

## THE ENGLISH MAJOR'S MLA 9 FORMATTING CHEAT SHEET

### *A Note from the Author/Collator/Editor/Fellow Cheater:*

Why should you care about formatting? If you're not wondering it now, you have done so at least once in the past. Is it just about getting a grade? Is it just because your professors "need a reason" to flunk you? Is it just busy work that stifles your innate creativity? Nope, nope, and nope. Formatting isn't about you and your professors. It's about you and your field. Everything you turn in that is associated with a class, or with your academic career in general, is a reflection on your priorities and your abilities. Many of you don't take this formatting seriously, and so just throw some stuff on the back page of your paper and refuse to worry about in-text citations. When your professors see these lapses in your work, we think one thing: "this student has no respect for the field."

Oh, you may claim to love the discipline very much, but unless we see that in your work your professors will never know it. And so we wonder about you and your priorities. Because these formatting guidelines are not difficult, but do require both brain power and a time commitment to do them well, we're left to consider that it surely can't be your intellectual abilities holding you back here, making it impossible for you to simply follow a string of directions. You're smart enough to imitate a model, and yet you do not succeed in doing so. The only reasonable inference we can make from this is that you simply don't want to, don't want to take the time to get this correct, because this just doesn't mean that much to you. And that's sad, to be so detached from one of the first major achievements of your life, graduating college with an English degree, that you already treat it with disdain, as if it is not worth your time. I'll leave it to you to consider what your actions communicate to your professors about their choices of a career.

Nevertheless, these are the rules that we follow in our discipline. You say you want to join us, so we put these simple tasks before you not to trip you up, but to help you realize that it is your attention to detail that matters, in constructing an argument, writing a clear sentence, and citing your sources. These conventions have been developed over decades so that academics can verify one another's work and pay due respect to those whom we think important enough to include in our own work. Formatting, in short, is the table manners, the social lubrication, of our field. In the 1999 movie *Blast from the Past*, one character sums up how those who do this professionally feel about this mannerly (and mannered) way of engaging in conversation with the field: "good manners are just a way of showing other people we have respect for them. See, I didn't know that; I thought it was just a way of acting all superior."

Effectively following the formatting guidelines will not make you feel or act "all superior." Neglecting them may, however, make you feel somewhat less intelligent. Using your manners says that you're ready to talk in a serious way about literature. Acting as if these manners are unnecessary displays a disregard for those who would read what you have to write.

## MLA 9, MLA 8, and MLA 7

Differences between MLA 9 and MLA 8 or MLA 7 are highlighted in yellow.

### *Do I have to memorize all this?*

Do you think your professors have memorized all this? Most of us can probably recall the basics here, but we're just like you when it comes to the arcana, or when the MLA offers new guidelines. We don't have to memorize the minutia, because we know we can always look it up and apply the model.

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## FORMATTING: THE BASICS

In general, the format of your paper should include the following:

- Typed manuscript on letter-sized (8.5x11 in.) paper
- Standard font size (e.g., 12 point) in an easily readable typeface (e.g., Times New Roman)
- 1-inch margins on all sides of text (top, bottom, left, right)
- Double-spacing of all text
- A double-spaced Works Cited list beginning on a new page at the end of your manuscript
- Page numbers should be placed in the upper right-hand header, preceded by your last name
- No title page is needed—include information like your name, course number, professor, and date in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. (These should be on separate lines, double-spaced.)
- The title should be centered directly above the text of your paper. Do not italicize, underline, or place your title in quotations.

### FORMATTING: FIRST PAGE TEMPLATE

The first page of your paper should follow these guidelines.

1" ↑ ↓

↑ ↓ .5" Last name page #

Your name

Instructor's name

Class Information

Date

Centered Title of Essay

Begin your first paragraph one double-spaced line below your centered title; the paragraph should begin with a .5" tabbed indent (don't just space over—use the tabs, or, better yet, format all paragraphs to begin with this .5" indent on the first line). The heading for the paper goes in the upper left corner of the first page only. Use 1" margins all around. Double-space everything, including block quotations. Do not justify the right margin. DO NOT ADD EXTRA LINES OR SPACES BEFORE OR AFTER A PARAGRAPH.

1" ← →

1" ← →

**Oh, and if you spell your professor's name wrong, we'll think you're an idiot. So don't guess, or think, "well, I'm close enough." Check on it before you write it.**

## WRITING: TITLES

### Quotations or Italics?

Use quotation marks for the titles of articles, essays, stories and poems published within larger works, chapters of books, pages in Web sites, individual episodes of television and radio broadcasts, and short musical compositions (e.g., songs). Also use quotation marks for unpublished works, such as lectures and speeches.

