In the MLA 8th edition, citations are based on information about the source (author, title of source, container, publication date, etc.), referred to as elements. MLA requires these elements be in a certain order, with specific punctuation that follows each element. Most sources have a container. If a source is inside a larger whole, such as a short story in a textbook, an article on a website, or an episode in a TV series, MLA calls the larger whole a container. Sample citations of frequently used source categories follow below.

1. **Article from a WEBSITE:**


   ![Diagram of citation structure]

   **Note:** Some sources have two containers. For example, for a journal article accessed through a database: Container 1 would be the journal, and Container 2 would be the database. See sample 2 below.

2. **Journal Article from an ONLINE DATABASE:**


   ![Diagram of citation structure]

3. **Reference on the WEB:**

4. Journal Article from an ONLINE DATABASE with a DOI:


5. Material from a GOVERNMENT AGENCY WEB SITE:


6. Article in an ONLINE NEWSPAPER:

7. Essay/Article in EDITED TEXT:


8. Article in a SCHOLARLY JOURNAL:


9. VIDEO on the WEB:


10. PODCAST:

11. INTERVIEW:


12. BOOK:


**Details Regarding the Elements of an MLA Works Cited Citation**

*Not all sources will have every element. Skip if not provided.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Examples and Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>The first author named should be inverted: Last name, First name. All other names are as usual: First name Last name. See examples in the chart below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Authors</strong></td>
<td><strong>Examples</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Brown, Jack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Brown, Jack and Laura Jackson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three or more</td>
<td>Brown, Jack, et al.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If no author is given, skip straight to the title. If it is a government document, the author is the federal, state, or local entity. Examples include United States or Missouri State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>The title of your essay and the titles of sources should use Capital letters for the first letter of the major words and the first words of the title and subtitle. Use a colon to separate the title and subtitle. Example: “The Best Laid Plans: Scheduling Your Time.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Should your title be in quotes or italics?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Quotes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short works:</td>
<td><em>Book Titles</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Article Titles”</td>
<td><em>Movie Titles</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Essay Titles”</td>
<td><em>TV Show Titles</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Poem Titles”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Song Titles”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Episode Titles”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title of container 1 or 2</strong></td>
<td>Often an article or shorter piece is contained within a larger whole, in which case you should include the title of the container. Some sources have two containers, such as an article in a journal (container 1) in a database (container 2).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other contributors</strong></td>
<td>See sample citation #7 on page 3. Possible contributors include: edited by, created by, adapted by, directed by, performance by, translated by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Version</strong></td>
<td>See sample citation #7 on page 3. Possible versions include edition number or special version/edition. Examples are: 3rd ed., King James Version, Expanded ed., director’s cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
<td>Journals often have volume numbers, or both volume and issue numbers. See sample citation #9 on page 3. TV shows have seasons and episode numbers. See sample citation #4 on page 2. Possible numbers include: vol. 128 vol. 3, no. 5 no. 57 season 2, episode 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publisher</strong></td>
<td>If the work is published by its author, skip this item. Omit ending terms such as Inc. and Co. When listing academic publishers of books, abbreviate University as U and Press as P. Example: University of Chicago Press becomes U of Chicago P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publication date</strong></td>
<td>Include full date given in source. Dates should be in European format: date, then abbreviated month, and then year. Example: 12 Nov. 2016. Abbreviate all months except May, June, and July. Sometimes only the year or only the month and year are provided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Location

The location of the source can be page numbers or the web address (URL), a permalink (permanent web address), or the DOI number. Example locations include:

- p. 6 (page number)
- pp. 322-29 (page numbers)
- doi: 10.1016/j.watres.2005.05.048 (DOI number)

URL/web address or permalink – don’t include http:// or https://

If the URL is more than three full lines long, you may shorten it to the home address. See sample citation #6 on page 2.

Date of access

Optional: Especially for Internet sources that do not provide a publication date, you may include the date of access (the day you found the source). Use the European format: 3 Nov. 2016. You may also wish to include date of access for web sources whose URL is likely to change in the future.

FORMATTING THE WORKS CITED PAGE

- Center Works Cited at the top of the page.
- Alphabetize the citations according to the first word (usually last name or title).
- Skip A, An, and The when alphabetizing, and use the next word. Example: “The Best Laid Plans” would be alphabetized by the B in Best, not the T in The.
- Do NOT number the entries in your Works Cited list—just alphabetize.
- Double space the lines and use the hanging indent format, which means the first line is NOT indented, and the second and additional lines ARE indented. See the sample citations in this handout for an example of hanging indentation format.

See our handout “MLA 8th Edition: In-text Citations and Sample Essay” for a sample works cited page and to learn about the very necessary step of including in-text citations, which identifies the source you are quoting or paraphrasing in the essay.

Remember to do both steps—the works cited page and the in-text citations—to build your credibility as a knowledgeable writer and to avoid plagiarizing someone else’s work.