

## MLA STYLE (8th edition)

The Modern Language Association of America's style (MLA style) is one way to format research papers and bibliographies. It is one of the most frequently used styles in English studies and other humanities. All MLA style rules can be found in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* which is a useful and recommended purchase for every student and scholar of English. When we refer to the *MLA Handbook* in the following, we always refer to its latest edition from 2016.

This overview is to give you examples and rules for quoting the most common sources. It can, however, not cover every single case even though we tried to give you as much information as possible. In most cases we also included page numbers or chapters from the *MLA Handbook* concerning the respective rules. If you cannot find an answer to your question here, we advise you to consult the *MLA Handbook*. Please note that the following rules and examples are for a **works cited list** and not for the citation of sources in the text. For the latter cf. chapter 3 of the *MLA Handbook*.

**Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 8th ed., Modern Language Association of America, 2016.**

Further information on aspects like title page, layout or plagiarism can be found on the [Academic Style Sheet](#) on the English Seminar Web site. However, students writing a paper for Prof. Weidle are kindly asked to use the rules for bibliographies listed below. This style sheet is also available as a pdf.

## General Notes

- Order your entries alphabetically
- Indent subsequent lines so that the first line of each entry is easily recognisable (for technical reasons has not yet been applied to the examples below)
- If you quote more than one source by the same author you should give the name in the first entry but replace it by ---. in the following entries; order the entries by the same author alphabetically by the title of the work
- Capitalise all words in English titles except articles, prepositions and coordinating conjunctions (such as "and," "but," "or" etc.); always capitalise the first and the last word of a title or subtitle (for more details cf. *MLA Handbook* 1.2.1); for capitalisation in languages other than English cf. *MLA Handbook* 1.2.5.
- Italicise titles of primary texts (*MLA Handbook* 1.2.4); use roman for primary texts in an already italicised title: e.g. Pilkington, Ace G. *Screening Shakespeare from Richard II to Henry V*. U of Delaware P, 1991.
- Be consistent: e.g. abbreviate "Cambridge University Press" with "Cambridge UP". But then also abbreviate other publishers accordingly ("Oxford UP", "U of Chicago P"). Do not abbreviate "Oxford University Press" with "OUP" or "Cambridge University Press" with "CUP"!
- Make the entry as short as possible without leaving out any necessary information ("as little information as possible, as much information as necessary").

- Not every “text” is a reliable source for an academic paper. Sources from Web sites like *sparknotes*, *Wikipedia* or *hausarbeiten.de* must not be used! (Cf. also *MLA Handbook* "Evaluating Your Source", p. 10-12.

## Periodical Publications

The most important forms of periodicals are newspapers, magazines and journals. A works cited entry for an article in a periodical publication should contain the following information:

- Name of author (surname, given name); if there is no author etc., begin with the title of the source
- Title of article in quotation marks (italicise primary texts)
- Name of periodical in italics
- Series number or name
- Volume number
- Issue number
- Date of publication in parentheses if you are citing a journal
- Page numbers for the article
- Supplementary information (if needed)

### Examples:

Green, Stephanie. "Grave Desires: Sexual Alterity and Gothic Romance in Oscar Wilde's *The Canterville Ghost*." *Australasian Victorian Studies Journal*, vol. 3, no.1, 1997, pp. 71–79.

For more examples and cases (e.g. how to cite reviews, abstracts or editorials) cf. *MLA Handbook*.

## Nonperiodical Publications

If you cite a nonperiodical print publications such as a monograph, an anthology or a compilation your entry should contain the following information:

- Name of author(s), editor(s), compiler or translator; if there are more than two authors, editors, compilers or translators, cite only the first name and add an “et al.” (lat.: et alii = and others) ; if there is no author etc., begin with the title of the source
- Title of work in italics (titles of primary texts within the title of the article have to be in roman)
- Edition
- Volume number(s)
- Publisher, year of publication
- Supplementary information (if needed)

If you, however, wish to cite only a single article in an anthology or compilation, give the author’s name, then the title of the article in quotation marks followed by the information listed above, adding the page numbers at the end of the entry.

