

# MLA Format & Citations

Most writing within humanities uses the Modern Language Association (MLA) Style. Following MLA Style allows readers to more easily focus on the writer’s ideas and increases the writer’s credibility.

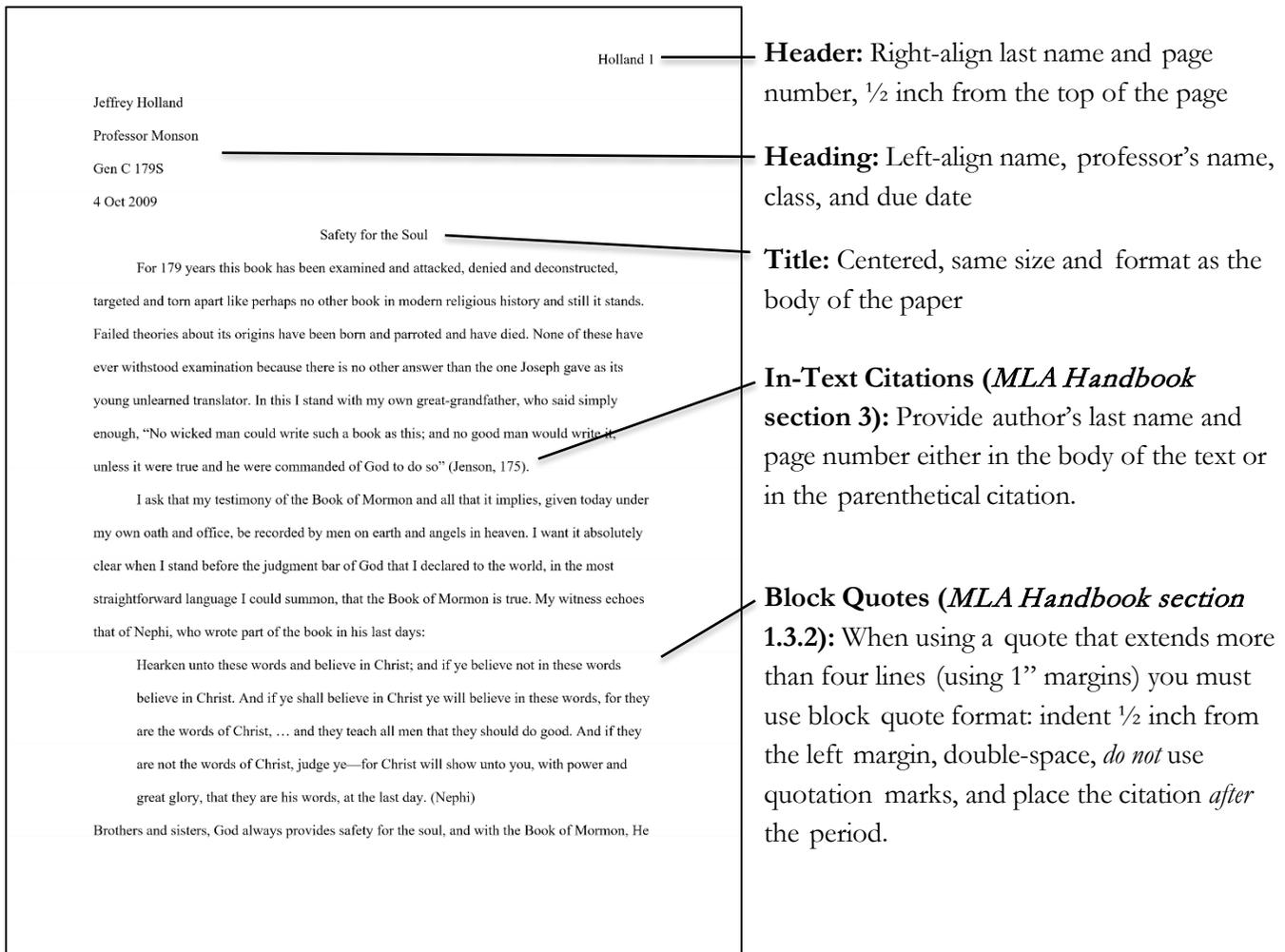
The information in this handout is based on the *MLA Handbook, Eighth Edition* and the MLA Style Center online ([style.mla.org](http://style.mla.org)). For each topic, the corresponding section number or pages in the handbook are listed in parentheses.

