

How-To Guide to Proper MLA Formatting

ELA 30

MLA (Modern Language Association) is a formatting style used to cite essay sources within writing. Using MLA style provides consistency, establishes credibility, and makes it easier for readers to understand your writing and your sources.

General Information:

- Essays should be typed, double spaced, size 12 font, preferably Times New Roman.
- Margins set at 1 inch all around.
- Each new paragraph indented half an inch (press the Tab button on the left!)
- Has a header with your last name and the page numbers in the upper right-hand corner.
- Use *italics* when using the title (novel, short story, movie, etc.)

Your First Page:

In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, the teacher's name, the course, and the date (double spaced.) Double space again and center the title of your essay. Your title is not bolded, underlined, italicized, or in quotation marks. Double space between the title and the first line of text.

	Smith 1
Jane Smith	
Mrs. Lodge	
ELA 30	
5 March 2018	
Hamlet's Procrastination	
William Shakespeare's masterpiece, <i>Hamlet, Prince of Denmark</i> , is a tragic drama which revolves around the themes of betrayal, vengeance, and procrastination.	

In-Text Citations:

When you use information from an outside source (it did not come from your own brain), you must use a citation to show the source information. MLA uses author-page method which means that the author's last name and page number(s) must appear after the source, and a full reference must be provided on the Works Cited page at the end.

If you use the name of the author within the text, you do not need to include it in the in-text citation, but the page numbers must always be placed in parenthesis (34).

Examples:

Robert Frost stated that "poetry is what gets lost in translation" (242).

This relates to the idea that "poetry is what gets lost in translation" (Frost 242).

Quotations:

When you directly quote from others in your essay, you will format them differently based on their length. Below are some of the basic guidelines for formatting quotes:

Short Quotations

If the quote is fewer than four lines, enclose the quote in quotation marks.

Punctuation? Periods, commas, and semicolons should go after the citation.

Question marks and exclamation points should appear within the quotation marks if they are part of the quoted passage.

Example:

Some believe that "they are devoid of the inner struggle that makes for great tragedy" (Smith 320).



Long Quotations

If your quote is more than four lines the quote is 'blocked'. You start the entire quote on a new line with the entire quote indented 1 inch from the left margin. Double spacing is still used, quotation marks are not used, and punctuation appears within the quote.

Example:

He describes the higher brain function as follows:

A brain-dead person is alleged to be dead because of his neocortex, the seat of consciousness, has been destroyed. He has thus lost the ability to think and feel.
(Greenberg 335).

Quotations Continued:

Adding Words:

If you add words to a quotation, you must use square brackets to indicate which words are yours.

Example:

Some believe that “[Romeo and Juliet] are devoid of the inner struggle that makes for a great tragedy” (Smith 320).

Omitting Words:

If you omit words to a quotation, you must use an ellipsis (...) to indicate where words were taken out.

Example:

Some believe that “they are devoid of the ... struggle that makes for a great tragedy” (Smith 320).

The Dangers of Not Citing Information

Plagiarism occurs when you use information, quotes, or ideas without properly acknowledging where it came from. **Plagiarism is cheating!** Any evidence of plagiarism leads to a mark of zero and may involve further disciplinary action.

Works Cited Page Information

A works cited page exists to allow your reader to get more information about things you have addressed in your paper. Only sources which you have cited in your essay with a citation in brackets can appear on this page.

Your works cited needs to appear on a separate page at the end of your essay.

Center the words Work Cited at the top of the page.

- Entries are alphabetized by the author's last name.
- An entry needs to contain the following basic information in this order:
 - Author's name (last name first), followed by a period
 - Title of the book (italicized), followed by a period
 - Location the book was published, followed by a colon
 - Name of the publishing company (in short form), followed by a comma
 - The year in which the book was published, followed by a period
 - Medium of publication, followed by a period.

A book by a Single Author:

Lewis, C.S. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. New York: Collier, 1970. Print.

A book by Two or More Authors:

Schanker, Harry, and Katherine Anne Ommanney. *The Stage and the School*. 6th ed.
Columbus: McGraw-Hill, 1989. Print.

- If your citation takes more than one line, the second line should be indented one inch (as shown in above example). All of your citations should be double spaced.

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Works Cited
Lewis, C.S. <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> . New York: Collier, 1970. Print.
Schanker, Harry, and Katherine Anne Ommanney. <i>The Stage and the School</i> . 6 th ed. Columbus: McGraw-Hill, 1989. Print.