*Italicize* the names of books, plays, poems published as books, pamphlets, periodicals (newspapers, magazines, and journals), Web sites, online databases, films, television and radio broadcasts, compact discs, audiocassettes, record albums, dance performances, operas and other long musical compositions, works of visual art, ships, aircraft, and spacecraft.

### Capitalizing Titles

Whenever you cite the title of a published work, take the title from the title page, not from the cover or from a running head at the top of a page. Do not reproduce any unusual typographic characteristics, such as special capitalization or lowercasing of all letters.

The rules for capitalizing titles are strict. In a title or a subtitle, capitalize the first word, the last word, and all principal words, including those that follow hyphens in compound terms. Therefore, capitalize the following parts of speech:

- Nouns (e.g., *flowers*, as in ***The Flowers of Europe***)
- Pronouns (e.g., *our*, as in ***Save Our Children***; *that*, as in ***The Mouse That Roared***)
- Verbs (e.g., *watches*, as in ***America Watches Television***; *is*, as in ***What Is Literature?***)
- Adjectives (e.g., *ugly*, as in ***The Ugly Duckling***; *that*, as in ***Who Said That Phrase?***)
- Adverbs (e.g., *slightly*, as in ***Only Slightly Corrupt***; *down*, as in ***Go Down, Moses***)
- Subordinating conjunctions (e.g., *after*, *although*, *as if*, *as soon as*, *because*, *before*, *if*, *that*, *unless*, *until*, *when*, *where*, *while*, as in ***One If by Land*** and ***Anywhere That Chance Leads***)

Do not capitalize the following parts of speech when they fall in the middle of a title:

- Articles (*a*, *an*, *the*, as in ***Under the Bamboo Tree***)
- Prepositions (e.g., *against*, *as*, *between*, *in*, *of*, *to*, as in ***The Merchant of Venice*** and ***“A Dialogue between the Soul and Body”***)
- Coordinating conjunctions (*and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *so*, *yet*, as in ***Romeo and Juliet***)
- The *to* in infinitives (as in ***How to Play Chess***)

### Titles within Titles

Italicize a title normally indicated by italics when it appears within a title enclosed in quotation marks.

***“Romeo and Juliet and Renaissance Politics”*** (an article about a play)

***“Language and Childbirth in *The Awakening*”*** (an article about a novel)

Use single quotation marks for a title normally indicated by quotation marks when it appears within another title requiring quotation marks.

**“Lines after Reading ‘Sailing to Byzantium’”** (a poem about a poem)

**“The Uncanny Theology of ‘A Good Man Is Hard to Find’”** (an article about a story)

Use quotation marks around a title normally indicated by quotation marks when it appears within an italicized title.

***“The Lottery” and Other Stories*** (a book of stories)

***New Perspectives on “The Eve of St. Agnes”*** (a book about a poem)

A normally italicized title that appears inside another italicized title is not italicized or put in quotation marks.

***Approaches to Teaching Tolkien’s The Lord of the Rings and Other Works*** (a book about a series of books)

Use single quotation marks around a quotation that appears within a title requiring quotation marks.

**“Emerson’s Strategies against ‘Foolish Consistency’”** (an article with a quotation in its title)

## Subtitles

Use a colon and a space to separate a title from a subtitle, unless the title ends in a question mark or an exclamation point. Include other punctuation only if it is part of the title or subtitle.

## Poems without Titles

When the first line of a poem serves as the title of the poem, reproduce the line exactly as it appears in the text.

**Dickinson’s poem “I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—” contrasts the everyday and the momentous.**

## Exceptions

The convention of using italics and quotation marks to indicate titles does not apply to the names of scriptural writings (including all books and versions of the Bible); of laws, acts, and similar political documents; of musical compositions identified by form, number, and key; of series, societies, buildings, and monuments; and of conferences, seminars, workshops, and courses. These terms all appear without italics or quotation marks.

But italicize titles of individual published editions of scriptural writings, and treat the editions in the works-cited list like any other published book.

***The Interlinear Bible***

***The Talmud of the Land of Israel: A Preliminary Translation and Explanation***

***The Upanishads: A Selection for the Modern Reader***

## Shortened Titles

If you cite a title often in the text of your paper, you may, after stating the title in full at least once, use a shortened form, preferably a familiar or obvious one (e.g., “Nightingale” for “Ode to a Nightingale”), or an abbreviation.

## WRITING: INCORPORATING QUOTATIONS

Always introduce quotations before they appear in your paper. No quotation should stand by itself as a separate sentence. Instead, your introductory phrasing should tie the quotation into the flow of your argument, and you should follow each quotation by explaining why it is important or what point it illustrates. Here are two bad examples without any introductory material.

