

MLA CITATION GUIDE



THE WRITING
— CENTER —

This handout discusses the most common forms of citations and questions surrounding citations. For detailed information regarding a specific circumstance, visit the [Perdue OWL](#) or make an appointment with the [VCUQ Writing Center](#)

In-Text Citations

In-Text Citations – Print Medium

Source information originating from a book or other print medium with page numbers will contain the last name of the author and the page number the information is found on:

Writing well includes learning to "trust your own mind and body" (Goldberg 12).

However, it is also possible to incorporate the author's name into your writing. In this case, the in-text citation would include the page number only.

According to writing expert Natalie Goldberg, "one of the main aims in writing practice is to learn to trust your own mind and body" (12).

It is important to remember that you are citing ideas, not just words, so even if you rephrase the information and remove the quote, it still requires a citation.

Trusting yourself is a crucial factor of writing well (Goldberg 12).

In-Text Citations – Online Sources

Most modern online sources (with the exception of peer-reviewed journals available online) do not include page or line numbers, so this information is not included in the citation.

Writing in the margins of a book creates a "collaboration between author and subject, text and reader" (Rubsam).

In-text Citation – More Than One Author

When citing a work by two authors, place an "and" between the author's last names

(Elbow and Belanoff 133)

When citing a work by three or more authors, write the first author's last name followed by an "et al."

(Booth et al. 147)



Citation Template

The MLA 9th edition citations guidelines consist of the following nine core elements listed in the template below.

Author.	
Title of Source.	
Title of Container,	
Other Contributors,	
Version,	
Number,	
Publisher,	
Publication Date,	
Location.	

To create your citation, merely fill in the spaces with the available information.

The following pages will provide a breakdown of each element.

For further information, please visit:

<https://style.mla.org/>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>



Core Elements

Author.

Any person, company, or group responsible for the creation of content can be considered the author. This includes pseudonyms, artists, actors, and corporations.

- When an author's first and last names are available, begin your entry with the author's last name followed by a comma and the rest of the name. End this element with a period.

Lee, Harper. *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Grand Central Publishing, 1960.

- If the source has **two authors**, include them in the order they are presented in the work. Reverse the name order of the first name (as described above), follow with a comma and an "and", then list the second name in normal order.

Cohn, Rachel, and David Levithan. *Dash & Lili's Book of Dares*. Knopf Books, 2010.

- If the source has **three or more authors**, reverse the first name as described above and follow with a comma and "et. al." ("and others"). Please note that et. al. is not italicized.

Rowling, J.K., et al. *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. Little Brown UK, 2016.

- **Pseudonyms**, including screen names, are used just like regular authors.

@TIME. "Epic video shows thousands of people in Taipei racing after Pokemon." *Twitter*, 22 August 2016, 12:36 p.m., <https://twitter.com/TIME/status/767655914472140801>.

- A work **without an author's name** is not listed as "Anonymous." Instead, skip the author element and begin with the work's title.

Beowulf. Translated by Alan Sullivan and Timothy Murphy, edited by Sarah Anderson, Pearson, 2004.

- When working with a **movie or television show**, the person cited depends on the discussion in your paper. (1) If the focus is on a specific performer, director, writer, etc., then that person is cited along with their role in the production. (2) If the focus is on the piece as a whole, then begin with the title, and other information can be provided as necessary.

(1) Harrington, Kit, performer. *Game of Thrones*. Home Box Office (HBO), 2011-2016.

(2) *Game of Thrones*. Created by David Beinoff, and D. B. Weiss, Home Box Office (HBO), 2011-2016



Title of Source.

Titles are given in their entirety, including subtitles; are capitalized, even if they are not in the actual source; are followed by a period.

- If the source is **part of a larger work**, the title appears in "quotation marks."

Debczak, Michele. "15 Adorable Images of Cats Sticking Out Their Tongues." *MSN News*, 22 Aug. 2016, <http://a.msn.com/01/en-ca/BBvTUIlf?ocid=st>.

- If the source is **independent**, the title is *italicized*.

Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. Scholastic, 2003.

Which to Use?

"Quotations"	<i>Italics</i>
Articles	Books
Short Stories	Newspapers (as a whole)
Book Chapters	Magazines (as a whole)
Website Posts	Websites (as a whole)
TV Episodes	Movies
Artwork in a Series	Artwork
Song Titles	Album Titles

Special Cases

- When working with an **untitled source**, such as an item, provide a description.

Mackintosh, Charles Rennie. *Chair of stained Oak*. 1897-1900, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

- When citing a **short untitled message**, such as a tweet, include the entire message in quotation marks.

