

MLA Documentation: Print Sources

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Why is Citing Sources Important?

When you write persuasive essays and papers, using others' ideas to back up your own conclusions greatly strengthens your argument's validity. It is important, however, not to let these outside sources construct your argument for you; you should use them only to *support* your claims. To avoid plagiarism, which is a serious violation of the Hamilton College Honor Code and of academic integrity in general, you must give credit for all ideas--not just words--that are not your own. Failure to do so, whether intentional or not, can result in serious disciplinary action. That is why you need to have a firm grasp of how to document sources both within the paper and through corresponding entries in a works cited page.

Aren't There Different Accepted Forms for Citations?

The citation forms we give here follow the MLA (Modern Language Association) guidelines for courses in language and literature; these guidelines include parenthetical citations with a works cited page. Social sciences and natural sciences favor different forms for in-text citations and for works cited pages.¹ For papers that use many sources (such as history papers), professors often prefer footnotes. When you are unsure of what form to use, consult your professor.

Where Do I Put Citations?

When documenting ideas, paraphrases, and quotations, use the parenthetical citation forms listed in this handout. These are appropriate for prose citations; poetry and drama have slightly different forms.² Include the citation after your end quotation mark but before the end punctuation of the sentence. Remember, the citation occurs *before* the final period. For quotations longer than four lines (block quotations), indent and single space the text; do not use quotation marks. The citation for block quotations follows the end punctuation.

What Information Do I Include in Citations?

¹ According to the [Hamilton College Style Sheet](#), "The social sciences [in general] prefer the author's name, the date, and the page number (e.g., Smith 1987: 273)," whereas "The natural sciences prefer the author's name and the date, but not the page number (e.g., Smith, 1987)" (28).

²For **poetry**, cite the line number(s): (5-10). For **drama** (in most cases), cite act, scene, and line(s): (1.2.5-10) (Gibaldi 74-75, 198).

When you use the MLA format, it is important to remember that your goal is to give your readers enough information so that they can return to your source. When you provide this information, try to avoid repetition. If, for example, you introduce your author in the same sentence in which your quoted material appears, you have already provided information as to the source of your material, and you need to place only page numbers within your end parentheses. Also, if within a section of a paper you repeatedly cite the same author and text, you do not need to include the author's name within all the citations; after the first citation simply record the page number. If your source has no author, the accepted rule is to give your readers the first information that appears in the works cited entry, such as the name of the editor or translator.

How Do I Set Up the Works Cited Page?

As a general rule, list the works cited on a separate, numbered page at the end of your paper. Indent by five spaces all but the first lines of your entries.

Below is a listing taken from Joseph Trimmer's A Guide to MLA Documentation of most of the types of print sources you are likely to encounter. Check with the MLA handbook or the "Useful Links" on the Writing Center homepage for additional information.

<u>Parenthetical Citations</u>	<u>Works Cited Page</u>
<i>I. BOOKS</i>	
A Book by One Author (Author pp.) (Petroski 174)	A Book by One Author Petroski, Henry. <u>To Engineer Is Human: The Role of Failure in Successful Design</u> . New York: St. Martin's, 1985.
Two or More Books by the Same Author (Author, <u>Shortened Title</u> pp.) (Hirsch, <u>Cultural Literacy</u> 174)	Two or More Books by the Same Author Hirsch, E. D., Jr. <u>Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know</u> . Boston: Houghton, 1987.
A Book by Two or Three Authors (Author and Author pp.) (Vare & Otacek 174)	A Book by Two or Three Authors Vare, Ethlie Ann, and Greg Ptacek. <u>Mothers of Invention: From the Bra to the Bomb: Forgotten Women and Their Unforgettable Ideas</u> . New York: Morrow, 1988.
A Book by Four or More Authors (First Author et al. pp.) (Belenky et al. 174)	A Book by Four or More Authors Belenky, Mary Field, et al. <u>Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind</u> . New York: Basic, 1986.

