MLA Citation Style: 8th Edition

This handout provides a brief guide to the basics of formatting papers and citations in the Modern Language Association (MLA) style. Most of the example citations are drawn from the *MLA Handbook*, 8th edition, available at the Reference Desk in the Library (LB2369 .G53 2016). Please see the handbook for complete guidelines to formatting the body of your paper, creating in-text citations, and creating a Works Cited list.

RefWorks can assist in proper formatting of in-text citations and lists of works cited. To learn more, see RefWorks @ the University of Delaware (guides.lib.udel.edu/refworks).

### Formatting Your Paper

- Choose a standard font and size, such as 12-point Times New Roman.
- Set 1-inch margins (top, bottom, right and left).
- Indent the first line of each paragraph.
- Number your pages.
- Double-space your paper, including the Works Cited page.
- Consult your assignment instructions for other required formatting elements, such as a title page.

### In-Text Citations

**Using a signal phrase**

For Charles Dickens the eighteenth century was “the best of times” and “the worst of times” (35).

**Using author and page number**

The eighteenth century was “the best of times” and “the worst of times” (Dickens 35).

**Long quotations (more than four lines)**

In discussing the historical relation between politics and the press, William L. Rivers notes:

> Presidential control reached its zenith under Andrew Jackson, the extent of whose attention to the press even before he became a candidate is suggested by the fact that he subscribed to twenty newspapers. Jackson was never content to have only one organ grinding out his tune. For a time, the *United States Telegraph* and the *Washington Globe* were almost equally favored as party organs, and there were fifty-seven journalists on the government payroll. (7)
The List of Works Cited

- Start your list of Works Cited on a separate page at the end of your paper.
- Center the title Works Cited at the top of the page.
- Alphabetize by the first author’s last name. If there is no author, alphabetize by title.
- Indent the second and all subsequent lines of each citation; this is called a hanging indent.
- Only include sources that are cited within the body of your paper.

Books

Sample citations for works with one author, with two authors, with more than two authors, and contained in collections.


Periodicals

Sample citations for articles contained in a scholarly journal, a newspaper, and a magazine.


Websites

Sample citations for an entire web project and an article/post on a website.
