

MLA Documentation

What do you need to document?

- Any direct quotation (a word, a phrase...)
- Any paraphrase or summary of another person's work (interviews, presentations...)
- Any opinions, interpretations, and conclusions that are not your own
- Any statistical data you have not compiled yourself
- Any visuals (photographs, graphs, charts, drawings...)

Documentation

Parenthetical Documentation: Documenting within the paper in parenthesis. Begin one space after the material cited. No punctuation should come between the material and the parenthesis, except of course for the closing quotations. Periods, commas, semicolons, etc are placed after the parenthesis:

According to John Smith, "most writers begin with a spacious design, putting a lot of material down on paper and then narrowing it down" (78).

If you have a quotation that is longer than 3 lines, you must set it off from the text. Skip two spaces after the final punctuation mark of the quotation and insert the parenthetical reference with no punctuation mark following:

Writers are usually introverts, since writing is a highly personal transaction:

It is one person discussing matters with the self. Readers are able to identify with this. They are able to understand that an author commits a great deal of him/herself on paper. (Smith 79)

Guidelines on Parenthetical Documentation:

- 1) If you give the author's name in the text, you only need to provide the page numbers in parenthesis:
In his book, *Poetics*, Aristotle states that Oedipus was the tragic hero par excellence (45).
- 2) If you don't give the author's name in the text, you need to provide the author's last name and the page numbers within the parenthesis:
A Tragedy must allow the audience to feel pity and fear (Aristotle 46).
- 3) When you are citing more than one work with the same author and you don't mention the author's name in the text, you need to give the author's name, an abbreviated title, and the page numbers within the parenthesis: (Smith, *Plague* 96).
- 4) If you do mention the author's name when you are citing more than one work with the same author, you need to give an abbreviated title and the page numbers within the parenthesis: (*Plague* 96).
- 5) If you are using a book that has more than one author up to three authors whose names you did not mention in your text, give the last names of each author and the page numbers within the parenthesis: (Millan and Sandifer 45).
- 6) If you are using a book that has more than three author's, mention the first author's name and use *et al.* (and others): (Millan et al. 52).

- 7) If the work was written by an organization, a committee, a corporation, a government agency, use the full or the abbreviated name: (MADD 6) or (Midwest Union College 52).
- 8) If a work has more than one volume, use a colon, followed by one space to separate the volume number from the page numbers: (Milton 3: 48).
- 9) When you are using an article or a book where your author quotes another author and you wish to use that quotation, place the abbreviation *qtd. in* (Quoted In) : (qtd. in Milton 78-79).

The List of Works Cited:

Every one of the parenthetical citations you included in your paper must have an entry in your works cited page. The **Works Cited page** comes at the end of your paper, detailing the works/sources used. The entries must be in alphabetical order arranged by the authors' last names. If a work has no author, alphabetize by the first word in the title, excluding the articles (a, an, the).

BOOKS

Citation entries for books generally list three main sections for information about your source:

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

Each of these sections is followed by a period and two spaces.

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.

In the above entries

1. the title is underlined or italicized
2. there are two spaces between the three sections of the entry
3. often-used words, such as "University" and "Press" use only initials, i.e., UP means "University Press;" no periods are used
4. only the first line is at the margin; all other lines are indented five spaces; and
5. there is only one blank space after each colon.

A Book by Two or More Persons:

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.

Second Work by the same author

When a person has authored (or edited or translated or compiled) more than one text, typical bibliography entries will appear as follows:

Fee, Elizabeth, ed. *Women and Health: The Politics of Sex
in Medicine.* Farmingdale, N.Y.: Baywood, 1982.

---. *AIDS: The Making of A Chronic Disease.* Berkeley: U
of California P, 1992.

Electronic Books

For electronic books, texts, or periodicals, provide the same information as a printed source, then add the necessary information for finding it online, the date of access, and the URL:

De Bonoutra, Simon. *The Second Time.* 6th ed. Vol. III. New York, NY:
Knopf Publishing House, 1953. <<http://www.Norton.com>>

"Frank Sinatra." Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000. CD-ROM. New
York: Microsoft, 1999.

ARTICLES IN NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

Citation entries for newspapers and periodicals generally list three main sections of information about your source:

1. author name: last name first;

2. full title of the work: newspaper and periodical titles are underlined or italicized; article titles are put in quotation marks; and
3. publication information: this will vary according to the amount of information available--follow the examples.

