

MLA Works Cited: Electronic Sources (Web Publications)

The 8th edition of the MLA handbook highlights principles over prescriptive practices. Essentially, a writer will need to take note of primary elements in every source, such as author, title, etc. and then assort them in a general format. Thus, by using this methodology, a writer will be able to cite any source regardless of whether it's included in this list.

However, this guide will highlight a few concerns when citing digital sources in MLA style.

Best Practices for Managing Online Sources

Because online information can change or disappear, it is always a good idea to keep personal copies of important electronic information whenever possible. Downloading or even printing key documents ensures you have a stable backup. You can also use the Bookmark function in your web browser in order to build an easy-to-access reference for all of your project's sources (though this will not help you if the information is changed or deleted).

It is also wise to keep a record of when you first consult with each online source. MLA uses the phrase, "Accessed" to denote which date you accessed the web page when available or necessary. It is not required to do so, but it is encouraged (especially when there is no copyright date listed on a website).

Important Note on the Use of URLs in MLA

Include a URL or web address to help readers locate your sources. Because web addresses are not static (i.e., they change often) and because documents sometimes appear in multiple places on the web (e.g., on

multiple databases), MLA encourages the use of citing containers such as Youtube, JSTOR, Spotify, or Netflix in order to easily access and verify sources. However, MLA only requires the www. address, so eliminate all https:// when citing URLs.

Many scholarly journal articles found in databases include a DOI (digital object identifier). If a DOI is available, cite the DOI number instead of the URL.

Online newspapers and magazines sometimes include a "permalink," which is a shortened, stable version of a URL. Look for a "share" or "cite this" button to see if a source includes a permalink. If you can find a permalink, use that instead of a URL.

Abbreviations Commonly Used with Electronic Sources

If page numbers are not available, use par. or pars. to denote paragraph numbers. Use these in place of the p. or pp. abbreviation. Par. would be used for a single paragraph, while pars. would be used for a span of two or more paragraphs.

Basic Style for Citations of Electronic Sources (Including Online Databases)

Here are some common features you should try to find before citing electronic sources in MLA style. Not every web page will provide all of the following information. However, collect as much of the following information as possible:

- Author and/or editor names (if available); last names first.
- "Article name in quotation marks."
- *Title of the website, project, or book in italics.*
- Any version numbers available, including editions (ed.), revisions, posting dates, volumes (vol.), or issue numbers (no.).

- Publisher information, including the publisher name and publishing date.
- Take note of any page numbers (p. or pp.) or paragraph numbers (par. or pars.).
- DOI (if available), otherwise a URL (without the https://) or permalink.
- Date you accessed the material (Date Accessed). While not required, saving this information it is highly recommended, especially when dealing with pages that change frequently or do not have a visible copyright date.

Use the following format:

Author. "Title." *Title of container (self contained if book)*, Other contributors (translators or editors), Version (edition), Number (vol. and/or no.), Publisher, Publication Date, Location (pages, paragraphs and/or URL, DOI or permalink). *2nd container's title*, Other contributors, Version, Number, Publisher, Publication date, Location, Date of Access (if applicable).

Citing an Entire Web Site

When citing an entire website, follow the same format as listed above, but include a compiler name if no single author is available.

Author, or compiler name (if available). Name of Site. Version number (if available), Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available), DOI (preferred), otherwise include a URL or permalink. Date of access (if applicable).

Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). *Name of Site*. Version number, Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available), URL, DOI or permalink. Date of access (if applicable).

The Purdue OWL Family of Sites. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and

Purdue U, 2008, owl.english.purdue.edu/owl. Accessed 23 Apr. 2008.

Felluga, Dino. *Guide to Literary and Critical Theory*. Purdue U, 28 Nov. 2003, www.cla.purdue.edu/english/theory/. Accessed 10 May 2006.

Course or Department Websites

Give the instructor name. Then list the title of the course (or the school catalog designation for the course) in italics. Give appropriate department and school names as well, following the course title.

Felluga, Dino. *Survey of the Literature of England*. Purdue U, Aug. 2006, web.ics.purdue.edu/~felluga/241/241/Home.html. Accessed 31 May 2007.

