

For example:

According to U.S. Senate staff member Paul C. Light, legislation on Capitol Hill is often surrounded by a “fog of politics” (11).

Note that this writer tells her reader the information needed for finding her source: we know that the quotation came from page 11 of a book by Paul C. Light.

Then, at the end of your paper, you need to give your reader the rest of the information necessary for looking up the reference. This is called a *Works Cited* page, and it is typically arranged by authors' last names, so that your reader can find the author referred to in your paper.

The following are sample entries for the most commonly used types of sources. If you have a source not covered here, consult the complete MLA handbook. **These entries should be double-spaced; we have single-spaced them here simply to save room.**

Books

Citation entries for books generally list three main sections of information about your source, with each section followed by a period and two spaces:

- author name, last name first
- full title of the work: book and journal titles are italicized; article titles are put in quotation marks
- publication information: city of publication, name of publisher, and date.

A book by a single author:

Light, Paul C. *Forging Legislation*.
New York: Norton, 1992.

Fairbanks, Carol. *Prairie Women: Images in American and Canadian Fiction*.
New Haven: Yale UP, 1986.

An anthology:

Allen, Robert C., ed. *Channels of Discourse: Television and Contemporary Criticism*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1987.

Note that in these entries:

- the title is italicized
- there is one space between the three sections of the entry
- often-used words, such as *University* and *Press* are abbreviated, i.e., *UP* means *University Press*; no periods are used
- only the first line is at the margin; all other lines are indented five spaces
- there is only one blank space after each colon

A book by two or more authors:

Berry, Jason, Jonathan Foose, and Tad Jones. *Up from the Cradle of Jazz: New Orleans Music since World War II*. Athens: U of Georgia P, 1986.

Note here that only the **first** author's name is inverted; the rest in the list are in regular order.

An anonymous book:

Encyclopedia of Photography. New York: Crown, 1984.

A work in an anthology:

Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun*. *Black Theater: A 20th Century Collection of the Work of Its Best Playwrights*. Ed. Lindsay Patterson. New York: Dodd, 1971. 221-76.

Lazard, Naomi. "In Answer to Your Query." *The Norton Book of Light*

Verse. Ed. Russell Baker. New York: Norton, 1986. 52-53.

Since articles are parts of larger works, you must also provide your reader with page numbers. The numbers should be for the whole article, not just for the pages you have used.

Note that the title of the play, *A Raisin in the Sun*, is italicized (as all play titles are), and the title of the poem, "In Answer to Your Query," is in quotation marks. In both cases, the anthology titles are italicized. *Works Cited* pages follow regular rules of capitalization, italicizing, and quotation marks for titles.

Articles in Newspapers and Periodicals

Citation entries for newspapers and periodicals generally list the same three main sections of information as book entries: author name, last name first; full title of the work (newspaper and periodical titles are italicized, and article titles are put in quotation marks); and publication information. Each of these sections is followed by a period and one space.

A newspaper article:

Fowler, Jennifer Jill. "Hilly Hundred Tour Called 'the best ever.'" *Bloomington Herald-Times* 12 Oct. 1992: A1.

Wheeler, David L. "Artificial-Intelligence Researchers Develop Electronic 'Tutors' to Aid Learning Process." *Chronicle of Higher Education* 20 May 1987: 6-8.

A letter to the editor:

Identify letters by adding the description "Letter" after the name of the author. Do not italicize the word or put it in quotation marks.

Lewis, Tracy. Letter. *USA Today* 2 June 1983: 3A.

An article from a magazine published weekly or every two weeks:

Prince, Dinah. "Marriage in the '80s." *New York* 1 June 1987: 30-38.

Note that this entry gives the full date. Do not include volume and issue numbers.

An article from a magazine published every month or two months:

Frazer, Lance. "Yours, Mine, or Ours: Who Owns the Moon?" *Space World* Nov. 1986: 24-26.

This entry gives only the month and year (and note that names of months should be abbreviated). Again, do not include issue or volume numbers.

An article in a scholarly journal that pages each issue separately:

Barthelme, Frederick. "Architecture." *Kansas Quarterly* 13.3 (1981): 77-80.

Note that this entry provides the volume number (13) and issue number (3) separated by a period and followed by the year.

An article in a scholarly journal with continuous pagination (i.e., the numbers in one issue begin where the preceding issue left off):

Brock, Dan W. "The Value of Prolonging Human Life." *Philosophical Studies* 50 (1986): 401-26.

Note that this entry supplies the volume number (50) before the year.

An anonymous article:

"Drunkproofing Automobiles." *Time* 6 Apr. 1987: 37.

If no author is given for an article, begin with the title and alphabetize by title.

Movies and Videocassettes

A film entry usually begins with the title, italicized, and includes the director, the distributor, and the year. You may include other information that seems important—such as the names of the writer, performers, and producer—between the title and the distributor.

Five Corners. Dir. Tony Bill. Perf. Jodie Foster, Tim Robbins, Todd Graff, and John Turturro. Handmade Films, 1987.

If you are citing a particular person's contribution, such as the director's, begin with his or her name.

Bill, Tony, dir. *Five Corners*. Perf. Jodie Foster, Tim Robbins, Todd Graff, and John Turturro. Handmade Films, 1987.

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Citing Sources in MLA Style

In most college courses, we are asked to read and incorporate others' writing into our own. Whenever you take ideas, paraphrase, or quote from a source, you need to indicate in your paper the source from which that information came.

Which Documentation Style Should You Use?

We have many sets of documentation guidelines from which to choose, and most disciplines require a specific style of documentation. **For any paper that requires documentation, however, you should first ask your instructor or professor which citation style you should use.**

The following guidelines and examples are from the *Modern Language Association (MLA) Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (6th edition), edited by Joseph Gibaldi. This set of guidelines, or "style sheet," is used in courses in English and some other humanities departments here at IU. Again, check with your professor or instructor about which style sheet is appropriate for your particular class.

What Kind of Information Must Be Documented?

When we use information from a source that is not common knowledge, we need to tell the reader where we obtained this information.