

MLA STYLE

If your instructor requires that a paper follow MLA format, s/he is referring to a specific style set by the Modern Language Association. The *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th edition* (on reserve in the LRC) or Purdue's Online Writing Lab (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>) will explain the MLA standards for almost any situation.

GENERAL FORMATTING GUIDELINES

- **Margins** – 1 inch margin all around.
- **Font** – 12 point font. Preferred styles are Arial, Times New Roman, Gill Sans, and Courier.
- **Spacing** – Double space everything; leave a single space after periods.
- **Alignment** – Flush left, with an uneven right margin.
- **Page numbers** – Insert a header with your last name and the page number in the upper right hand corner, ½ inch from the top.

(To create a header in Word 2007, go to the Insert tab and select Header. Key in Control + R to set the entry flush right, and type in your last name and one space. Then click on Page Number and select Current Position. Select Plain Number. Some professors may prefer that you omit the header on the first page of your paper. To start numbering on page 2, click on Different First Page, delete your name and the page number, and then click on Close Header and Footer. Check with your professor on which format to use.)

- **Paragraph Style** – Indented, not block style.
- **Tables** – Include tables in the body of the text, as close as possible to the section to which they relate.
- **Works Cited** – A separate page at end of document.

FIRST PAGE FORMATTING

- **Heading** – Use a heading rather than a title page unless directed otherwise by your instructor. The heading includes your name, the instructor's name, the course title and identification, and the date (written day month year). The heading is double spaced and placed flush left at the top of the first page.
- **Title** – Every paper should have a title. Center the title 1 double space below the heading. The font remains the same – don't bold, underline, change size, or italicize.

QUOTATIONS AND PARAPHRASES

For short quotations, use quotation marks to show another person's exact words. For long quotations (more than 4 lines), omit quotation marks, indent the entire quote 10 spaces from the left margin, and continue double spacing throughout.

Identify any material originally produced by another author – whether a direct quotation or a paraphrase – by including the original author's last name and the page number on which you found the information. This may be put in the body of the text, a parenthetical citation, or a combination of the two. If no author is given, use a shortened version of the title in the parenthetical citation. With Internet sources, page numbers are usually omitted. In short quotations, the parenthetical citation comes before the end punctuation; in long quotations (over 4 lines) that require special formatting, the parenthetical citation is placed after the end punctuation.

“Chairman of the Board and President Bill Marriott personally reads 10 percent of the 8,000 letters and 2 percent of the 750,000 guest comment cards provided by customers each year” (Kotler and Armstrong 5). [quote with authors and page number]

According to Kotler and Armstrong, “Chairman of the Board and President Bill Marriott personally reads 10 percent of the 8,000 letters and 2 percent of the 750,000 guest comment cards provided by customers each year” (5). [quote with page number only—authors named in the text of the paper]

Bill Marriott, Chairman of the Board and President of the Marriott Hotel Empire, pays close attention to customer feedback in his business, personally going through 15,000 of the 750,000 guest comment cards and 800 of the 8,000 letters sent in annually (Kotler and Armstrong 5). [paraphrase with authors and page number]

WORKS CITED PAGE

- Center the words Works Cited at the top of the page. *The font remains the same – don’t bold, underline, change size, or italicize.*
- Double space the entire page.
- Alphabetize entries by the first word of the entry, usually the author’s last name. If no author is given for a source, list the title first.
- Do not number entries.
- Indent the second and subsequent lines of each entry 5 spaces.
- Place the author’s last name first, followed by first name. (With multiple authors, the second and subsequent authors’ names are not inverted: Smith, Robert, Ana Ramirez and Bonnie Patterson.)
- Capitalize all important words in titles. Italicize book and journal titles. Put quotation marks around article or essay titles.
- Include only works you have actually cited in your paper.
- For each entry, identify the medium of the publication, i.e., print, DVD, Web

The basic format for several common source types is illustrated below. Check the MLA Handbook for more specific information.

ONLINE SOURCES

Journals from online research services such as First Search

First Author’s Last Name, First Name. Subsequent Authors’ First and Last Names. “Title of Article.” *Title of Journal*. Volume.Issue (Year): pages. *Database*. Type of media. Date of Access.

Michaels, John and Benjamin Carle. “Chicago Style.” *American Architecture* 40.2 (2009): 17-20. *EbscoHost*. Web. 28 July 2009.

Websites

Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). *Name of Site*. Version number. Publisher or Institution Affiliated with the Site, date of posting. Type of Media. Date of access.

(Use the abbreviations n.p. and n.d. when no publisher or date of publication is indicated.)

Placement Tests. Lincoln College-Normal, n.d. Web. 17 June 2009.

PRINT SOURCES

Journals

First Author’s Last Name, First Name and Subsequent Author’s First Name and Last Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Journal*. Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Type of media.

MacFarlane, Alexander and Danielle LeBrun. “Tornado Alley.” *Meteorology Today*. 17.3 (2004): 28-36. Print.

Books

Author’s Last Name, First Name. *Title*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of publication. Type of media.

Bettis, Catharine. *Stars at Dark Midnight*. New York: Penguin, 1989. Print.