While working on your research projects you will seek out sources of information. When discussing the data from the sources you consulted, you have to document them in your paper. According to the MLA format, you need to document your sources parenthetically. The following guidelines and examples are taken from the 6th edition of the Modern Language Association’s MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.

WHAT SHOULD BE DOCUMENTED?

The standards of scholarship require that any source of information (statement or concept) that is not your own should be documented. This includes facts, ideas, opinions, direct quotations, paraphrased material, as well as other information. However, common knowledge—information which any adult ought to know (e.g. the sun rises in the east) should not be documented. Conscientious documentation gives credit to another's ideas or opinions and indicates your integrity as an author. When you fail to document passages that are not your own, you are plagiarizing, i.e., stealing the ideas or writings of another.

PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION

The most practical way to indicate within the body of your paper the sources or parts of sources you have used is to enclose your citations in parentheses within the text itself. Parenthetical citation replaces endnotes or footnotes, but it does not replace the List of Works Cited or Selected Bibliography at the end of the paper. As you'll see later in this section, you'll still need this.

SAMPLE PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

Author's name given in text

Travis Bogard makes the following claim for Desire Under The Elms: "The narrative's stress on murder and incest is potentially lurid and melodramatic, yet it also moves the work toward the special concerns of all tragic drama" (212).

Yoga - the “harnessing of mental and physical capabilities” - is similar to the meditation experienced by mystics in other religious traditions (Smart 67).
More than one work by the same author is cited

"Mourning Becomes Electra gave one hundred and fifty performances on Broadway" (Sheaffer, Son and Artist 390).
[Complete title: O'Neill: Son and Artist as distinguished from O'Neill: Son and Playwright by the same author, Louis Sheaffer.]

Bible

Ezekiel saw “what seemed to be four living creatures,” each with the faces of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Ezek. 1.5-10).

LIST OF WORKS CITED

At the end of the paper, as previously mentioned, you must provide a list of WORKS CITED, an alphabetical list of all the works you have referenced in your paper.

The following rules should be followed in setting up the WORKS CITED section of your paper.

1. Arrange the entries alphabetically according to the authors' last names. If you use several works by one author, list these alphabetically by title.
2. Start the entry at the left margin; all lines after the first in each entry should be indented 5 spaces.
3. Double space between and within entries.
4. Use the same format if the instructor requires a SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY that may indicate works not actually cited in the text.

Should I use underlining or italics?

You should always use underlining. However, most word-processing programs and computer printers permit the reproduction of italic type. In material that will be graded, the type style of every letter and punctuation mark must be easily recognizable. Italic type is sometimes not distinctive enough for this purpose. In printed material submitted for grading, therefore, words that would be italicized in a publication are underlined to avoid ambiguity. If you wish to use italics rather than underlining, check your instructor's preferences.

SAMPLE ENTRIES FOR LIST OF WORKS CITED

Basic Format

Author’s Last Name, First Name. Book or Magazine Title. City of publication: Publisher, Date.

Book with one author

Book with two or three authors


Book with more than three authors


Work in more than one volume


Work with an editor


Work in a book with selections by various authors


Bible


Translation


Article in encyclopedia


Article in a journal or magazine with continuous pagination


Article in a periodical without continuous pagination (include vol and issue #)


Periodicals that do not have volume numbers

Article in newspaper


Book review


Broadcast interview

Benigni, Roberto. Interview with Charles Gibson and Diane Sawyer. Good Morning America. ABC. WLS, Chicago. 2 March 1999.

Interview conducted yourself

Larson, Robert. Personal interview. 8 April 1999.

When you include more than one work by an author in your LIST OF WORKS CITED, list these alphabetically by title; instead of repeating the author's name, use three hyphens followed by a period, e.g.:


CITING WEB PAGES

The MLA guidelines on documenting online sources are explained in detail in the sixth edition of the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. What follows here is a summary of the guidelines that cover the World Wide Web. See section 5.1 and following of the MLA Handbook for details on citing all kinds of electronic sources.

World Wide Web sources can be any of the following:

- Scholarly Project
- Professional Site
- Personal Site
- Book
- Poem
- Article in a Reference Database
- Article in a Journal
- Article in a Magazine
- Work from a Subscription Service
- Posting to a Discussion List

In parenthetical references in the text, works on the World Wide Web are cited just like printed works. For any type of source, you must include information in your text that directs readers to the correct entry in the works-cited list (see the MLA Handbook, sec. 5.2). Web documents generally do not have fixed page numbers or any kind of section numbering. If your source lacks numbering, you have to omit numbers from your parenthetical references.
If your source includes fixed page numbers or section numbering (such as numbering of paragraphs), cite the relevant numbers. Give the appropriate abbreviation before the numbers: "(Moulthrop, pars. 19-20)." (See sec. 6 in the MLA Handbook for various forms for citing electronic sources in text.) For a document on the Web, the page numbers of a printout should normally not be cited, because the pagination may vary in different printouts.

When documenting sources from the World Wide Web, the MLA suggests that your Works Cited entries contain as many items from the following list as are relevant and available:

- Name of the author, editor, compiler, or translator (if available and relevant), alphabetized by last name and followed by any appropriate abbreviations, such as ed.
- Title of a poem, short story, article, or other short work within a scholarly project, database, or periodical, in quotation marks
- Title of a book, in italics or underlined
- Name of the editor, compiler, or translator of a book (if applicable and if not cited earlier), preceded by any appropriate abbreviation, such as ed.
- Publication information for any print version
- Title of the scholarly project, database, periodical, or professional or personal site (in italics or underlined), or, for a professional or personal site with no title, a description such as home page2
- Name of the editor of a scholarly project or database (if known)
- Version number (if not part of the title) or, for a journal, the volume, issue, or other identifying number
- Date of electronic publication or posting or latest update, whichever is most recent (if known)
- Name of any institution or organization sponsoring or associated with the Web site
- Date you accessed the source
- URL (in angle brackets)

Although no single entry will contain all fourteen items of information, all Works Cited entries for Web sources contain the following basic information:

**Basic citation format**

Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of work." Article's original source and publication date: page numbers. Product name. Publisher. Date of access. <Electronic Address, or URL, of the source>.

**EXAMPLES OF WEB CITATIONS**

**Personal site**

Professional site


E-Book

An online book may be the electronic text of part or all of a printed book, or a book-length document available only on the Internet (e.g., a work of hyperfiction).


E-Book from a subscription service such as NetLibrary


Article in an electronic journal (ejournal)


Article in an electronic magazine (ezine)


Newspaper article


Review


Editorial


Letter to the editor


Government publication


Full text in a compiled subscription database (i.e. EbscoHost)


Scholarly project or information database


Short text within a larger project or database


OTHER WEB SOURCES

When documenting other Web sources—for example, an audio or film clip, a map, or a painting—provide a descriptive phrase (e.g., map) if needed.


CITING A SOURCE THAT HAS NO PAGE NUMBERS

In parenthetical references in the text, works on the World Wide Web are cited just like printed works. For any type of source, you must include information in your text that directs readers to the correct entry in the works-cited list (see the MLA Handbook, sec. 5.2). Web documents generally do not have fixed page numbers or any kind of section numbering. If your source lacks numbering, you have to omit numbers from your parenthetical references.

The examples in this STUDY GUIDE are based on the sixth edition of the Modern Language Association's MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. The MLA format is only one of many formats available to writers. If you need another format or writers' manual, please consult with a Reference Librarian if you require additional assistance.

Go to: http://www.asbury.edu/library/services/style for more citation formats.