## General Format (*MLA Handbook* sections 1.3 and 3)

**Font:** Clear and easily readable with a standard size (e.g., Times New Roman, 12 pt. font)

**Line Spacing:** Double-spaced with no extra lines between heading, title, or body

**Margins:** 1-inch margins



**Header:** Right-align last name and page number, ½ inch from the top of the page

**Heading:** Left-align name, professor’s name, class, and due date

**Title:** Centered, same size and format as the body of the paper

**In-Text Citations (*MLA Handbook* section 3):** Provide author’s last name and page number either in the body of the text or in the parenthetical citation.

**Block Quotes (*MLA Handbook* section 1.3.2):** When using a quote that extends more than four lines (using 1” margins) you must use block quote format: indent ½ inch from the left margin, double-space, *do not* use quotation marks, and place the citation *after* the period.

**Fig. 1.** Sample paper from modified portions of *Safety for the Soul*; Holland, Jeffrey R. “Safety for the Soul.” *October 2009 General Conference*, Oct. 2009, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2009/10/safety-for-the-soul?lang=eng>.

## In-Text Citations Format (*MLA Handbook* pages 54–58, section 3)

In-text citations follow any incorporated sources and direct the reader to the source on the works cited page.

### Source with Author

Any time a different work is cited in MLA, there must be an in-text citation that includes the author's last name and referenced page number, if applicable. This information can be included in parenthesis at the end of the sentence or in the normal flow of the sentence. If placed in parenthesis, the citation comes after the closing quotation mark and any other word of the sentence. Terminal punctuation (e.g., a period) follows the citation.

**Example:** In the digital age, “reading is no longer a uniquely solitary practice—it is alternately solitary and social” (Collins 208).

If the author's name is placed in the text itself when introducing the quoted or paraphrased material, only the page number would appear in the in-text citation.

**Example:** Jim Collins argues that in the digital age “reading is no longer a uniquely solitary practice—it is alternately solitary and social” (208).

### Source with No Author

When the works cited entry begins with the title of the source (meaning no author is provided), the title is included in the in-text citation. As with using the author, the title may appear in the text itself when introducing the source material, or with the page number in parentheses. You may abbreviate the title to the first word or first couple of words when using it for your in-text citation (see *MLA Handbook* section 3.2.1).

**Example:** *Reading on the Rise: A New Chapter in American Literacy* reports that in contrast to previous studies, there has been a rise in literary reading from 2002–2008 and “a slight majority of American adults now read literature or read books” (8).

**Example:** In contrast to previous studies, there has been a rise in literary reading from 2002 to 2008 and “a slight majority of American adults now read literature or read books” (*Reading* 8).

### Other Sources

When citing classical literature, such as *The Iliad* or *Hamlet*, omit page numbers and cite by division method (e.g. act, scene, canto, book, part) and line, separating each number with a period.

**Example:** (Shakespeare 1.5.12–13) or (Dante lines 131–132)

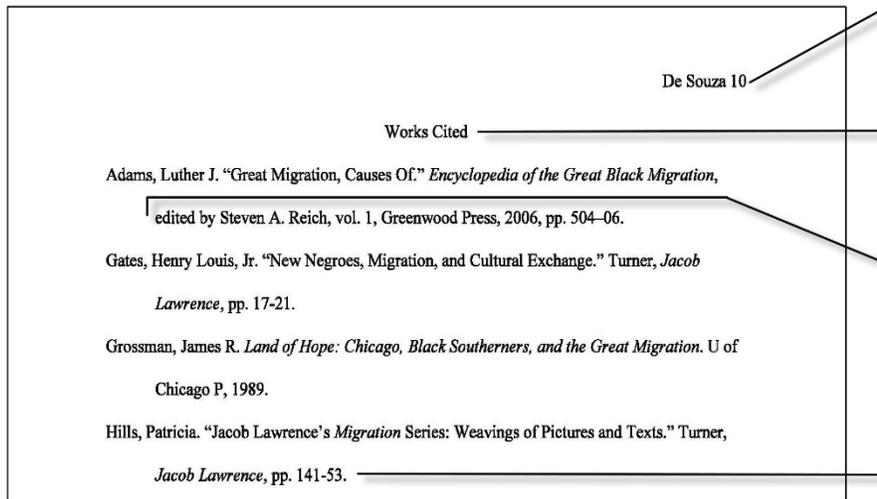
If no line numbers are present, cite a page number or other form of division numbering if available.

