What’s New and Different

The 8th edition of the MLA Handbook rethinks citation instructions for an era of digital publication. The Modern Language Association now recommends a universal set of guidelines that writers can apply to any source and gives writers in all fields—from the sciences to the humanities—the tools to intuitively document sources. These guidelines state that, if given, **nine core elements** should be included in the citation. **Core elements are those common pieces of information to all sources**, from books to articles, from lectures to tweets. These core elements are assembled in a specific order (as listed below) to document a source.

**Core Elements**

1. Author
2. Title of source
3. Title of container
4. Other contributors
5. Version
6. Number
7. Publisher
8. Publication date
9. Location

**These core elements are placed in the citation, usually in this format:**

Author. Title of source. Title of the container. Other contributors, Version, Number, Publisher’s name, Date of publication, Location.

### Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book, Three authors</td>
<td>When a source has three or more authors, only the first one shown in the source is given. It is followed by et al..</td>
<td>Robbins, Chandler S., et al. <em>Birds of North America: A Guide to Field Identification.</em> Golden, 1966.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A work (e.g., essay, short story) in an anthology or compilation</td>
<td>The individual work is the source, while the compilation or anthology is the container.</td>
<td>Kimball, Jean. &quot;Growing Up Together: Joyce and Psychoanalysis, 1900-1922.&quot; <em>Joyce through the Ages: A Nonlinear View,</em> edited by Michael Patrick Gillespie, UP of Florida, 1999, pp. 25-45.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website (Whole site)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Farkas, Meredith. <em>Information Wants to Be Free.</em> June 2015, meredith.wolfwater.com.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Important Things to Know

- **Author:** It is now common and acceptable to use simplified names of famous authors, pseudonyms, online handles, or screen names.

- **Containers:** The larger wholes in which the source is located. For example, if you want to cite a magazine article that is published in a magazine, the individual article is the source, while the whole magazine is the container.


- In some cases, a container might be within a larger container. For example, a book of short stories read on Google Books or a television series watched on Netflix.


- **The city of publication:** No longer given for book sources, except in special cases.

- **URLs:** List for web sources without the preceding http:// or https://.

- **Date of access:** It is not required to do so but especially encouraged when there is no copyright date listed on a website.

- **No date:** No longer need to use placeholders like n.d. for “no date.”

- **Page numbers:** In works-cited lists (but not in-text documentation) page numbers are now preceded by p. or pp.

- **DOIs** (digital object identifiers found in most databases): Citing DOIs is now encouraged.
MLA Citation Style Settings

- **Font**: choose an easy to read font such as Times New Roman or Arial.
- **Font Size**: set the font size to be eleven (11) or twelve (12) throughout your research paper, including your paper’s title. Never set the font size larger than 12.
- **Margins**: 1-inch for top/bottom/right/left throughout your paper.
- **Double-space**: double-space throughout your paper including the header and Works Cited page. Leave only one space after punctuation marks.

Formatting an MLA header:

- Use a **header** on the first page of your paper with your last name and page number. This page number should be right justified.
- The top left-hand corner of your paper must include the following information in this exact order:
  - your name
  - your teacher’s name
  - the name of your class
  - the date is written in day-month-year order
- Your title should define the assignment or the topic of the paper. Do not bold, italicize, or underline your title. Type it in the same font and size as the rest of your paper.

Formatting an MLA cover page:

- This page is double-spaced and the words are centered.
- Type the name of your university or college.
- Skip to about one-third of the page and type your paper title; include a subtitle if you have one. Skip several lines down and type your name, your course name and number, your instructor’s name, and the date.
- An example is provided on the next page!

Still have questions? Ask a Librarian! ([libraryhelp@fontbonne.edu](mailto:libraryhelp@fontbonne.edu))
MLA Format Cover Page Sample:

Page title

Your University

Title of your Essay

Subtitle

Your Name

Course Name and Number

Professor Name

Paper Due Date

MLA Format First Page Sample with Cover Page

Alternate First Page:

If your instructor requires a cover page, you may omit the main heading on your first page. Here is an example of the first page if a cover page is used. You still need a header with your last name and page number on the first page and every other page.

MLA Format First Page Sample with Cover Page
Works Cited


*An Inconvenient Truth*. Directed by Davis Guggenheim, performances by Al Gore and Billy West, Paramount, 2006.


