Tips from the Writing Center: Modern Language Association (MLA) Basics

Formatting (font, name, date, spacing, page numbers)

Formatting area	MLA Guideline	Example
Font, margins, spacing (all pages) *See page 116 in the* MLA *Handbook.*	Use Times New Roman, 12 point font. Margins are 1 inch (do this by clicking on the "Page Layout" tab in Microsoft Word). Double space all text (including Works Cited) by selecting "paragraph" in Word.	This handout meets these specifications.
Heading (page 1 of your paper) *See pages 116-17.*	An MLA research paper doesn't need a title page. Instead, on the top left side of the first page of your paper, type your name, the instructor's name, the course number, and the date on separate, double-spaced lines. On the next line, centered, is your title. Do not bold or italicize the title.	Justin Smith Dr. West ENGL 433 12 June 2014 MLA Formatting Basics from the BU Writing Center
Page numbers (all pages) *See pages 117-18.*	All pages should be numbered consecutively throughout paper in the upper right-hand corner. Type your last name before the page number.	For an example, see the top right corner of this handout.

Visit www.bellarmine.edu/writingcenter to make your Writing Center appointment.

In-Text Citations

Each sentence that contains source information (such as articles, websites, books, interviews), paraphrased, quoted, or summarized, must attribute the source(s) within the sentence. Each source within the essay's body corresponds with source information listed on the Works Cited page and vice versa.

Guideline, *see pages 214-19*	Examples
Either include the author's last name as part of the sentence (1st example) or in parentheses at the end (2nd example). Page number, if available, must be included. This rule applies whether you are quoting or paraphrasing.	Erin Burke, a Bellarmine English alumna, claims that she "used MLA formatting in English classes" (23). Not all majors use MLA, but "some undergraduates use only MLA in their major" (Burke 23).
If there is no page number (e.g., if the source is from a website), use paragraph number.	Some argue that using Purdue Online Writing Lab is one of many effective ways of learning MLA (Wallitsch para. 3).
If there are two or three authors of a source, give the last name of each person listed.	The best way to learn MLA is practice (Lu, Davis, and McCoy 784).
For three or more authors, either give the first author's last name followed by et al., or write all the last names. Follow whichever form you decide to use in the Works Cited page.	Mandatory MLA quizzes are more harmful than helpful (Norris et al. 67-9).
If the source has no author, use the title.	Some resources claim "MLA formatting is simple" ("Purdue Owl").

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Works Cited

- All sources provided should appear *both* in-text and on a Works Cited page.
- Title the page "Works Cited" (centered on page).
- Alphabetize entries by the last name of the first author listed in the publication. For multiple works by the same author, list by date beginning with earliest; if no author is listed, begin with the title.
- Each entry begins: Author's last name, first name.
- Use a "hanging indent" for all lines after the first line of the source.
- Use quotation marks for "article titles"
- Use *italics* for titles of books, periodicals, journals, magazines, and anthologies.
- Include URL in citations for web sources only when one most likely cannot locate the information without it or when your instructor requires it.
- *See pages 123-212.*

Type	Basic Format	Example
Entire book	Author's last name, first name. *Title of Book*. City of publication: Publisher, year. Print.	Atwood, Margaret. *The Blind Assassin*. New York: Random House, 2001. Print.
Scholarly journal article retrieved electronically	Author's last name, first name. "Article Title." *Title of Journal* Volume. Issue (year published): page numbers. *Database*. Web. Date accessed.	Cooke, Nathalie. "Turning The Pages: Rereading Atwood's Novels." *English Studies In Canada* 33.3 (2007): 89-93. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 12 June 2014.
A work in an anthology or collection	Author's last name, first name. "Title of Entry." *Title of Anthology*. Ed. Editor's name. City of publication: Publisher, year published. Page numbers. Print.	Irving, Washington. "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." *American Short Stories: An Anthology*. Ed. Mark Jones. New York: Interlink, 1993. 95-116. Print.
Newspaper, print	Author's last name, first name. "Article Title." *Title of Newspaper* day month year, edition: section. Print.	Dwyer, Jim. "Yeats Meets the Digital Age." *New York Times* 20 July 2008, early ed., Arts and Leisure sec.: 7. Print.
Article from a website	Author's last name, first name. "Article title." *Title of Website*. Publisher (if no publisher, put n.p.), date published. Web. Date of access.	Green, Joshua. "The Rove Presidency." *The Atlantic.com*. Atlantic Monthly Group, Sept. 2007. Web. 15 May 2013.