### Examples:

American Heritage Guide to Contemporary Usage and Style. Houghton, 2005.	A book with an unknown author
Bates, Catherine. "Desire, Discontent, Parody: The Love Sonnet in Early Modern England." <i>The Cambridge Companion to the Sonnet</i> , edited by A. D. Cousins and Peter Howarth, Cambridge UP, 2011, pp. 105–22.	An article in an anthology
Bessière, Jean, editor. <i>Mythologies de l'écriture: Champs critiques</i> . PUF, 1990.	A book in a language other than English
Njus, Jesse. <i>Performing the Passion: A Study on the Nature of Medieval Acting</i> . 2010. Northwestern U, PhD dissertation..	An unpublished dissertation
Maier, Hans, and Horst Denzer, editors. <i>Klassiker des politischen Denkens</i> . 6th ed., vol. 1, Beck, 2001.	A multivolume edition, only first volume used
Morris, Roy, Jr. <i>Declaring His Genius: Oscar Wilde in North America</i> . Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013. Print.	A suffix important for the name
Pilkington, Ace G. <i>Screening Shakespeare from Richard II to Henry V</i> . U of Delaware P, 1991.	Title of primary text in roman
Plag, Ingo, et. al. <i>Introduction to English Linguistics</i> . Mouton, 2007.	A book by more than two authors
Raby, Peter, editor. <i>The Cambridge Companion to Oscar Wilde</i> . Cambridge UP, 2004.	An anthology
---. "Wilde's Comedies of Society." <i>The Cambridge Companion to Oscar Wilde</i> , edited by Peter Raby, Cambridge UP, 2004, pp. 143–60.	An entry by the previous author
Schabert, Ina, ed. <i>Shakespeare-Handbuch: Die Zeit – Der Mensch – Das Werk – Die Nachwelt</i> . 5th ed, Kröner, 2009.	A subsequent edition
Tetzeli von Rosador, Kurt. "Die nichtdramatischen Dichtungen." <i>Shakespeare-Handbuch: Die Zeit – Der Mensch – Das Werk – Die Nachwelt</i> , edited by Ina Schabert, 5th ed., Kröner, 2009, pp. 568–600.	An article in an anthology
Wroth, Mary. <i>The Countesse of Mountgomerie's Urania</i> . London, 1621.	The publisher can be omitted if the book was first published before 1900

For more examples and cases (e.g. how to cite translations, prefaces, forewords or illustrated books) cf. *MLA Handbook*.

## Web Publications

Web sources have become increasingly important when researching for a thesis. Some journals solely exist in electronic form. Whereas print publications can only be changed in a new edition, web sources are prone to constant revision and modification. Often, web publications might be accessible in different online databases in different versions at the

same time. Thus, it may be useful to indicate the date and place of access in addition to the information necessary for a normal print document.

### **A Nonperiodical Web Publication:**

- Name of the author, compiler, director, editor, narrator, performer, or translator of the work; if there is no author etc., begin with the title of the source
- Title of the work (italicised if the work is independent; in roman type and quotation marks if the work is part of a larger work)
- Title of the overall Web site (italicised), if distinct from item 2, i.e. the title of the work
- Version or edition used
- Date of publication (day, month, and year, as available); if nothing is available, use *n.d.*
- Location (URL, doi, or Web address)
- Only provide the date of access when the source provides no date specifying when it was produced or published

#### Examples:

Green, Joshua. "The Rove Presidency." *The Atlantic*, Sept. 2007, [www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2007/09/the-rove-presidency/306132](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2007/09/the-rove-presidency/306132).

Hollmichel, Stefanie. "The Reading Brain: Differences between Digital and Print." *So Many Books*, 25 Apr. 2013, [somanycbooksblog.com/2013/04/25/the-reading-brain-differences-between-digital-and-print/](http://somanycbooksblog.com/2013/04/25/the-reading-brain-differences-between-digital-and-print/).

"Under the Gun." *Pretty Little Liars*, season 4, episode 6, ABC Family, 16 July 2013. *Hulu*, [www.hulu.com/watch/511318](http://www.hulu.com/watch/511318). Accessed 23 July 2013.

When you access an online work through an online database such as JSTOR, MLA, Project Muse etc., include that information before the location.

#### Example:

Stanley, Julia P. "'Correctness,' 'Appropriateness,' and the Uses of English." *College English*, vol. 41, no. 3, Nov. 1979, pp. 330-35. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/376452](http://www.jstor.org/stable/376452).

## **Other Common Sources**

For other cases (e.g. audio files, films or digital files) cf. *MLA Handbook*.

## **Further information**

[Here](#) you can find a model paper. Please note that this paper was written using the 6th edition of the *MLA Handbook*.