When writing a paper in MLA format, there are a few simple rules you should follow.

Make sure that you use a very clear, simple font. Times New Roman 12 is the preferred font in MLA style. You should double space your all paragraphs and use **bold** and *italics* minimally. These special styles should be reserved for cases that really require extra emphasis on a word or phrase. *Italics* or quotation marks should be used when indicating the title of another work in the body of your paper.

MLA style requires the use of *parenthetical citation* in the body of your paper. There are three main ways that you can correctly use parenthetical citation:

1. If you only have one work by a given author an you incorporate the author’s name in your sentence, the quotation should simply be followed by a page number in parentheses. For example, **Howard** states that “[In-text citations] mark each use you make of a source, regardless of whether you are quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, or drawing ideas from [them]” (288). Note also that you can use [square brackets] should you need to change a word or two to make the quotation fit into the grammatical structure of your sentence.

2. If you do not incorporate the author’s name into the body of your text, the quotation should be followed by the author’s last name and the page number in parentheses. In contrast to the first example, this second scenario might look like this: It is critically
important that you “mark each use you make of a source, regardless of whether you are quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, or drawing ideas from it” (Howard 288).

3. If you paraphrase or use an idea that comes directly from some other source but without a quotation, you should make note of this by listing the page number of the source in parentheses after you present the idea. This scenario might look like this: Howard extensively outlined the requirements for citation in the MLA style (288).

In all three of these scenarios, the reader can use the author and page number information you provide, along with the Works Cited page, to locate the exact reference you have made.

In addition to the brief quotations mentioned above, you may also feel the need to include a longer quotation. If you include a longer quotation, you should format it as follows:

When the text you are quoting takes up more than four lines of your project, indent the borrowed material as a block by one inch from the left margin, and place the parenthetical citation one space after the closing punctuation mark. No quotation marks should be used when indenting quoted material as a block.

(Howard 292)

As you write your paper, you want to give the reader additional information without distracting him/her from the main goals of your writing. Generally, this can be accomplished with endnotes. To create endnotes, mark the area of the text with a superscript number after the sentence punctuation just like the number at the end of this sentence.¹ At the end of the paper, before the Works Cited page, include a Notes page. Each note should be numbered to match the in-text notation; indented five spaces on the first line with no indentation on subsequent lines;
and should include a period and a space after each number. In general, footnotes should be avoided in MLA.

The very last page of any paper should be the bibliography. For MLA style papers, center the title Works Cited on this page. All citations on this page should be double spaced and all lines of a given citation, after the first line, should be indented by exactly ½ inch. When referencing titles, be sure to use Title Case, which means you capitalize only the first letter of each word except for articles, prepositions, and conjunctions, unless any of those words are the first word in the title. See the Works Cited page of this document for additional sources you can use to master the MLA style and information on how to cite some common sources.


**Here are formats for common sources:**

**Book with one author**

Lastname, Firstname. *Title of Book*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Print.

**Book with two or more authors**

Lastname, Firstname, and Firstname Lastname. *Title of Book*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Print.

Lastname, Firstname, Firstname Lastname, and Firstname Lastname. *Title of Book*. City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Print.

**Book with four or more authors**


**Websites**

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). Web. Date of access.

**Magazine & Newspaper Articles**

(Note that pagination may be a little different in newspapers than magazines.)

Author(s), "Title of Article." *Title of Periodical* Day Month Year: pages. Print.

**Other important tips:**

1. Alphabetize your Works Cited page by author’s last name.
2. When citing websites, use *n.p.* to indicate that neither a publisher nor a sponsor name has been provided. Use *n.d.* if there is no publication date.
3. Reference an MLA handbook or the Purdue OWL website ([https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/)) should you need additional citation information.