

MLA Quick Guide

In-Text Citation

When you use a source in your text, you also briefly tell us **who** said it (the author[s]), and **where** that information was found (page number, if you have it). It makes it easy for readers to find the source's entry in the works cited page(s). Here are some examples of in-text citation:

MY SOURCE HAS ONE AUTHOR

Oluo explains cultural appropriation as “the adoption or exploitation of another culture by a more dominant culture” (146).

OR

When the dominant culture profits from or emulates characteristics of a historically oppressed or marginalized culture, this is called cultural appropriation (Oluo 146).

MY SOURCE HAS TWO AUTHORS

Cats can't create a vacuum because their cheeks aren't complete. This is why they lap up water with their tongues (Durrani and Kalaugher 117).

OR

Durrani and Kalaugher describe cats' cheeks as “incomplete,” which is why they don't suck up water with their mouths, but rather lap it up with their tongues (117).

MY SOURCE HAS THREE OR MORE AUTHORS

Most children who used the art therapy methods as a way to cope with the pain and stress of various medical procedures requested it again for future procedures (Favara-Scacco et al. 474).

Your Works Cited Page

This is an alphabetical list of your sources that goes on a separate page at the end of your project. Each type of source (book, journal article, film, etc.) has its own special citation format. Note these somewhat tricky things:

- Books, journals, and collections of smaller works are italicized.
- Smaller works that are found in larger collections (for example, an article in a journal, or an essay in a book) have quotation marks around the titles.
- Works cited entries are formatted with a hanging indent (see examples below).

MY SOURCE IS A BOOK

Oluo, Ijeoma. *So You Want to Talk About Race?* Seal Press, 2018.

MY BOOK HAS TWO AUTHORS

Durrani, Matin, and Liz Kalaugher. *Furry Logic: The Physics of Animal Life*. Bloomsbury, 2016.

MY BOOK HAS MORE THAN THREE AUTHORS

White, Karen, et al. *The Forgotten Room*. Berkley, 2016.

MY BOOK IS AN E-BOOK

Cohen, Simon. *Animals as Disguised Symbols in Renaissance Art*. Koninklijke Brill NV, The Netherlands, 2008, ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.wvu.edu. Accessed 13 January 2019.

MY SOURCE IS A JOURNAL ARTICLE I FOUND ONLINE (WITH A DOI)

Brandmayr, Federico. "Order and Conflict Theories of Science as Competing Ideologies." *Social Epistemology*, vol. 32, no. 3, 2018, pp. 175-195. Taylor & Francis Online, doi: 10.1080/02691728.2018.1440023.

MY SOURCE IS A JOURNAL ARTICLE I FOUND ONLINE (WITHOUT A DOI)

Labbo, Linda D., and Karen Place. "Fresh Perspectives on New Literacies and Technology Integration." *Voices from the Middle*, vol. 17, no. 3, 18 March 2010, pp. 9-18, <http://www.ncte.org/journals/vm/>. Accessed 2 February 2019.

MY SOURCE IS A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE I GOT ONLINE

Goel, Vindu. "In India, Building Bridges Between Life and Art." *The New York Times*, 9 January 2019, <https://nyti.ms/2FkCF9e>. Accessed 10 January 2019.

MY SOURCE IS A WEBPAGE

Drake, Nadia. "We Saw Earth Rise Over the Moon in 1968. It Changed Everything." *National Geographic*, 21 December 2018, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2018/12/earthrise-apollo-8-photo-at-50-how-it-changed-the-world/>. Accessed 28 December 2018.

More Questions:

Q. What if my source doesn't have an author?

Most scholarly articles and books will have this information, but there are some resources out there without a clear author. If you can't find an author listed, you might either use the organization as author, or, if the organization and publisher are the same, you can start your reference with the title of the work. Here are those two examples:

In-text citation: (National Senior Service Corps 24-28).

National Senior Service Corps. *Seniors for Habitat: Effective Practices Manual*. Habitat for Humanity International, 2001

In-text citation: ("A Brief History of Opera").

"A Brief History of Opera." San Francisco Opera, <https://sfopera.com/discover-opera/intro-to-opera/a-brief-history-of-opera/>. Accessed 24 April 2019.

Q. I don't have a date anywhere on my source. Can I still use it?

Yup. Just skip that part of the works cited entry. If you found the source online, however, do include an accessed date.

Q. My source is just a PDF I found online. How do I cite that?

In-text citation: (Ryan, 2016).

Ryan, J.E. “2016 Stormwater Regulations.” Whatcom County Planning & Development Services, 2016, <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/23161/Stormwater-Regulations-Update?bidId=>.

Q. Two of my sources have the same surname. How will people know who I’m referring to in my text?

Your in-text citation can include the author’s first initial.

(P. Hemsley 92).

Q. I’ve got a source-within-a-source situation. How do I cite that?

This is called an indirect source. While you should try to cite the original work, here’s what that looks like if you can’t:

Kjesrud argues that content is always more important than correct grammar, “whatever that is” (qtd. in Winningham 14).

Q. What does a reference look like for a podcast?

“A Bar Fight Walks into the Justice Center.” *Serial*. 20 September 2018, <https://serialpodcast.org/season-three/1/a-bar-fight-walks-into-the-justice-center>.

Q. This handout doesn’t answer my question; where can I go for more help?

Try the MLA Style Center at <https://style.mla.org>. It has many more examples you can view.

Q. Why should I care about citation anyway?

Here are just a few reasons:

- Proper citation allows other scholars to find your resources if they want to learn more.
- It's important to give credit where credit is due. If you use other people's ideas and words, you should identify who they are and acknowledge their work.
- When you incorporate others' opinions and research into your work, it gives you credibility; it shows you've done the research and that there are experts that back up your claims.
- If you fail to properly cite your sources, that could be considered plagiarism, even if your intentions are good.

Notes:

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