For more information, refer to the “Modern Verse Works” section of the *MLA Handbook, Eighth Edition* (page 121).

When citing an image or a figure, refer to *The MLA Style Center* ([style.mla.org/formatting-papers/#tablesandillustrations](http://style.mla.org/formatting-papers/#tablesandillustrations)).

## Works Cited Page Format (MLA Handbook section 2.7)

The works cited page is formatted like the rest of the paper: 1 inch margins, double-spaced, a right-aligned header that includes last name and page number. List sources alphabetically with no extra lines between sources.



**Header:** Continue the pagination from the rest of the paper.

**Title:** Center and use same size and format as the body of the paper.

**Hanging Indent:** Set a 1/2" indent for citations over one line. (To set the indent in MS Word, highlight citations, right-click and select *Paragraph*. Under *Indentation*, select *Special Indent*. Click *Hanging*, and set it to 1/2".)

**Page Numbers:** List page numbers efficiently (e.g., 141–48 instead of 141–148).

**Fig. 2.** Sample MLA formatted works cited page from MLA Style Center; "Second-year course in African American studies." *The MLA Style Center*, Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

## Citations for Works Cited Page (MLA Handbook pages 20–53)

Each citation on a works cited page is constructed from a selection of core elements given in a specific order. This handout gives brief examples and explanations of citations from various sources and with various attributes. For more information on the following elements, visit the listed pages in the *MLA Handbook*: Authors (21-24), title of source (25-29), title of container (30-36), other contributors (37-38), version or issue number (38-40), publisher (40-42), publication date (42-49), location (46-50).

If an element (such as an author, the director of an online video, page number or publication date) is missing, do not include those elements in the citation.

### Journal Article from an Online Database

Last name, First name. "Title of Source." *Journal Title*, volume number, issue number, publication year, page number(s). *Database Title*, doi or URL.

Tuite, Kevin. "Agentless Transitive Verbs in Georgian." *Anthropological Linguistics*, vol. 51, no. 3/4, 2009, pp. 269–295. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/40929716](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40929716).

### Journal Article in Print

Same as a journal article from an online database, but do not include a database title, doi, or URL.

Tuite, Kevin. "Agentless Transitive Verbs in Georgian." *Anthropological Linguistics*, vol. 51, no. 3/4, 2009, pp. 269–295.

## Book

Last name, First name. *Title of Source*. Other Contributors (translators, illustrators, etc.), Publisher, publication year.

Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. A.A. Levine Books, 1999.

## Article from a Website

Last name, First name. "Title of Source." *Title of Website*, publication date, URL.

Jabr, Ferris. "The Reading Brain in the Digital Age: The Science of Paper versus Screens." *Scientific American*, 11 Apr. 2013, [www.scientificamerican.com/article/reading-paper-screens/](http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/reading-paper-screens/).

## Work from an Anthology

Author of Selection. "Title of Selection." *Title of Anthology*, edited by Editor's Name(s), version, Publisher, publication year, page(s).

Aesop. "The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing." *The Norton Anthology of World Literature*, edited by Simon Peter and translated by Laura Gibbs, W. W. Norton & Company, 2012, p. 631.

## Online Videos

Last name, First Name, director. *Title of Video*. *Upload site*, uploaded by account name, date, URL.

*Ze Frank: Are You Human*. *YouTube*, uploaded by TED, 18 July, 2014, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQw4w9WgXcQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQw4w9WgXcQ).

## A Work with Multiple Authors

*Two authors:*

Last name 1, First name 1, and, First name 2, Last name 2. [Followed by information normally included].

*Three or more authors:*

Last name 1, First name 1, et al. [Followed by information normally included].

## Unknown Author

For a work with a corporate author (a group that does not identify an individual author), put the name of the group as the author. If the corporate author is the same as the publisher, skip the author slot and list the title first.

American Education Association. *Dynamics of Elementary Education*. Random House, 2001.

## A Work with Other Contributors

In some sources, people other than the author may be credited in the source as contributors. When contributors are important to your research or to the identification of the work, include them in your entry and introduce each with a description of their role (for example: edited by, directed by, translated by, etc.).

Marquez, Gabriel Garcia. *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Translated by Gregory Rabassa, HarperCollins Publishers, 2003.