MLA STYLE QUICK GUIDE: 
CITING ARTICLES FROM LIBRARY DATABASES

This guide is based on the *MLA Handbook* 8th edition. When using the examples, be sure to follow the punctuation and format exactly as shown. Citations must be double-spaced with a “hanging indent” (all lines of the citation except the first are indented over 0.5 inches).

**General Format and Punctuation for Citing Library Database Articles:**

1. **Author Last name, First name Middle name [followed by a period]:**
   - For multiple authors, only reverse the first author name: Bay, Joe M., Sara Rose Tan, and Rob Nen.
   - For 4 or more authors, name only the first author followed by et al.: Chen, Mei L., et al.
   - List names in the order they appear on the article.
   - Include middle names and initials if given.
   - Do not include professional titles, such as MD or PhD.
   - If no author name is provided, skip the author and begin with the title.

2. **Title of article [end with a period and put in quotes]:**
   - Capitalize all-important words (and the first word) in both titles and subtitles.
   - DO NOT capitalize words like “the,” “a,” “of,” etc. (unless they are the first word in the title or subtitle).
   - Always include the subtitle after a colon. Example: “Childhood Obesity: The Facts.”

3. **Title of source [in italics; follow by a comma]:**
   - Capitalize all-important words (and the first word) in both titles and subtitles.

4. **Volume and issue numbers [abbreviate followed by the number followed by a comma]:**
   - Use abbreviations vol. for volume and no. for issue or number.
   - Follow the abbreviation with the volume and issue/number numbers.
   - If there is no issue number omit the abbreviation.

5. **Publication date [followed by a comma]:**
   - Abbreviate all months except May, June, July.
   - Format as Day Month Year, i.e.: 29 June 2015, 5 Jan. 2016, Spring 2014.

6. **Page number range [followed by a period]:**
   - Use p. for one page, or pp. for multiple pages.

7. **DOI or URL [lowercase doi followed by a colon; if using URL omit “http://” or “https://” from the URL**
   - Use the DOI if it is available. If there is no DOI use the URL.
   - If a permalink option is available for the URL, use the permalink.

8. **OPTIONAL - Date you accessed the article online [the word Accessed followed by the date followed by a period]:**
   - Abbreviate all months except May, June, July.
   - Format as Day Month Year, i.e.: 29 June 2015, 5 Jan. 2016.
Examples:

**Scholarly Journal Article from Academic Search Complete:**


- In-text citation example: “Quote from page 244 of the article” (Brown 244).

**Scholarly Journal Article with 4 or More Authors:**


- In-text citation example: Paraphrasing an argument from multiple pages (Foltran et al. 649-50).

**Magazine Article from Academic Search Complete:**


- In text citation example: “Quoting page 20 of this article” (Mitchels and Reeves 20).

**Article from CQ Researcher:**


- In text citation example: “Quoting page 20 of this article” (Mantel 20).

More MLA Style Resources:

*MLA Handbook*, 8th ed. (available at any library)
Purdue Online Writing Laboratory Electronic Sources [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/07/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/07/)