*Bad Examples:*

**There are many examples of self-analysis in Plato’s philosophy. “The unexamined life is not worth living” (Plato 45).**

**Plato thinks people should analyze their own lives. “The unexamined life is not worth living” (Plato 45).**

To integrate the quotation smoothly, either use a colon to link it to the previous introductory sentence, as in the acceptable version below, or insert a short introductory phrase—the signal phrase—as in the better example below:

*Acceptable Example:*

**Plato thinks people should analyze their own lives: “The unexamined life is not worth living” (Plato 45). By this statement, Plato means. . . .**

[In this example, the author uses a colon to show that a quotation will follow the first sentence. This version is still more awkward than the version below, however.]

*Better Example:*

**Plato thinks people should analyze their own lives. As he writes in one dialogue, “The unexamined life is not worth living” (Plato 45). His attitude is a common one among Greek philosophers.**

In the good examples, the writer doesn’t suddenly start off with a quotation at the beginning of the sentence, and doesn’t leave it hanging, unattached from the surrounding sentences. Instead, the writer attaches it to the previous introductory material with appropriate punctuation, or she adds a short introductory phrase to set the reader up for the quotation. She also follows the quotation with an explanation of why that quotation is important.

### Block Quotations

The block quotation is used for direct quotations that are longer than four lines. **Indent the entire quotation by one half an inch.** Block quotations are double-spaced, just like the rest of your text.

**At the conclusion of *Lord of the Flies*, Ralph and the other boys realize the horror of their actions:**

**The tears began to flow and sobs shook him. He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island; great, shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island; and infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too. (186)**

If you’re quoting multiple paragraphs, indent the first line of each paragraph **(but not the first paragraph)** another quarter of an inch.

## Punctuation with Quotations

Whether your quotation is incorporated into your text or set off from it (a block quotation), quoted material is usually preceded by either colon (if it is formally introduced) or by a comma or no punctuation if the quotation is an integral part of the sentence structure.

- **Shelley held a bold view: “Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794).**
- **“Poets,” according to Shelley, “are the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794).**
- **Shelley thought poets “the unacknowledged legislators of the World” (794).**

### *Periods and Commas*

When using quotation marks without using parenthetical documentation, place the period or comma inside the final quotation mark. Unless you are quoting material and using a parenthetical citation, commas always go inside the quotation marks, rather than just after them. Here is an example of this situation:

**Hemingway is an authorial “stud,” a guy who wrote manly books.**

If a quotation ends with both single and double quotation marks, the comma or period precedes both.

**Miller notes that, “the poem alludes to Stevens’ ‘Sunday Morning.’”**

This rule also applies to the title of short works (songs, short poems, and short stories). The punctuation goes inside the quotation mark:

**Odysseus is similar to Hemingway’s hero in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” and he is similar to the character called Francis Macomber in “The Short, Happy Life of Francis Macomber.”**

If a quotation ends with a question mark or an exclamation point, however, the original punctuation is retained, and no comma is required:

**“Who wrote the book of love?” asked The Monotones in 1957.**

When a quotation is directly followed by a parenthetical citation, any required comma or period follows the citation:

**As Parker notes, “By the mid-1970s, deconstruction was the rage” (98).**

### *Other Punctuation*

All other punctuation marks—such as semicolons, colons, question marks, and exclamation points—go outside a closing quotation mark, except when they are part of the quoted material.

If a quotation ending with a question mark or an exclamation point concludes your sentence and needs a parenthetical reference, keep the original punctuation within the quotation mark and follow with the reference and the sentence period outside the quotation mark.

**In “Kubla Khan,” Coleridge recognizes how strange his ideas are: “It was a miracle of rare device, / A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!” (35-36).**

In a parenthetical citation, no comma appears after the author’s last name (or shortened title).

**It is now more common for undergraduates to study fewer “white-written works” (Parker 326).**

## Single and Double Quotation Marks

As with the titles above, use double quotation marks around quotations incorporated into the text, single quotation marks around quotations within those quotations.

Use single quotation marks for a translation that follows the original directly, without intervening words or punctuation.

**The word *text* derives from the Latin verb *texere* ‘to weave.’**

Notice that the two words in question, because they’re being considered as words, are in italics.

## Indirect Quotations

When possible, cite information directly. If you must cite a source that was cited in another source, name the original source in your signal phrase. Include the secondary source in parentheses with the abbreviation “qtd. in” (quoted in). Include the indirect source in your works cited list.

