

ARC Writing Lab Worksheets:
MLA Style Guide

Final draft version, compiled February 12, 2007, by J. Hines, Ed Prgms Intern

MLA style requirements:

General Arrangement

- MLA requires no title page, but always go with your professor's preferences.
- Just like with APA style, MLA leaves only 1-inch margins all around the page.
- In the right-hand side of the page header, put your last name (surname) and then the page number one space after.

Quotes/Cited Ideas

- When you quote anything or refer to an idea from anything other than yourself (unless it is common knowledge, as for instance that Washington, D.C., is the capital of the United States of America or that Copernicus came up with the current model of a sun-centered solar system), you must give credit to its creator.
- When you leave out a piece of a quote, use ellipses (the “dot-dot-dot”)with spaces between each dot, meaning “. . .”, not “...” as some word processors may do; hence, a quote might look like this: “Adams was well-respected by his colleagues . . . for his intelligence and careful demeanor, among other things” (Author 236). Even if you cut off a sentence before it ends, do not put ellipses at the end before the quotation marks. Just use whatever punctuation is necessary to make it correct overall.
- Make sure that when you have your in-text citation in parenthesis, you put the period outside the last parenthesis at the very end of the sentence, and not before the reference or inside the quotation marks:

According to some, the madwoman in the lighthouse “symbolized the psychological frustration generated by conflict between personal integrity and gender roles” (Gorges 234).

- When you quote more than four lines of text or three lines of a poem, you must format it as a block quote, meaning that the entire quote starts on its own line, every line indented half an inch. If you have fewer than three lines of a poem quoted, show the breaks between the lines with slashes: “Tyger! Tyger! Burning bright, / In the forests of the night.”

Works Cited:

- Do not divide up your “Works Cited” page by type of resource, even if you have specific requirements on what type or types of sources you must use. The way a reference is

written out shows clearly to those familiar with the guidelines whether it is a book, a chapter from an edited compilation, a journal article, or a website.

Other General MLA Style Information:

References:

- MLA requires references that are reputable; *Wikipedia*, while sometimes a useful start for research ideas, is not an acceptable source; a magazine like the *National Geographic* would be more acceptable; a scholarly journal like *Cambridge Quarterly* or a serious academic book would be most acceptable and should make up most of your sources.
- Remember that the more work you do with a specific style, the more likely it will be that you will need to invest in the latest actual style guide—whether your major requires MLA, APA, Turabian, or Chicago Manual of Style. The purchase will definitely be worth it, possibly for at least a letter grade. You should also buy page tabs from a convenience or office supply store (or the CBU bookstore) and tab off the important sections of your style guide; taking some time to skim through your guidebook to highlight the more difficult or confusing requirements to make them more easily found can save a lot of time later on.

Your Name (First and Last)

Your Professor's Name

The Course Title

The Date

The Title of Your Paper

The main text of your paper is written on the line directly after your essay title; do not skip any lines. MLA guidelines do not require a title page, but check with your professor to see if a particular assignment calls for one. Note that this and every other paragraph in the main text of your paper is indented ½ an inch (move the down-pointing arrow in the ruler at the top of the page, right below all the toolbars). Remember also that your entire paper, including the four lines with identification for the paper (i.e., your name and so forth) and the Works Cited at the end, should be double-spaced. In Microsoft Word, you can do this before you write anything by going to “Format” on the task bar, selecting “Paragraph” from the drop-down menu, and, in the “Indents and Spacing” tab, select “Double” from the scrolling menu under “Line spacing:”; if you already have something written, follow these same steps but first select all the text in the document.

Also, your page should have a margin of exactly one inch (1”) at the top, bottom, right, and left of the page. Go to the “File” drop-down menu and click on “Page Setup” to open the dialogue box to do this.

At the top right-hand corner of this page you should have your last name written, with the page number one space after (as in, “Smith 1”); you can do this in Microsoft Word by going to “View” on the taskbar and selecting “Headers and Footers” from the drop-down menu. Do not type

“1” for the page number; instead, click the “#” button on the “Header and Footer” toolbar that pops up. When you are finished, click the “Close” button on the toolbar.

When you quote anything or refer to an idea from anything other than yourself (unless it is common knowledge, as for instance that Washington, D.C., is the capital of the United States of America or that Copernicus came up with the current model of a sun-centered solar system), you must attribute it. This is whether you quote it exactly or whether you use some of the words it used or an idea it had, put in a different way.

Works Cited:

Hines, Jonathan D. "This Is a Standard Magazine Article Citation." *Worksheet Basics*, 9 Feb.

2007: 12-34.

Author (if any). Article or Webpage Title (if any). *Book/Website/Journal title* (then) volume & issue #'s: then page #'s. (For books,) City (usu. first city on the list), State if not a recognizable city: Publisher Name, Year of Publication.