@itsmaddiepetit. "Someone should tell Megan Trainor about the subjunctive mood. 'If I was you' is horribly incorrect grammar. Ugh. #grammarmatters." *Twitter*, 20 Aug 2016 5:55 p.m., <https://twitter.com/itsmaddiepetit/status/767148140319375365>.

- When citing an **email**, use the subject as the title using quotation marks.

Yaqoob, Neihan. "Fwd: Exam Attached." Received by Nicole Mace, 20 Aug 2016.



Title of Container,

If the source is part of a larger work or website, the title of that larger source is cited in *italics* as the container and followed by a comma.

- **Articles** are often parts of **periodicals** (magazine, newspaper, journal) that hold the articles.

Jacobs, Andrew. "After Olympics, Rio is Altered if Not Reborn." *The New York Times*, 21 Aug 2016, <http://nyti.ms/2buxrr3>.

- When citing a particular **page on a site**, the home website is considered a container.

"Goodreads Choice Awards 2015: Best Fiction." *Goodreads*, 2016.

- Any website that hosts a particular **video** is considered a container.

Adele. "Rolling in the Deep." *YouTube*, Uploaded by AdeleVEVO, 30 Nov 2010, <https://youtu.be/rYEDA3JcQqw>.

- When citing a particular **episode of a television series**, the series is the container.

"The Door." *Game of Thrones*, Created by David Benioff and D.B. Weiss, and directed by Jack Bender, season 6, episode 5, Home Box Office (HBO), 22 May 2016.

Note: a source can be housed within more than one container (i.e. an article in a book found in JSTOR). When this happens, you list all information about the smaller container followed by the bigger container.

Please visit The Writing Center with any questions regarding this.



Other Contributors,

Any other person you believe should be credited for this source is listed here. The names will be preceded with a title and followed by a comma.

Twain, Mark. *The Complete Short Stories of Mark Twain*. Edited by Charles Neider, Bantam Classics, 1984.

Common Descriptions for this role:

adapted by
directed by
edited by
illustrated by
introduction by
narrated by
performance by
translated by

Version,

If the source indicates a specific version of a work released in more than one form, you must identify the version in your citation.

Goldberg, Natalie. *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within*. Forwarded by Julia Cameron, 30th Anniversary Edition, Shambala, 2016.

Number,

If the source you are documenting is part of a sequence of work, this must be documented in the citation.

Conan, Arthur Doyle Sir. *Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels and Stories*. Introduced by Loren D. Estleman, Vol. 2, Bantam Classics, 1986.



Publisher,

The publisher is the company or organization responsible for the production and/or marketing of the source.

- When the source is a **book**, the publisher can be found on the title or copyright page.

Weir, Andy. *The Martian*. Broadway Books, 2011.

- When working with a **film or television series**, cite the organization that had overall responsibility for it. There are often multiple companies working on different parts of the production – only cite the most important.

The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring. Produced by Peter Jackson et al., directed by Jackson, New Line Cinema, 2001.

- When your source is a **website**, look at the bottom of the homepage; there is often a copyright notice at the bottom which will tell you the publisher.

"Archive Stories" *The Teenie Harris Archive*, Carnegie Museum of Art,
<http://teenie.cmoa.org/ArchiveStories.aspx>.

A publisher's name may be omitted if the publisher is the same as the container (such as newspapers), a work published by its author or editor, or a website whose title is the same as the publisher.

Note: It is no longer necessary to state the publisher's location.

Publication Date,

Many publications (especially online) hold more than one publication date. You should cite the one which is most relevant to your use of the source. This will usually be the most recent date.

You should write the date as you find it on the source. If it includes the day, month, and year, then you should as well. Abbreviate the names of months, or not, by using the style found in your source.



When dealing with constantly changing mediums, such as online posts, you should include the time posted when available. Include them by consistently using either the 12-hr or 24-hr style. Use the time zone if it is provided.

Location.

The final piece of information in your citation is the location. This will allow the reader to easily find your source.

- If your source is a **print source**, a page number (preceded by *p.*) or a range of page numbers (preceded by *pp.*) specifies the location in the text of a container, such as an anthology or periodical

Deresiewicz, William. "The Death of the Artist – and the Birth of the Creative Entrepreneur." *The Atlantic*, Jan.-Feb. 2015, pp. 92-97.

- If the source uses explicit paragraph numbers, sections numbers, or chapters, provide the relevant number(s), preceded by the appropriate label (par., pars., sec., secs.). Do not count unnumbered paragraphs or sections.
- If the source is located **online**, provide the URL, permalink, or DOI.

Ansari, Azadeh. "Ryan Lochte: 'I Over-Exaggerated' Olympics Robbery Story." *CNN*, 22 Aug 2016, <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/08/20/sport/us-olympics-swimmers-reported-robbery-future>.