

How to Read and Prepare a MLA Bibliographic Citation

The Modern Language Association (MLA) is one of many organizations that has developed a format for bibliographic citation. Other popular styles of citation include the APA and Chicago styles—the Library has handouts for these sources as well.

A *bibliography* is a list of works on a given subject or by a given author. Bibliographies are common tools used to cite referenced work in everything from transcribed speeches, college research papers, and professional journal articles.

Each entry of a bibliography is called a *citation*.

Properly citing sources when researching and writing a paper is an important part of the research process. According to MLA style, all the resources you cite in your research paper must appear at the end of the paper on the Works Cited list.

When using MLA format, different information is needed for different types of materials (i.e. books, journals, websites etc.). See below for examples:

Books

Gardner, Howard. *Frames of Mind*. New York: BasicBooks, 1983. Print.
Author(s). * *Title*. City of publication.** Publisher, year of publication. Publication medium.

*If there are more than 3 authors, name only the first and add *et al.* (“and others”).** If several cities are listed in the book, give only the first. It is not necessary to identify a state, province, or country after the city name.

Article in a Journal

Windschuttle, Keith. “Steinbeck’s Myth of the Oakies.” *The New Criterion* 20.10 (2002): 24-40. Print.

Author(s). “Title of the Article.” *Journal Title* Volume number.Issue number
(Publication Year): Page numbers. Publication medium.

Article in a Magazine

Drevitch, Gary. “Hard-time Heroes.” *Scholastic Update* 11 Mar. 1994: 22. Print.

Author(s). “Title of Article.” *Title of Periodical* Day Month Year: Page numbers.** Publication medium.

**If article is not printed on consecutive pages, write only the first page number and a plus sign, leaving no intervening space. DO NOT give volume and issue numbers even if they are listed.

Article in a Newspaper

Booth, William. “Napa Vintners Reap Green Grapes of Wrath; Environmental Concerns Create Headaches for Wine Industry.” *Washington Post* 16 Mar. 2003, final ed.: A.03. Print.

Author(s). “Title of the article.” *Newspaper title** complete date– day, month, and year, edition (if available): page number(s)**. Publication medium.

*Omit any introductory articles *Washington Post* NOT *The Washington Post*. **Copy the page numbers exactly. Newspaper articles are not often printed on consecutive pages, for such articles, write the first page number and a plus sign.



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Websites

An entry for a non-periodical publication on the Web will usually contain most of the following components in sequence:

1. Name of the author, compiler, director, etc. If no author alphabetize the entry by title.
2. Title of the work (*italicized* if the work is independent; in roman type and quotation marks if work is part of larger work)
3. Title of the overall Web site (*italicized*), if distinct from #2.
4. Version or edition numbers (e.g., posting date)
5. Publisher or sponsor of the Web site; if not available use *N.p.*
6. Date of publication (day, month, and year); if nothing is available use *n.d.*
7. Publication medium (Web)
8. Date of access (day, month, and year)

Each entry is followed by a period except the publisher or sponsor, which is followed by a comma.

“Simple Strategies for Creating Strong Readers.” *Ed.gov*. 10 Aug. 2006.

U.S. Department of Education, *n.d.* Web. 13 July 2009.

Name of author (if available). “Title of page.” *Title of Web site*. Date the page was updated. Publisher, Date of publication. Publication medium. Date the site was accessed.

Article in an Online Database

To cite a work from a periodical in an online database, such as a article, begin the entry by following the recommendations for citing works in print periodicals, but drop the medium of original publication (Print). A periodical article on the Web may not include page numbers. Provide page numbers if possible, if not available use *n. pag.* Conclude the entry with the following items:

1. Title of database (*italicized*)
2. Publication medium (Web)
3. Date of access (day, month, and year)

Windschuttle, Keith. “Steinbeck’s Myth of the Oakies.” *The New Criterion* 20.10 (2002): 24-40. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 13 June 2009.

Author(s). “Title of the Article.” *Journal Title* Volume number. Issue number (Publication Year): Page numbers. *Title of database*. Publication medium. Date of access.

Time Designations

Abbreviate the names of months in the list of works cited except May, June, and July.

Apr. April Dec. December Jan. January Nov. November Sept. September

Aug. August Feb. February Mar. March Oct. October

For more information, see *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (7th edition).



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