**Jackson stated that... (qtd. in Johns 14).**

In this example, “Johns” should appear in your works cited list.



## WRITING: QUOTING POETRY OR DRAMA

### *Quoting one line or less from a poem*

Only include the line number in the parenthetical citation. Be sure to make clear the author and the poem in your sentence.

**In T.S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men," he writes, "We are the stuffed men" (2).**

If you have included the name of the poet elsewhere in your paper, do not include the poet's name in your parenthetical citation. Instead, include the first significant word of the poem's title, followed by the line number(s). This is especially important if you are quoting more than one poem by the same author in your paper.

**Eliot immediately engages the reader with his use of the second person in the opening lines: "Let us go then, you and I / When the evening is spread out against the sky" ("Prufrock" 1-2).**

However, if you have mentioned the title of the poem in the sentences immediately preceding your quotation, you can cite the line number only.

**Eliot engages the reader on multiple levels in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." This begins with his use of the second person in the opening lines: "Let us go then, you and I / When the evening is spread out against the sky" (1-2).**

### *Quoting between one and three lines from a poem*

Replace the line breaks with a virgule ( / ), with a space before and after it. For a stanza break, use two virgules ( // ).

**Rita Dove's "The Wardrobe Lesson" complicates the use of color: "turquoise is beckoning and emerald's best / a hue entertained only in furnishings. True, // we are props of a sort, let's not forget it;" (8-10).**

### *Quoting more than three lines from a poem*

Start the quotation on a new line. **Indent each line one half an inch from the left margin** of your paragraph. Preserve all punctuation, spacing, and line breaks exactly as they appear in the original text of the poem. Double-space between each line. Do not use quotation marks (unless they are used in the poem).

**Mary Oliver's poem "The Wild Geese" offers an alternative to the morality of institutional religious structures:**

**You do not have to be good.**

**You do not have to walk on your knees**

**for a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.**

**You only have to let the soft animal of your body**

**love what it loves.**

**Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.**

**Meanwhile the world goes on. (1-7)**

*Quoting a poem in which lines are not all left-justified*

Indent the poem one half an inch from the left margin, but try to match the original spacing of the poem.

In George Herbert's poem "Easter Wings," the speaker offers a prayer to the Divine for his personal salvation:

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,  
Though foolishly he lost the same,  
Decaying more and more,  
Till he became  
Most poore:  
With thee  
O let me rise  
As larks, harmoniously,  
And sing this day thy victories:  
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

*Quoting dialogue in a verse drama*

Indent the speakers one half an inch from the left margin and indent all other lines an additional quarter inch. Capitalize the entire name of the speaker, and follow the name with a period. Cite the act, scene and line numbers. Try to match the formatting of the original, as you would for a poem.

Desdemona takes part in teasing Bianca, although she does not understand that she will soon find herself unable to talk.

DESDEMONA. Alas, she has no speech!

IAGO. In faith, too much.  
I find it still when I have list to sleep. (2.1.115-117)

*Quoting dialogue in a prose drama*

Indent the speakers one half an inch from the left margin and indent all other lines an additional quarter inch. Capitalize the entire name of the speaker, and follow the name with a period. Include stage directions as they appear in the original source. Cite the page number as you would for any other quoted prose.

Early on in the play *A Raisin in the Sun*, Walter explodes when Ruth refuses to listen to his ideas:

RUTH. Eat your eggs, Walter.

WALTER. (*Slams the table and jumps up*) —DAMN MY EGGS—  
DAMN ALL THE EGGS THAT EVER WAS!

RUTH. Then go to work.

WALTER. (Looking up at *her*) See—I'm trying to talk to you 'bout myself—(Shaking his head with the repetition)—and all you can say is eat them eggs and go to work. (34)

## CITING: DO I REALLY NEED TO CITE THIS SOURCE?

If you're asking this question, you already know the answer. Nevertheless, we'll start with the fundamentals.

### *Direct Quotation*

A direct quotation is a word-for-word copy of source material. The quotation is enclosed in quotation marks. Include the author's last name and date of publication as well as page numbers if available.

**Joseph Conrad writes of the company manager in *Heart of Darkness*, "He was obeyed, yet he inspired neither love nor fear, nor even respect" (87).**

**"The red tree vole is a crucial part of the spotted owl's diet" (Moone 15).**

### *Paraphrase/Summary*

A paraphrase is a quotation rewritten in your own words. A summary is a condensed version of a longer passage from an outside source. Both require citations. Include the author's name and the page number.

