

# Using the Proper MLA Format

Here is a quick guide for using the MLA format to properly cite your sources. Further examples can be found online at [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org) and <https://www.library.cornell.edu/research/citation/mla>.

Plagiarizing is a serious academic offense. In broad terms, it is “stealing” the work of someone else and using it as if it were your own work.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- Copying another person’s essay and submitting it as if it were your own.
- Quoting words or ideas from someone else and not giving them credit.
- Changing words but not the structure from another source.
- Not putting quotes around something directly taken from another source.
- Using so much of another source in your paper—quoted or not—so that the majority of the paper is someone else’s work.

You can avoid plagiarism in a very simple way: citing your sources. This means you name the sources where you got your information. You do this in two ways.

- Create a Works Cited page.
- Use an in-text citation.

Below you will find a helpful guide for doing this properly.

## Works Cited Page:

This is the list of the resources you used to create your essay. It could be books, websites, and poems among many other sources. Below is a guide for the Works Cited page that should be at the end of each of your essays. Be sure to pay attention to punctuation, capitalization, and the indenting of the second (and following) lines instead of the first line as a paragraph typically does. A Works Cited page is also listed in alphabetical order.

<b>Book with one author</b>	Lastname, Firstname. <i>Title of Book</i> . City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication.  Gleick, James. <i>Chaos: Making a New Science</i> . New York: Penguin, 1987. Print.
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<p><b>Book with more than one author</b></p>	<p>Lastname, Firstname, and Firstname Lastname. <i>Title of Book</i>. City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication.</p> <p>Gillespie, Paula, and Neal Lerner. <i>The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring</i>. Boston: Allyn, 2000. Print.</p>
<p><b>A page on a website</b></p> <p>If no publishing date is given, write "n.d."</p>	<p>"Title of Article." <i>Title of Webpage</i>. Publisher, Date of Publishing. Web. Date Accessed.</p> <p>"How to Make Vegetarian Chili." <i>eHow</i>. Demand Media, n.d. Web. 24 Feb. 2009.</p>
<p><b>A poem from the textbook</b></p>	<p>Lastname, Firstname. "Title of Poem." <i>Title of Textbook</i>. Ed. Editor's Name(s). City of Publication: Publisher, Year. Page range of entry. Medium of Publication.</p> <p>Shakespeare, William. "Sonnet 116." <i>Literature: The British Tradition</i>. Hoboken, New Jersey: Pearson, 2015. 276. Print.</p>

### In-Text Citation:

This is a quicker reference in the essay right by the copied information. It will be brief and should match up with one of the more formal listings in the Works Cited page.

<p><b>Books with one author:</b></p>	<p>Use the author's last name and page number, if given.</p> <p>(Gleick 18)</p> <p>"I am quoting from this book" (Gleick 18), and you should be able to see my Works Cited page for what that parenthetical citation actually refers to.</p>
<p><b>Books with more than one author</b></p>	<p>Use both last names and page number, if given.</p> <p>(Gillespie and Lerner 12–13)</p> <p>"Assume these are direct words from the book" (Gillespie and Lerner 12–13).</p>

<b>A page on a website</b>	<p>Author's last name, if given. If not, use the first word of the title, punctuated the same.</p> <p>("How")</p> <p>"If these were words from the page, I would cite it like this" ("How").</p>
<b>A poem from the textbook</b>	<p>Author's last name and page number, if given.</p> <p>"Let me not to the marriage of true minds / Admit impediments" (Shakespeare 276).</p> <p><i>If you mention the poem title you can cite the line number:</i></p> <p>In Shakespeare's "Sonnet 116," he says, "Let me not to the marriage of true minds / Admit impediments" (Lines 1–2).</p>

**Another Note:**

For many of the uses in this course, the readings are commonly known. It is also okay to mention the title of the work in the sentence along with the author, and then use an in-text citation with the poem line. For plays, use the Act, Scene, and Line. You can also give the citation prior to the quote.

<b>Poems</b>	<p>In "To his Coy Mistress", Andrew Marvell speaks about time being an issue. "Had we but world enough and time, / this coyness, lady were no crime" (Lines 1–2).</p> <p>In the opening lines, Marvell says, "Had we but world enough and time, / this coyness, lady were no crime."</p>
<b>Plays</b>	<p>In Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i>, Macbeth struggles with his plan to kill Duncan. "Let not light see my black and deep desires" (Act I, Scene iv, Line 51).</p> <p>In Act I, Scene iv, Line 51, Macbeth says, "Let not light see my black and deep desires", which indicates his struggle with his plan to kill Duncan.</p>