Citing Your Sources
MLA Handbook 8th Edition

Part of academic writing is the process of acknowledging the source of the material you used in preparing your paper. This is called citing your sources.

At West Valley College, the English Department has chosen as a standard the MLA format. Many instructors in other disciplines also specify this citation format. Check with your individual instructors on what citation style they prefer.

MLA lists the “core elements” or pieces of information to include in your Works Cited, and the order in which to put them. Here is the template for a simple citation from MLA Handbook 8th ed.

<p>| | |</p>
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The person(s), or group who is responsible for the creation of the work. |
| 2 | Title of source |
This can refer to the title of an entire book or a chapter, a television show or an episode, an article in a webpage or the entire website etc. |
| 3 | Title of container |
If the source is contained in something, an article contained in a journal, or a poem contained in a book, list the larger work or “container” it is in. |
| 4 | Other contributors |
Other person(s) who have contributed to the work such as a translator or an illustrator. |
| 5 | Version |
When a source comes in more than one form: second edition, director’s cut, expanded edition. |
| 6 | Number |
Any reference to a numbered sequence: volume, issue, episode. |
| 7 | Publisher |
The organization who is responsible for publishing the source. |
| 8 | Publication date |
The date when the source was published or released. |
| 9 | Location |
This can be a page number, page range, webpage URL; DVD disc number, journal DOI. |
Single Container Citations

Single Container Citation: a self-contained book, a web site, an article on a web site, a television program.

Print book


Website


Print article


Secondary Container Citations

For some citations, you will choose to include a secondary container, to make your source easier to find. MLA encourages this for clarity, especially if your source is from a subscription database or embedded within a site such as Youtube.com.

Article from a subscription database
(Add the URL or DOI if your instructor requires it)


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