**Oregon salmon populations have dramatically declined in the past decade (Lenz 27).**

**Kafka describes the insecurities of his youth, analyzing his social shortcomings in school and his rocky relationship with his father (44-46).**

## CITING: IN-TEXT CITATIONS

In-text citations point your reader to the full citation found on your Works Cited page. Generally that's done through the use of a signal phrase (e.g., "Miller notes that . . ." or "Samson argues . . ."). When you use a signal phrase, you usually need only put the page number(s) of the source in the parentheses. But if you don't use a signal phrase to introduce the material, or if you're using more than one source by the same author, more detail is necessary in your citation.

*When you mention the author's name in your sentence:*

**Freud states that "a dream is the fulfillment of a wish" (154).**

*When you omit the author's name in your sentence:*

**One researcher has found that dreams move backward in time as the night progresses; the sleeper experiences a reversal of the usual chronology (Dement 71).**

*When you cite more than one work by the same author:*

**One theory emphasizes the principle that dreams express "profound aspects of personality" (Foulkes, *Sleep* 184). But investigation shows that young children's dreams are "rather simple and unemotional" (Foulkes, "Dreams" 78).**

*When the work has two or three authors:*

**Psychologists hold that no two children are alike (Gesell and Ing 68).**

*When the work has more than three authors:*

**Stutts et. al. argue that language development may also impact development in related parts of the brain (339).**

*When a work has no author, begin with the word by which the title is alphabetized in the “Works Cited” list:*

**Random testing for steroids use by athletes faces strong opposition by owners of several teams (“Steroids” 22).**

## **CITING: THE WORKS CITED PAGE**

Unfortunately, the creation and proper formation of this section of your paper is usually the thing that freaks out students the most. Actually, it’s pretty simple. There are a series of rules that you need to follow, and if you do so you’ll end up with a perfect Works Cited page.

### *A Word about Online Citation Generators*

If you use these, you’re inviting problems. First, most of them aren’t very accurate. They may be able to handle a very basic entry (e.g., you’ve got a single-author book and you know the year it was published and the name of the publisher), but anything beyond this will cause most generators to stumble. And here’s the real problem: when these things fail, they still produce an entry. So unless you know what the entry is supposed to look like, you won’t be able to tell if it’s correct or not until you lose points on a paper for incorrect formatting.

Second, this is a middle-school activity. 99% of your Works Cited entries won’t require much advanced thought or critical thinking on your part. You just need to apply the rules. And this isn’t insulting, or somehow beneath you. It’s just part of the job. So when you get an entry wrong, you’re telling your professor that you are incapable of actually following directions that a 12-year-old can grasp. You make yourself look bad.

## CITING: FORMATTING THE WORKS CITED PAGE

### *Order*

This is done in the same way that you've probably always done it. Entries are presented alphabetically according to the primary author's or editor's last name, or lacking those, the title of the entry. If you have multiple works by the same author, the second and subsequent entries replace the author's name with three hyphens (they stand for exactly the same name and function as is the previous entry). Multiple sources by the same author are alphabetized by their titles.

### *Design*

Entries are reverse-indented. That is, the first line of an entry starts at the left margin. If the entry spills over onto two lines, the second and all following lines are indented half an inch.

Entries are double-spaced. Don't skip spaces between entries (maintain the usual double-spacing).

### *Examples*

**Berry, Bill, and R.E.M. "Losing My Religion." *Out of Time*, Warner Brothers, 1991.**

**Johnson-Davies, Denys, translator. *Season of Migration to the North*. By Tayeb Salih, New York Review Books, 1969.**

**Thornton, Weldon. *Allusions in Ulysses*. UNC Press, 1968.**

**--. *D.H. Lawrence: A Study of the Short Fiction*. Twayne, 1993.**

## The Core Elements in MLA 9

The most recent version of the *MLA Handbook* urges you to think about Works Cited entries in a particular way. When the source being documented forms a part of a larger whole, the larger whole can be thought of as a container that holds the source. It is thus crucial to the identification of the source.

### Containers?

The MLA is trying to make this easier for you. So they're giving you one citation format that applies to all sources. This style asks you to think about each source as being housed within one or more containers. [And from here on out, most of this material could be highlighted in yellow as differing from the previous edition of MLA documentation, but I'll spare you the distraction.] When a source being documented is a part of a larger whole, you can see that larger whole as a container. Containers can be edited volumes, periodicals, web sites, television series, or a number of other things. All your Works Cited entries, from a tweet to a video to a journal article to a book to a multi-volume reference work can fit into the template here. If a particular element isn't relevant to an entry, just leave it out. If an element is relevant to more than one container, you put it in the last relevant container.

