

# MLA FAQ

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## How do I format my headers and heading?

The MLA header only requires your last name and the page number on the top-right corner of every page. In the heading, flush left, include your name, your professor's name, the course name, and the date, each on a new line. The title of your paper should follow on the next line, centered and with no special changes to the font (12-point basic font).

- **Header Example (should be right-aligned)**

Thom 1

- **Heading Example (should be left-aligned)**

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WR 230W

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### Professors Have Priority

If your professor provides instructions that differ from these or any other MLA formatting rules, make sure to follow those directions instead. Your professors know what they want, which sometimes means bending the rules of the already-flexible MLA 8 formatting.

## Where do I put my parenthetical citation?

Try to include your parenthetical citation after your quotation, paraphrase, or summary but before your analysis, since those ideas are yours and not the author's. Find the most natural break after the source's information to include your citation.

- In *Walden*, Thoreau claims that "things do not change; we change" (248)

## How do I quote and cite poetry?

If you quote poetry (or any verse text) within the sentence of your text, use a single slash ( / ) to signify line breaks and a double slash ( // ) to indicate stanza breaks. Use a block quote when citing three or more lines. The first time you cite poetry, include the word "line" or "lines" between the author and line numbers, but only include the numbers themselves in the rest of your citations.

- First time: (Angelou lines 4-7); Rest of paper: (Angelou 6-8)

## How do I quote and cite plays?

If you are using dialogue from a play that shifts between characters, use a block quotation following the formatting of the play. If integrating the quote within the text of your sentence, cite it with act, scene, and line numbers as well. Include any special designations for a unique type of scene.

- (3.2.16-22)
- (Prologue 15-23)

### How do I cite editors/translators/etc.?

If the main author performed a specific role other than writing, include a term to describe the role after their name separated by a comma in the Works Cited list (translator, editor, producer, etc.).

- Borroff, Marie, editor.

If the editor/translator/etc. is not the main author but is important to include, include them in the “Other contributors” section with a short description of the role (edited by, translated by, introduction by, etc.).

- Translated by Seamus Heaney

### How do I cite works in a collection or anthology?

In the title section of the citation, include the title of the work as it would be formatted outside of the collection, followed by the title of the collection in italics. In “other contributors,” include editors and/or translators involved in creating the collection.

- Harris, Muriel. “Talk to Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers.” *A Tutor’s Guide: Helping Writers One to One*, edited by Ben Rafoth, Heinemann, 2000, pp. 24-34.

### How do I cite sources in a multi-volume work?

For an in-text citation referring to an entire volume of a work, follow the author’s name with a comma and the volume number. If referring to page numbers in a volume, use the volume number and page range.

- (Schlesinger, vol. 3)
- (5:13-15)

### How do I cite multiple works by the same author?

On the Works Cited page, use three hyphens with no spaces in between where an author normally goes to indicate that it is the same as the one above. Repeat the author’s full name when citing any of their co-written works. When citing within the text of your essay, use the titles of the author’s works to differentiate which source you are referring to.

- Glaspell, Susan. *Trifles*.  
---. “A Jury of Her Peers.”

### How do I cite a well-known work in-text?

Some sources are so commonly used, such as the Bible and Shakespeare’s works, there are agreed-upon abbreviations for in-text citations. Instead of guessing what makes sense, look them up when you think you can use them. On the Works Cited page, include which edition of the text you used.

- Dante Alighieri’s *Inferno* (*Inf.* XI, 83-84)

#### Still have questions?

Try checking out The MLA Style Center and its sample papers, created by MLA to answer many types of formatting questions: <https://style.mla.org>

# MLA8 CORE ELEMENTS

## In brief

1 Author.	Who created the work?
2 Title of Source.	What is the name of the work?
3 Title of container,	Larger wholes in which the source is located
4 Other contributors.	Editors, illustrators, translators, etc
5 Version,	Edition or version of a work
6 Number,	Part of sequence, volume and/or issue
7 Publisher,	Who produced or distributed the work?
8 Publication date,	When was it created?
9 Location.	Where found? Page / para number, URL or DOI

*Information adapted from the MLA Handbook, Eighth Edition. For more information, find it on our bookshelf or in the library.*