



Oregon Coast Community College Library

MLA STYLE SHEET

Jan 2012

Changes to the MLA Handbook, 7th Edition

- § Use italics in citations for titles of larger works such as books. A general rule of thumb: if it has its own cover, it is considered a larger work. Use quotation marks for titles of shorter works such as poems and articles.
- § For every citation you must give the Medium of Publication. Examples might be Print or Web sources, but could also be other mediums such CD-ROMs or DVDs.
- § Also new, you are no longer required to provide URLs in your citations. However, if your instructor requests them, simply include them in angle brackets after the citation entry followed by a period.

Parenthetical Documentation

Whenever you use someone else's ideas or words in your paper, you will need to insert a brief parenthetical acknowledgment. This is most often the author's last name and page numbers where you obtained your information. Every reference in the text must point to a specific source in your Works Cited.

Example: "The major diseases in the industrialized world are caused by departures from the diet to which our early ancestors were adapted" (Shields 185).

In this case, the reader would find the complete publication information by scrolling down the works cited list until they found the author with the last name of *Shields*.

The Basic Format for the MLA Works Cited Page

- Place your Works Cited page on a separate sheet at the end of your research paper. Center the title, Works Cited, at the top of the page. Continue the page numbering from the body of the paper. Margins should be one inch all around, and all entries are double-spaced.
- Indent the second and subsequent lines of citations five spaces to form a hanging indent.
- The citations are comprised of three sections separated by a period after the author, the title, and the publication information. Only one space need follow the period.
- Capitalize each word in the titles of articles and books, with the exception of words such as *a*, *an* or *the*, short prepositions, or conjunctions unless one is the first word of the title. For example: "The Life of Birds."
- Citations are listed alphabetically by the author's last name. If the author is unknown, use the first word of the title, skipping words such as *A*, *An*, or *The*.

Books

The basic form for a book citation is: Lastname, Firstname. *Title of Book*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication.

Example: Shields, David. *The Thing about Life is that One Day You'll Be Dead*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008. Print.

Books with more than one author are listed by the first author's last name, first name format; and then subsequent author names appear by first name and last name, such as: *Jones, Bob and Sally Hart*. Many other variations are possible—you should consult the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* in the OCCC Library for more information.

Web Publications

The Purdue Online Writing Lab gives the following as necessary parts of a Web citation:

Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). *Name of Site*. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available). Medium of publication. Date of access.

Example:

The Purdue OWL Family of Sites. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2008. Web. 21 April 2010.

Electronic Databases

Most databases today have a citation feature, which puts a citation together for you in whichever style you choose. You may need to make slight alterations in format or punctuation, so inspect the results closely. It should resemble a citation for a printed article, but it will also have the title of the database in italics, then the word **Web**, and then the date of access by day, month, and year.

Example:

"Muscular dystrophy reversed." *American Scientist* 95.2 (2007): 124. *Academic OneFile*. Web. 29 Apr. 2010.

Sources of Help

- § Visit the OCCC Library homepage at <http://occc.cc.or.us/library/index.html> for tutorials and aids to help with the research process.
- § The Purdue Online Writing Lab is an excellent source for help with research papers. Go to: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> for help with MLA style citations.
- § www.mla.org is the Modern Language Association website, and it has some helpful information.
- § Go to Son of Citation Machine at <http://citationmachine.net/index2.php?start=&reqstyleid=0#> to use a very friendly online citation generator.
- § The OCCC Library has the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* available for check-out.