English Department. Purdue U, 20 Apr. 2009, www.cla.purdue.edu/english/. Accessed 31 May 2007.

A Page on a Web Site

For an individual page on a Web site, list the author or alias if known, followed by an indication of the specific page or article being referenced. Usually, the title of the page or article appears in a header at the top of the page. Follow this with the information covered above for entire Web sites. If the publisher is the same as the website name, only list it once.

Lundman, Susan. "How to Make Vegetarian Chili." *eHow*, www.ehow.com/how_10727_make-vegetarian-chili.html. Accessed 6 July 2015.

"Athlete's Foot - Topic Overview." *WebMD*, 25 Sept. 2014, www.webmd.com/skin-problems-and-treatments/tc/athletes-foot-topic-overview.

An E-Book

Citations for e-books closely resemble those for physical books. Simply

indicate that the book in question is an e-book by putting the term "e-book" in the "version" slot of the MLA template (i.e., after the author, the title of the source, the title of the container, and the names of any other contributors).

Silva, Paul J. *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*, e-book, American Psychological Association, 2007.

If the e-book is formatted for a specific reader device or service, you can indicate this by treating this information the same way you would treat a physical book's edition number. Often, this will mean replacing "e-book" with "[App/Service] ed."

Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince*, translated by W. K. Marriott, Kindle ed., Library of Alexandria, 2018.

Note: The MLA considers the term "e-book" to refer to publications formatted specifically for reading with an e-book reader device (e.g., a Kindle) or a corresponding web application. These e-books will not have URLs or DOIs. If you are citing book content from an ordinary webpage with a URL, use the "A Page on a Web Site" format above.

An Image (Including a Painting, Sculpture, or Photograph)

Provide the artist's name, the work of art italicized, the date of creation, the institution and city where the work is housed. Follow this initial entry with the name of the Website in italics, and the date of access.

Goya, Francisco. *The Family of Charles IV*. 1800. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid. *Museo Nacional del Prado*, www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/the-family-of-carlos-iv/f47898fc-aa1c-48f6-a779-71759e417e74. Accessed 22 May 2006.

Klee, Paul. *Twittering Machine*. 1922. Museum of Modern Art, New York. *The Artchive*,

www.artchive.com/artchive/K/klee/twittering_machine.jpg.html. Accessed May 2006.

If the work is cited on the web only, then provide the name of the artist, the title of the work, and then follow the citation format for a website. If the work is posted via a username, use that username for the author.

Adams, Clifton R. "People Relax Beside a Swimming Pool at a Country Estate Near Phoenix, Arizona, 1928." *Found*, National Geographic Creative, 2 June 2016, natgeofound.tumblr.com/.

An Article in a Web Magazine

Provide the author name, article name in quotation marks, title of the web magazine in italics, publisher name, publication date, URL, and the date of access.

Bernstein, Mark. "10 Tips on Writing the Living Web." *A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites*, 16 Aug. 2002, alistapart.com/article/writeliving. Accessed 4 May 2009.

An Article in an Online Scholarly Journal

For all online scholarly journals, provide the author(s) name(s), the name of the article in quotation marks, the title of the publication in italics, all volume and issue numbers, and the year of publication. Include a DOI if available, otherwise provide a URL or permalink to help readers locate the source.

Article in an Online-only Scholarly Journal

MLA requires a page range for articles that appear in Scholarly Journals. If the journal you are citing appears exclusively in an online format (i.e. there is no corresponding print publication) that does not make use of page numbers, indicate the URL or other location information.

Dolby, Nadine. "Research in Youth Culture and Policy: Current Conditions and Future Directions." *Social Work and Society: The International Online-Only Journal*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2008, www.socwork.net/sws/article/view/60/362. Accessed 20 May 2009.

Article in an Online Scholarly Journal That Also Appears in Print

Cite articles in online scholarly journals that also appear in print as you would a scholarly journal in print, **including the page range of the article**. Provide the URL and the date of access.

