



MLA In-text Citations

Use the following guidelines when writing in-text citations in MLA style. For more information, see: The Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook*. 8th ed., MLA, 2016.

For each outside source used, you need:

- an in-text citation every time you use material from the source
- a works cited entry at the end of your essay

Sources with Page Numbers

In-text citations must include two items:

1. author's last name
2. page number(s) from the author's text where the information can be found

In-text citations of sources with page numbers can be done in two ways:

- Introduce the author's name in a signal phrase:

Example: Smith has found that "most college students disagree with dorm rules" enforced on their campuses (11).
(This citation shows that the quote comes from page 11 of Smith's text.)

Example: Though Smith considers dorm rules to be too harsh, he does seem to realize that some of them are necessary (14).
(This citation shows that the writer paraphrased ideas from page 14 of Smith's text.)

- Include the author's name in parentheses:

Example: Though dorm rules are sometimes called "unreasonable" and "hard to deal with" (Smith 5), I find them to be fair.
(This citation shows that the quotes in the sentence come from page 5 of Smith's text.)

Example: Resident directors and assistants are the primary individuals who create and enforce dorm rules (Smith 7).
(This citation shows that the writer paraphrased ideas from page 7 of Smith's text.)

Sources without Page Numbers

When a source, such as a Web publication, has no page numbers or any other kind of reference numbers (e.g., paragraph numbers), do not include any numbers in parenthetical references. Refer to the author either in a signal phrase or in the parenthetical citation. Note that the signal phrase is preferable to the parenthetical citation for paraphrases of Web sources with no page numbers.

Example: According to Everett in her online article, Victorian-era utilitarianism combined laissez-faire economic principles and Malthus's demographic theory.
(This citation shows that the writer paraphrased ideas from Everett's online text.)

Example: The early nineteenth-century philosophy of utilitarianism "had a profound effect upon the socialist movement of the '80s and '90s" (Everett).
(This citation shows that the quote in the sentence comes from Everett's text.)

If an electronic source uses explicit paragraph numbers, use the abbreviation *par.* or *pars.* in the parenthetical reference. However, do not count paragraphs if they are not already numbered in the publication.

Example: Chan claims that "Enlightenment beliefs . . . get translated into the parlance of the May Fourth Movement that erupted in China in 1919" (par. 3).
(This citation shows that the quote in the sentence comes from paragraph 3 of Chan's text.)

If an electronic source uses explicit section numbers, use the abbreviation *sec.* in the parenthetical reference.

Example: The Committee on Scholarly Editions provides an annotated bibliography on the theory of textual editing (sec. 4).
(This citation shows that the information comes from section 1 of the text.)

Sources without Authors

When a source does not have an author and the first piece of information in your bibliographic entry is the title of the source, use an abbreviated form of the title for your in-text citation.

Example: The author famous for *Winnie-the-Pooh* began his career as a dramatist. These plays, like his later children's stories, are "characterized by writing that focuses on fantastic or fanciful situations" ("A.A. Milne").
(This citation indicates that the quote came from an article entitled "A.A. Milne" that has neither an author nor page numbers.)

Sources with Multiple Authors

For sources with multiple authors, include the last name of each author in the parenthetical citation prior to the page number. If there are two authors, separate the names with "and." If your source includes more than two authors, use the abbreviation *et al.* after the first author name. Alternatively, you may include all the authors' names in your signal phrase, as detailed above.

Example: Diana Cogan Thacker and Jean Webb note that these texts "suggest an awareness of the social power of language...that reflects Modernist concerns" (103).
(The authors' names are introduced in a signal phrase here, so they do not need to be included in the citation).

Example: Some scholars have argued that these texts "suggest an awareness of the social power of language . . . that reflects Modernist concerns" (Thacker and Webb 103).

Example: Although writings describing utopia have always seemed to take place far from the everyday world, in fact "all utopian fiction whirls contemporary actors through a costume dance no place else but here" (Rabkin et al. vii).
(This citation shows that Rabkin is the first of at least three authors.)