### Template?

This edition of the formatting and style guidelines offers you a template, into which every single one of your sources can fit. So instead of getting comfortable with the differences between an article in a journal as opposed to an article in a collected volume, or the distinctions between a journal with continuous pagination and one with issue-specific pagination, you now need to ensure a sense of consistency between containers.

You'll find that this simplifies the citations for most of the sources you use. It may take a while to get used to this way of considering your sources, but once you do you'll see that the rules are actually more consistent and less finicky than they were previously.

We'll walk through each element of the template below, then look at some examples of the template in use, and then I'll let you in on the biggest secret in the book

WORKS CITED TEMPLATE		
#	INFORMATION	ENDING
1	Author	•
2	Title of source	•
CONTAINER 1		
3	Title of container	,
4	Other contributors	,
5	Version	,
6	Number	,
7	Publisher	,
8	Publication date	,
9	Location	•
CONTAINER 2		
3	Title of container	,
4	Other contributors	,
5	Version	,
6	Number	,
7	Publisher	,
8	Publication date	,
		•

## *Elements of the Template*

### 1. Author.

The person or group primarily responsible for producing the work. If the role of that person or group was something other than creating the work's main content, follow the name with a description of the role. For example, the "author" of a collection of essays is the editor of the volume. Since the editor didn't create the main content, the name is followed by a descriptive label, as in *Pellegrino, Joe, editor*.

### 2. Title of source.

See the "Writing: Titles" section above. If it's a complete work, it's italicized. If it's part of something larger (a poem in a volume, an article in a journal, etc.), it's in quotation marks.

## CONTAINERS

### 3. Title of container,

For an article, it's the journal. For a web page, it's the site. For an article you accessed through an online db (JSTOR, Project Muse, Literary Reference Center, etc.), it's first the journal (as container1), then the database (as Container 2).

### 4. Other contributors,

If someone who isn't the author is important in identifying the source, you name them in the citation. Precede each name or group of names with a description of the work done. Here are some common setups for this:

adapted by	directed by	edited by	illustrated by
introduction by	narrated by	performance by	translated by

If a contributor can't be described with a phrase like those above, present their role as a noun followed by a comma:

general editor, Samuel Hazo	series editor, Stephen Orton
dialogue coach, Samuel L. Jackson	

### 5. Version,

If the source exists in more than one version, note which version it is here. For a book, this might be the **revised edition**, the **abridged edition** or **unabridged edition**, the **3<sup>rd</sup> edition**, etc. For a movie this might be the **director's cut**.

### 6. Number,

If the source is part of a numbered series, note it here. Books can be in multiple volumes (use the abbreviation **vol.** for this). Some journals have both volume and issue numbers (use the abbreviations **vol.** and **no.** for these). Television shows are numbered by seasons.

### 7. Publisher,

This is the organization responsible for producing the source or making it available. So you'd note the publisher or the press for a book, the production or distribution company for a movie, or the organization responsible for a web site (usually found in the copyright notice on the site). You don't need this element—because you've already named it as the container in #3 above—for a periodical (magazine, journal, or newspaper), a web site whose title is essentially the same as the name of its publisher, a self-published book, or a web site or

archive that is essentially a collection of information produced by others (YouTube, JSTOR, ProQuest, etc.).

### **8. Publication date,**

This is the date the source hit the container. If a source has more than one date, use the one most relevant to your work. For instance, if you're using the web version of a source that was also published in print earlier, use the web publication date, since that's what you consulted.

### **9. Location.**

If this is a print source, this is the range of page numbers of the source (use the abbreviation "pp." for this). If it's an online work, use the URL (without http:// or angle brackets). Use a permalink if an online source has one. If the online source has a DOI (Digital Object Identifier), use that instead of a URL or a permalink. If you use a DOI, however, you must include the http:// in the address.



## Examples Using Containers

Ex. 1: Seamus Heaney published a book of poetry in 1987. (This model applies to all standalone works.)

#	INFORMATION	ENTRY
1	Author.	Heaney, Seamus.
2	Title of source.	<i>The Haw Lantern</i> .
<b>CONTAINER 1</b>		
3	Title of container,	You omit irrelevant items. Standalone works don't have containers, so all of these are blank.
4	Other contributors,	
5	Version,	
6	Number,	
7	Publisher,	Faber and Faber,
8	Publication date,	1987.
9	Location.	
<b>CONTAINER 2</b>		
3	Title of container,	Omitted unless you access a version of this book through another means (e.g., as an online document, as an audio book, through an RSS feed, etc.)
4	Other contributors,	
5	Version,	
6	Number,	
7	Publisher,	
8	Publication date,	
9	Location.	