Wheelis, Mark. "Investigating Disease Outbreaks Under a Protocol to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention." *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, vol. 6, no. 6, 2000, pp. 595-600, wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/6/6/00-0607_article. Accessed 8 Feb. 2009.

An Article from an Online Database (or Other Electronic Subscription Service)

Cite online databases (e.g. LexisNexis, ProQuest, JSTOR, ScienceDirect) and other subscription services as containers. Thus, provide the title of the database italicized before the DOI or URL. If a DOI is not provided, use the URL instead. Provide the date of access if you wish.

Alonso, Alvaro, and Julio A. Camargo. "Toxicity of Nitrite to Three Species of Freshwater Invertebrates." *Environmental Toxicology*, vol. 21, no. 1, 3 Feb. 2006, pp. 90-94. *Wiley Online Library*, doi:10.1002/tox.20155. Accessed 26 May 2009.

Langhamer, Claire. "Love and Courtship in Mid-Twentieth-Century England." *Historical Journal*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2007, pp. 173-96. *ProQuest*, doi:10.1017/S0018246X06005966. Accessed 27 May 2009.

E-mail (including E-mail Interviews)

Give the author of the message, followed by the subject line in quotation marks. State to whom the message was sent with the phrase, "Received by" and the recipient's name. Include the date the message was sent. Use standard capitalization.

Kunka, Andrew. "Re: Modernist Literature." Received by John Watts, 15 Nov. 2000.

Neyhart, David. "Re: Online Tutoring." Received by Joe Barbato, 1 Dec. 2016.

A Listserv, Discussion Group, or Blog Posting

Cite web postings as you would a standard web entry. Provide the author of the work, the title of the posting in quotation marks, the web site name in italics, the publisher, and the posting date. Follow with the date of access. Include screen names as author names when author name is not known. If both names are known, place the author's name in brackets.

Author or compiler name (if available). "Posting Title." *Name of Site*, Version number (if available), Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), URL. Date of access.

Salmar1515 [Sal Hernandez]. "Re: Best Strategy: Fenced Pastures vs. Max Number of Rooms?" *BoardGameGeek*, 29 Sept. 2008, boardgamegeek.com/thread/343929/best-strategy-fenced-pastures-vs-max-number-rooms. Accessed 5 Apr. 2009.

A Tweet

Begin with the user's Twitter handle in place of the author's name. Next, place the tweet in its entirety in quotations, inserting a period after the tweet within the quotations. Include the date and time of posting, using the reader's time zone; separate the date and time with a comma and end with a period. Include the date accessed if you deem necessary.

@tombrokaw. "SC demonstrated why all the debates are the engines of this campaign." *Twitter*, 22 Jan. 2012, 3:06 a.m., twitter.com/tombrokaw/status/160996868971704320.

@PurdueWLab. "Spring break is around the corner, and all our locations will be open next week." *Twitter*, 5 Mar. 2012, 12:58 p.m., twitter.com/PurdueWLab/status/176728308736737282.

A YouTube Video

Video and audio sources need to be documented using the same basic guidelines for citing print sources in MLA style. Include as much descriptive information as necessary to help readers understand the type and nature of the source you are citing. If the author's name is the same as the uploader, only cite the author once. If the author is different from the uploader, cite the author's name before the title.

McGonigal, Jane. "Gaming and Productivity." *YouTube*, uploaded by Big Think, 3 July 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkdzy9bWW3E.

"8 Hot Dog Gadgets put to the Test." *YouTube*, uploaded by Crazy Russian Hacker, 6 June 2016, www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBlpjSEtELs.

A Comment on a Website or Article

List the username as the author. Use the phrase, *Comment on*, before the title. Use quotation marks around the article title. Name the publisher, date, time (listed on near the comment), and the URL.

Not Omniscient Enough. Comment on "Flight Attendant Tells Passenger to 'Shut Up' After Argument Over Pasta." ABC News, 9 Jun 2016, 4:00 p.m., abcnews.go.com/US/flight-attendant-tells-passenger-shut-argument-pasta/story?id=39704050.