

Documenting Sources Using MLA Style

What is a citation?

A citation is a note or some other indicator telling your reader where you obtained a particular quotation, paraphrase, fact, statistic, etc. Documenting is important because... "it helps build your credibility as a writer and researcher by giving credit to those people whose works influence your own ideas" (Lunsford 609).

What should be cited?

All information you have taken from other sources.

What information do I need in order to cite my sources?

- **For a book:** Title, author(s), place of publication, publisher and date of publication
- **For an article in a magazine or anthology:** title of article, author(s) of article, title of magazine/anthology, editors of anthology, dates (for magazines only), place of publication (for anthologies only), publisher (for anthology only), page numbers of the article.
- **For an online resource:** title, author(s) of page, title of main site, dates and date of access.

How should sources be cited?

The *St. Martin's Handbook, first edition* tells us that the "...MLA style uses parenthetical citations of sources within the text and a list of these sources at the end of the text" (Lunsford 610). The material in parenthesis above is an example of a parenthetical citation. The author's last name is there to indicate which text to refer to on a work cited list. The page number refers your reader to the correct page. Usually the author's name is mentioned in a single phrase that introduces the material, and the page number of the original source is given in parentheses after the material. In general, make your parenthetical citations as short as possible, but include enough information for your readers to locate the material in your **Works Cited** list. Place the parenthetical citation as near to the material as is possible without disrupting the flow of the sentence, usually before the punctuation mark at the end of the sentence or phrase that contains the material. Place any punctuation mark **after** the closing parenthesis. If your citation refers to a quotation, place it **after** the closing quotation mark (Lunsford 600-01).

A **Works Cited** page "...is an alphabetical list of the sources actually cited in your essay" (Lunsford 605). (If you are asked to list everything you have read as background to your writing, you need to create a "works consulted" list.) The **Works Cited** page lists all the information that refers you reader to the work. On most works this includes the author, subtitle, publication information, and medium of publication. (On the back of this sheet you will find a list to help you to find the type of work you are dealing with, and how to cite it properly. The list is alphabetized by the first word of the first line of each citation.) *Figure 1* represents a typical works cited page.

The basic entry for a book includes the following elements:

- **Author.** List the author by the last name first followed by a comma and the first name.
- **Title.** Underline the title and any subtitle and capitalize all major words.
- **Publication information.** Give the city of publication (and country or postal abbreviation for the state if the city is unfamiliar), and add a colon, a space, and a shortened version of the publisher's name--dropping *Press*, *Publishers, Inc.*, and so on, using only the first surname (*Harcourt for Harcourt Brace Jovanovich*), and abbreviating *University Press* to UP--a comma, and the year of publication (Lunsford 612). You would also include "Print" to indicate a published text.

The basic entry for a web site includes the following:

- **Author.** List the author by last name first, followed by a comma and the first name.
- **Title of page.** Enclose the title and any subtitle in quotation marks and capitalize all major words.
- **Title of overall website.** Italicize the title of the main website.
- **Medium of publication.** For web sites you should list "Web."
- **Date of publication & date of access.** Day/Month/Year.

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Works Cited
Carter, Angela. "A Ribbon around a Bomb." <u>New Statesman & Society</u> 12 May 2009. n. pag. Web. 10 Sep. 2009.
Delavoy, Robert L. <u>Bosch</u> . Trans. Stuart Gilbert. Cleveland, OH: World, 1984. Print.
Gardner, Helen. <u>Art through the Ages</u> . Vol. 2. 7th ed. New York: Harcourt, 1980. 3 vols. Print.
<u>Portrait of an Artist: Frida Kahlo</u> . Dir. Eila Hershon. RM Arts/Hershon/WDR, 1983. DVD.

Figure 1

Examples of the most Common Citations

Books

One Author

Herrera, Hayden. Frida: A Biography of Frida Kahlo. New York: Harper, 1983. Print.

Two or Three Authors

McNeill, John T., and Helena M. Gamer. Medieval Handbooks of Penance. New York: Octagon, 1965. Print.

Unknown Author

The New York Times Atlas of the World. New York: New York Times Books, 1980. Print.

Editor or Editors

Woodward, C. Vann, ed. Mary Chestnut's Civil War. New Haven: Yale UP, 1981. Print.

Author and Editor

James, Henry. Portrait of a Lady. Ed. Leon Edel. Boston: Houghton, 1963. Print.

Selection in an Anthology or Chapter in a Book

Gordon, Mary. "The Parable of the Cave." The Writer on Her Work. Ed. Michael Pemberton. New York: Norton, 1980. 27-32. Print.

Edition other than the First

Kelly, Alfred H., Winfred A. Harbison and Herman Belz. The American Constitution: Its Origins and Development. 6th ed. New York: Norton, 1983. Print.

Government Document

New Hampshire. Dept. of Transportation. Right of Way Salinity Reports, Hillsborough County, 1985. Concord: New Hampshire Dept. of Transportation, 1986. Print.

Pamphlet

Treat a pamphlet as a book.

Periodicals

Article in a Journal Paginated by Volume

Norris, Margot. "Narration under a Blindfold: Reading Joyce's 'Clay.'" PMLA 102 (1987): 206-15. Print.

Article in a Journal Paginated by Issue

Loffy, John. "The Politics at Modernism's Funeral." Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory 6.3 (1987): 89-96. Print.

Article in a Monthly Magazine

Said, Edward. "Through Gringo Eyes." Harper's Apr. 2008. Web.

Article in a Weekly Magazine

Holden, Ted. "Campbell's Taste of the Japanese Market is Mm-Mm Good." Business Week 28 Mar. 2008. Web.

Article in a Newspaper

Cooper, Chester. "Fateful Day in Somalia." Washington Post 11 Feb. 2008. Web.

Unsigned Article

"The Odds of March." Time 15 Apr. 2005. Web.

Other Sources

Interview

Honeywell, Richard. Personal interview. 15 Apr. 2008.

E-mail

Diaz, Gloria. Message the author. 12 Feb. 1989. E-mail.

Web page

Jones, John. "How to Cite The Internet." The Internet Site. 9/10/2004 Web. 8/01/2003.

Film or Video.

The Night of the Hunter. Dir. Charles Laughton. Will Robert Mitchum, Shelly Winters, and Lillian Gish. United Artists, 1955. DVD.

Television or Radio Program

Hill Street Blues. Writ. Michael Kozoll and Stephen Bochco. With Daniel J. Travanti, Joe Spano, and Charles Haid. NBC. KUTV, Salt Lake City. 15 Jan. 1981. Television.

Recording

Vega, Suzanne. Solitude Standing. A & M, SP 3156, 1987. CD.

Lecture or Speech

Stone, Elisa B. "Mondo Citation." SLCC Writing Center Writing Workshops. Salt Lake Community College. Salt Lake City. 17 Nov. 2008. Lecture.



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Works Cited

Lunsford, Andrea, and Robert Connors. The St. Martin's Handbook, 1st ed. New York: St. Martin's, 1989. Print.
Lunsford, Andrea, and Robert Connors. The St. Martin's Handbook, 2nd ed. New York: St. Martin's, 1992. Print.

Consulted Works

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed. New York: Modern Language Association, 2009. Print.