On your Works Cited Page:

Heaney, Seamus. *The Haw Lantern*. Faber and Faber, 1987.

Ex. 2: An article by Albert C. Labriola appeared in a journal, *The Shakespeare Quarterly*, in 1981. Issues of *The Shakespeare Quarterly* are contained in JSTOR, an online database.

#	INFORMATION	ENTRY
1	Author.	Labriola, Albert C.
2	Title of source.	"Shakespeare in Pittsburgh."
<b>CONTAINER 1</b>		
3	Title of container,	<i>The Shakespeare Quarterly</i> ,
4	Other contributors,	
5	Version,	
6	Number,	vol. 32, no. 2,
7	Publisher,	
8	Publication date,	1981,
9	Location.	pp. 202-206.
<b>CONTAINER 2</b>		
3	Title of container,	JSTOR,
4	Other contributors,	
5	Version,	
6	Number,	
7	Publisher,	
8	Publication date,	
9	Location.	www.jstor.org/stable/2870024.

These elements refer to the smaller container, *The Shakespeare Quarterly*.

JSTOR contains the issues of the journal, so it's the larger container.

**On your Works Cited Page:**

Labriola, Albert C. "Shakespeare in Pittsburgh." *The Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 2, 1981, pp. 202-206. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/2870024.

Ex. 3: “Valar Morghulis,” a 2012 episode of the television series *Game of Thrones*, was broadcast on the Home Box Office network, and viewed online through the *Putlocker* web site.

#	INFORMATION	ENTRY
1	Author.	
2	Title of source.	“Valar Morghulis.”
<b>CONTAINER 1</b>		
3	Title of container,	<i>Game of Thrones</i> ,
4	Other contributors,	
5	Version,	
6	Number,	season 2, episode 10,
7	Publisher,	Home Box Office,
8	Publication date,	3 June, 2012.
9	Location.	
<b>CONTAINER 2</b>		
3	Title of container,	<i>Putlocker</i> ,
4	Other contributors,	
5	Version,	
6	Number,	
7	Publisher,	
8	Publication date,	
9	Location.	putlocker.is/watch-game-of-thrones-tvshow-season-2-episode-10-online-free-putlocker.html.

If you're not discussing an individual's contribution to the episode (director, producer, actor, etc.), you don't cite an author.

Although Putlocker only distributes links to other sites that actually host the content, those other URLs are hidden, so you can direct your reader here. This URL is as close to the actual file that you viewed as you can get.

**On your Works Cited Page:**

“Valar Morghulis.” *Game of Thrones*, season 2, episode 10, Home Box Office, 3 June, 2012. *Putlocker*, putlocker.is/watch-game-of-thrones-tvshow-season-2-episode-10-online-free-putlocker.html.

Ex. 4: *Nobody's Nation: Reading Derek Walcott*, is a 2001 book published by the University of Chicago Press in 2001. It's accessible online through the ProQuest Ebrary.

#	INFORMATION	ENTRY
1	Author.	Breslin, Paul.
2	Title of source.	<i>Nobody's Nation: Reading Derek Walcott.</i>
<b>CONTAINER 1</b>		
3	Title of container,	
4	Other contributors,	A unified, standalone work doesn't need a container.
5	Version,	
6	Number,	
7	Publisher,	U of Chicago P,
8	Publication date,	2001.
9	Location.	
<b>CONTAINER 2</b>		
3	Title of container,	<i>ProQuest Ebrary,</i>
4	Other contributors,	
5	Version,	Your access came through an independent container, so you need to cite that. ProQuest's independent document ID is the closest you're going to get to a stable URL or a DOI.
6	Number,	
7	Publisher,	
8	Publication date,	
9	Location.	site.ebrary.com/lib/gasouthern/detail.action?docID=10286166

**On your Works Cited Page:**

Breslin, Paul. *Nobody's Nation: Reading Derek Walcott*. U of Chicago P, 2001.  
*ProQuest Ebrary,*  
 site.ebrary.com/lib/gasouthern/detail.action?docID=10286166.

Ex. 5: Shakespeare’s *King Lear* is the third volume of a thirty-eight-volume edition of his works. The play was edited by Kenneth Muir, and the entire series was edited by a team of scholars. The series was published over several years.

