1-inch margins
- Header at the top left of first page; last name and page number at top right of every page
- Do not put extra space between paragraphs
- Indent each paragraph

MLA Citation

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MLA Citation has Two Main Parts

1. In-Text Citation
 - These are the citations that go **within** the paragraph/sentence
 - Whether you directly quote or paraphrase something, you must provide a citation
2. Works Cited page
 - This is a page, at the end of your paper, that has an alphabetical list of all the sources you used in the paper

The 4 Basic Rules of In-Text Citation

1. You **must** put the author(s) name if you know it
 - you can put the author's first and last name in the signal phrase
- OR
- you can put the author's last name in parentheses at end of the sentence

Robert Smith states, "....."

One author states, "....." (Smith).

2. You **must** put the page number in parentheses if you know it

Robert Smith states, "....." (27).

One author states, "....." (Smith 27).

3. If you **don't know the author's name**, you must put the title of the article or title of the website section in the signal phrase or parentheses

According to "Understand Your Risk for Diabetes", "....."

In "About Heart Attacks" it states, "....." (27).

4. In the signal phrase, you can also choose to put **optional information** like the name of the book, name of the article, name of the website, or information about the author

In the article "Obama's Fight for Healthcare" Janet Evans argues that, "....." (41).

According to Henry Sanchez, a doctor at Arlington Memorial Hospital, "....." (7).

MLA In-Text Citation: Two Special Cases

5. What if the source has more than one author?

[This is very similar to rule #1]

Mention the full names of both authors in the signal phrase or both their last names in parentheses; use the word "and" between their names.

According to Janet Rose and James Smith "the economy is on the rise in 2012" (21).

According to two authors "the economy is on the rise in 2012" (Rose and Smith 21).

6. How do I quote something that is already being quoted?

- You must mention the name of the person that said the quote, in your signal phrase
- You must also put the last name of the person who wrote the article/book in parentheses, with "qtd. in" before their name

According to Chris Van Hollen, "there is a split on the Republican side about what their priorities are" (qtd. in Lake).

Creating the Works Cited Page

List all the sources you used in your paper in alphabetical order; use www.citationmachine.net to create each entry; format your entries using a "hanging indent"; double-space this page; blueletters.com → Writing Shop for more info.