<u>Parenthetical Citations</u>	<u>Works Cited Page</u>
<p>A Book by a Corporate Author (Corporate Author pp.) (The Boston Women's Health Book Collective 174)</p>	<p>A Book by a Corporate Author The Boston Women's Health Book Collective. <u>Our Bodies, Ourselves: A Book by and for Women</u>. New York: Simon, 1973.</p>
<p>A Book by an Anonymous Author (Shortened Title pp.) (<u>Literary Market Place</u> 174)</p>	<p>A Book by an Anonymous Author <u>Literary Market Place: The Directory of American Book Publishing</u>. 1985 ed. New York: Bowker, 1984.</p>
<p>A Book with an Editor (Editor pp.) (Hall 174)</p>	<p>A Book with an Editor Hall, Donald, ed. <u>The Oxford Book of American Literary Anecdotes</u>. New York: Oxford UP, 1981.</p>
<p>A Book with an Author and an Editor (Author pp.) (Toomer 174)</p>	<p>A Book with an Author and an Editor Toomer, Jean. <u>Cane</u>. Ed. Darwin T. Turner. New York: Norton, 1988.</p>
<p>An Anthology or Compilation (Author and Author pp.) (Valdez and Steiner 174)</p>	<p>An Anthology or Compilation Valdez, Luis, and Stan Steiner, eds. <u>Aztlan: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature</u>. New York: Vintage-Knopf, 1972.</p>
<p>A Work in an Anthology (Author pp.) (Thomas 125)</p>	<p>A Work in an Anthology Thomas, Lewis. "A Long Line of Cells." <u>Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir</u>. Ed. William Zinsser. Boston: Houghton, 1987. 125-48.</p>
<p>An Introduction, Preface, Foreword, or Afterword (Preface/Foreword/Afterword Author pp.) (Bernstein 275)</p>	<p>An Introduction, Preface, Foreword, or Afterword Bernstein, Carl. Afterword. <u>Poison Penmanship: The Gentle Art of Muckraking</u>. By Jessica Mitford. New York: Vintage-Random, 1979. 275-77.</p>
<p>A Republished Book (Author pp.) (Malamud 174)</p>	<p>A Republished Book Malamud, Bernard. <u>The Natural</u>. 1952. New York: Avon, 1980.</p>

<u>Parenthetical Citations</u>	<u>Works Cited Page</u>
<i>II. ARTICLES</i>	
A Signed Article in a Reference Book (Author pp.) (Tobias 174)	A Signed Article in a Reference Book Tobias, Richard. "Thurber, James." <u>Encyclopedia Americana</u> . 1987 ed.
An Unsigned Article in a Reference Book ("Shortened Article Title" pp.) ("Tharp" 174)	An Unsigned Article in a Reference Book "Tharp, Twyla." <u>Who's Who of American Women</u> . 15 th ed. 1987-88.
An Article in a Journal with Continuous Pagination (Author pp.) (Fulwiler 114)	An Article in a Journal with Continuous Pagination Fulwiler, Toby. "How Well Does Writing across the Curriculum Work?" <u>College English</u> 46 (1984): 113-25.
An Article in a Journal that Numbers Pages in Each Issue Separately (Author pp.) (Walker 74)	An Article in a Journal that Numbers Pages in Each Issue Separately Walker, Jack. "The Primary Game." <u>Wilson Quarterly</u> 12.1 (1988): 64-77.
An Article from a Monthly or Bimonthly Periodical (Author pp.) (Edsall 86)	An Article from a Monthly or Bimonthly Periodical Edsall, Thomas Byrne. "The Return of Inequality." <u>Atlantic</u> June 1988: 86-94.
An Article from a Weekly or Biweekly Periodical (Author pp.) (McPhee 43)	An Article from a Weekly or Biweekly Periodical McPhee, John. "The Control of Nature: Cooling the Lava – 1." <u>New Yorker</u> 22 Feb. 1988: 43-77.
A Signed Article from a Daily Newspaper (Author pp.) (Darst 17)	A Signed Article from a Daily Newspaper Darst, Guy. "Environmentalists Want Hotels, Concessions Removed from US Parks." <u>Boston Globe</u> 25 May 1988: 17.
An Unsigned Article from a Daily Newspaper ("Shortened Article Title" pp.)	An Unsigned Article from a Daily Newspaper "Hospitals, Competing for Scarce Patients,

("Hospitals, Competing" 47)	Turn to Advertising." <u>New York Times</u> 20 Apr. 1986, sec. 1: 47.
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For information on **citing on-line sources**, go to

- on the Writing Center homepage:
 - <<http://onthehill.hamilton.edu/academics/resource/wc/>>
 - "Useful Links" and
 - the Writing Center handout "MLA Documentation: On-Line Sources"
- the official MLA website: <<http://www.mla.org/>>

You also can consult the sources listed below. In addition, the Writing Center has many resource books and handouts that you are welcome to use.

Works Cited³

- Gibaldi, Joseph, ed. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 5th ed. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1999.
- Hamilton College Reference Librarians. "Citing Electronic Information." Series of four handouts.
- Harnack, Andrew, and Eugene Kleppinger. Online! A Reference Guide to Using Internet Sources. New York: St. Martin's, 1997.
- Lia, Xia. Electronic Styles: A Handbook for Citing Electronic Information. 2nd ed. Medford: Information Today, 1996.
- Modern Language Association. "MLA Style." July 9, 1998.
http://www.mla.org/set_stl.htm. May 14, 1999.
- O'Neill, John H., and Margaret Thickstun, eds. Hamilton College Style Sheet. Trustees of Hamilton College, 1998.
- Trimmer, Joseph F. A Guide To MLA Documentation. Boston: Houghton, 1989.

³ This should be a separate page, but for purposes of space we are including it here.