Each of these sections is followed by a period and two spaces.

I. 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.

II. A Letter to the Editor:

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

III. An Article from a Magazine:

A. 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.

B. 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 states only the month. Again, you should not include issue or volume numbers in your citation.

Abbreviate the names of months so that they take up three spaces plus a period, e.g., Aug. The following months may be spelled out: May, June, and July.

IV. An Article in a Scholarly Journal:

A. a 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.

B. a 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.

V. An Anonymous Article:

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

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

VI. An Article With a Title That Contains a Quotation or a Title Within Quotation Marks:

Carrier, Warren. "Deconstructing Keats's 'Ode on a Grecian
Urn.'" *Critical Thought* 28 (1992): 35- 58.

VII. Online Journals

Jefferson, Paul. "The Role of Democracy." *Government and Authority* (1
August 2000). 13 July 2003.
<<http://www.journals.org/gov/ny/volume?sj=19>>

ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLES

To cite an article in an encyclopedia, use the same format as if it were an item in an anthology (see above), the only difference being that the editor should not be cited. If the passage designates a particular author (sometimes this is done with abbreviations of the

author's name - find the entire name of that author elsewhere in the work), give the name of the author first. If there is no explicit author, then give the title first. If the encyclopedia arranges its articles alphabetically, volume and page numbers may be omitted. If the encyclopedia is very familiar and frequently appears in new additions, only the edition and the year of publication are needed.

"Mealworm." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 1987 ed. Garvey, Lawrence. "El Paso, Illinois." *Encyclopedia Americana*. 1982.

Citing sources includes:

- ethical, legitimate use of source material
- accurate, clear parenthetical citations
- thorough Works Cited page

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism involves trying to pass off another's words or ideas as one's own. One plagiarizes if one

- turns in another student's work as though it were one's own -- even with the other student's permission
- types up something that appeared in a periodical, book, website, or similar source and turns it in as one's own work
- purchases or downloads an essay from a paper mill
- copies and pastes passages from a website without a diligent attempt to indicate that the material is the work of another writer
- presents another writer's ideas as though they are one's own (that is, without clearly citing a source)--even if one has altered the language through which the ideas are expressed (Note: This activity does **NOT** constitute legitimate paraphrase)
- credits a source for ideas, but adheres closely to the language (especially sentence structure) of the original passage (Note: This activity does **NOT** constitute legitimate paraphrase)

Sometimes individuals plagiarize intentionally (as is clearly the case with the first several actions listed above); in other cases, however, the plagiarism is due to carelessness or ignorance. Yet even the latter form of plagiarism is a serious problem.

QUOTING safely and effectively

- Lead into the quote. Do not simply drop it into the paragraph. You may wish to use this lead-in to establish the credibility of the source. (Examples of lead-ins:

Robert Kennedy once observed... Shirley Chisolm has said that... Stephen Hawking, the noted physicist, argues for another explanation:)

- Place quotation marks (**absolutely necessary!**) around words, phrases, and sentences that you take from a source. (Wait a minute--does a word used in isolation really need to be quoted? If it's a fairly unique word--say, a choice adjective that describes something in a flavorful or precise way--yes, it probably should be quoted. A more mundane word--*computer*, for instance, or *snow*--would not need to be placed in quotation marks if it stood alone.)
- Quote with accuracy. Do not alter the quotation.
- Indicate any deletions within the quote. Usually this is done with ellipses, which look like this: [. . .]
- Indicate any additions or other changes you make to the quote. Usually this is done by placing the new text in square brackets.
- Cite your source (**absolutely necessary!**).

PARAPHRASE effectively

- Read the passage carefully. Reread it if you do not understand it completely the first time.
- Do not look at the source as you attempt to paraphrase it.
- Write down your understanding of the idea(s) you believe the source is attempting to express. Include major themes and the basic outline of supporting examples. Use your own words (**absolutely necessary!**) and your own sentence structure (**absolutely necessary!**). The most common mistake here involves keeping the same sentence structure, the same style, as the original source. Doing so is plagiarism.
- Check your paraphrase against the source. Is it accurate, both in fact and in spirit? Are your words different enough? Are your sentences different enough? If the answer to any of these questions is no, start over.
- Cite your source (**absolutely necessary!**) at the end of the paraphrase.