#	INFORMATION	ENTRY	
1	Author.	Shakespeare, William.	
2	Title of source.	<i>King Lear</i> .	
<b>CONTAINER 1</b>			
3	Title of container,		
4	Other contributors,	edited by Kenneth Muir,	If your work is focusing on the editorial decisions made by Muir, instead of on the work as a whole, you’d lead with that (see the <i>Season of Migration to the North</i> example on p. 13).
5	Version,		
6	Number,		
7	Publisher,		
8	Publication date,	1952.	
9	Location.		
<b>CONTAINER 2</b>			
3	Title of container,	<i>The Arden Shakespeare, Second Series,</i>	
4	Other contributors,	general editors, Una Ellis-Fermor, et al.,	
5	Version,		When information applies to more than one container, you present it in the last relevant container. So the Publisher and Publication date are included in Container 2.
6	Number,	vol. 3,	
7	Publisher,	Metheun,	
8	Publication date,	1951-1982.	
9	Location.		

**On your Works Cited Page:**

Shakespeare, William. *King Lear*. Edited by Kenneth Muir, 1952. *The Arden Shakespeare, Second Series*, general editors, Una Ellis-Fermor, et al., vol. 3, Metheun, 1951-1982.

**THE BEST SECRET IN THE BOOK**

In the *MLA Handbook*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, as they are explaining a particularly thorny entry (author + multiple editors + multiple volumes in a series + multiple containers), the authors drop a significant point. I quote it here directly, after presenting its context, because I want to categorize it correctly: “There may be more than one correct entry for a source.”

Now, this is not to say that you can just make up some formatting, but it does recognize that if, for instance, you’re writing about the performances of actors in various film versions of *Hamlet*, your entries would be valid if they began with the actor’s name instead of Shakespeare’s.

You can legitimately apply this point to every element in the template. So don’t get all twisted up with shoehorning a source into a particular format; let the format and template work for you.

## THE COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC OF AN ENTRY

Wait! Don't just skip this because you saw "rhetoric" in the heading. Maybe if you understand why we set these up the way we do you can get a better grasp on the process.

Here's a specific entry for an article in a scholarly journal:

**McKee, Kathryn. "The Forgotten World of Idora McClellan Moore's Betsy Hamilton Letters." *Studies in American Humor*, vol. 3, no. 10, 2003, pp. 65-76.**

Let's see how that fits into the template:

#	INFORMATION	ENDING	ENTRY
1	Author	•	McKee, Kathryn.
2	Title of source	•	"The Forgotten World of Idora McClellan Moore's Betsy Hamilton Letters."
<b>CONTAINER 1</b>			
3	Title of container	,	<i>Studies in American Humor</i> ,
4	Other contributors	,	
5	Version	,	
6	Number	,	vol. 3, no. 10,
7	Publisher	,	
8	Publication date	,	2003,
9	Location	•	pp. 65-76.

And here's what that entry boils down to generically:

**Author's Name. "Title of the Article." Publication Information.**

That's it. Three areas, each concluded with a period. The order is important, and specific to our discipline. If this were, say, an entry for a reference in a biology paper (they use the Council of Biology Editors style), it would contain the same information, formatted and arranged differently:

**McKee, K. 2003. The forgotten world of Idora McClellan Moore's Betsy Hamilton letters. *Stud Am Humor* 3(10):65-76.**

Generically, here's that entry:

**Author's Name. Year of publication. Title of the article. Publication information.**

Let's look at the differences between the two generic entries:

MLA	CBE
1. Author's Name.	1. Author's Name.
2. "Title of the Article."	2. Year of publication.
3. Publication Information.	3. Title of the article.
	4. Other publication information.

They both lead with the author's name, because, well, because it's the Academy, and our first interest is in appealing to an authority. Professor McKee is one of the leading authorities on southern literature. So it makes sense for us to foreground her. And the CBE does that, too (although they don't include the author's full first name).

But after that we grow apart. The title comes next in MLA, but the date comes next in CBE. Why? Because the sciences are built around the currency of information. An article written in 1945 on polio is certainly going to be less timely, and thus less important, than an article written on the same topic in 2015. But here in literature, we deal with timeless truths (that's a stretch, I know), and so the date of publication isn't as important for us as it is for the sciences. If T.S. Eliot's criticism of *Hamlet* was important in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it's still important now.

Rather, we present the title of the source next, with either italics or quotation marks, and more capitalization than those biologists afford to their titles. We make sure that the title stands out, because, coupled with the name of the author, it's how we first judge whether this article will address our area of research.

## STOLEN FROM

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———. *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*. Modern Language Association of America, 2008.

*MLA Handbook*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

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Russell, Tony, Allen Brizee, and Elizabeth Angeli. “MLA Formatting and Style Guide.” *The Purdue OWL*, Purdue U Writing Lab, 4 April 2010,  
owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01.

Wheeler, L. Kip. “Common Format Problems with MLA Citation.” *Dr. Wheeler’s Website*, Carson-Newman University, 5 January 2016,  
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