

MLA (Modern Language Assoc.) Style Citations

INTERNAL or IN-TEXT CITATIONS

Once you have made decisions about what to cite and how to cite it (paraphrase, quotations, etc) it is time to give credit to your sources within the body of your paper. You need to give sources and authors credit for their words and ideas in order to establish your credibility as an author.

The “basic format” for an internal citation is a parenthetical placed directly after the quoted or paraphrased sentence. The parenthetical commonly includes Author Last Name and pg. #.

Ex. ----- or “-----” (Smith 461).

(Note that the period is placed after the parenthetical and there is **no comma** separating the Author Last Name from the page number.)

Although this is the basic citation format for internal citations, you never need to repeat what is already understood. If your sentence contains a “signal phrase,” such as “According to Smith” or “In reference to ___ Smith contends/notes/proposes,” you do not need to include ‘Smith’ in the internal citation parenthetical. See the following examples:

Quotation: “Aliens have been found to inhabit the craggy surface of the moon”(Smith 460).

Paraphrase: Aliens were discovered on the moon (Smith 460).

Quotation w/ signal phrase: According to William B. Smith, aliens were discovered “inhabit[ating] the craggy surface of the moon”(460).

Borrowing Repeatedly: (in subsequent quotations the last name may be dropped from the parenthetical if no new source is introduced in the meantime)

Scientists discovered aliens on the moon (Smith 460). This directly contradicts our current understanding of there being no life there. Furthermore, these same scientists are not sure whether we are alone here on Earth, as well (461). ← *Note that the 2nd sentence does not include an internal citation, as it is the author’s own sentence.*

However, **if your paper uses 2 or more works by the same author:**

- 1) Include the title in the internal citation: In his article, “Green Men on Mars,” scientist William B. Smith states. (460).

OR

- 2) Include the title in the internal citation to distinguish between multiple sources by the same author: William B. Smith states that aliens are now a threat (“Moon Men” 460).

Note: While the full article title might have been “Moon Men Attack!” the parenthetical only needs to include enough of the title to make it uniquely identifiable from “Green Men on Mars,” which might have been abbreviated in a parenthetical to “Green Men.”

Another exception to the (Author Last Name pg. #) is if the author is unknown of the work being cited was from a webpage, thus lacking fixed page numbers.

Author Unknown:

In 1990 people stopped buying red apples (Fruit Census 12).

Websites:

If paginated using a fixed numbering (like in pdf), use the (Author Last Name pg. #).

If the webpage lacks pagination, but provides numbered sections, screens or other fixed numbering systems:

(Smith, screens 4-8) or (Doe, par. 5) (where par.= paragraph)

However, if there is no fixed numbering you cannot just use the numbering your printer gives when printing an online website article, as it will be different for different printer models and settings. In this case just include the author name or website name.

** Also, make sure that you use internal citations after EVERY cited idea, quotation or paraphrase. You cannot just include the citation at the end of the page or paragraph.

WORKS CITED PAGE: the Fully-Documented Reference Information

However, internal citations are just the first half of the citation process. At the end of your paper, you will need to include a page of fully-documented reference information, known as a Works Cited page. (The difference between this and a bibliography is that in a bibliography you are acknowledging works that might not be cited in the paper, as well. However, in a Works Cited page, all references must have been used and cited in the body of the paper, it is not enough merely to allude to them in a bibliography.)

Each entry includes information (as available and applicable) in the following order:

1. Author last name, first name, Editor (given later if separate from the author), or compiler of the source. Ed. is the abbreviation for editor.
2. Title of work in quotation marks (if it is an article title, poem title, short story or internet site.)
3. Title of book (or journal name) that work appears in underlined or italicized
4. Name of editor or translator if that is additional information
5. publication information
6. Version #, Volume #, Issue #
7. Date of electronic publication, last updating or posting
8. Subscription service information
9. number range or total # of pages, paragraphs or sections
10. Institution or organization sponsoring site
11. Date you accessed the site (if a website)
12. URL or if impractically long, the URL of the site's search page

The following are examples in various different formats:

Basic book format

Author Last, First. Book Title. Location: Publisher, year date.

Edited book format

Author Last, First and Author First Last, Eds. Book Title. Location: Publisher, year date.

Note: use a hanging indent for the second line. (This can be created in Word by hitting "enter" then "tab" if the program at first tries to tab both lines over.)

Also, for more than three authors or editors list the first person Last Name, First, et al.
Ex: Smith, William B. et al.

Article in Magazine

Author Last, First. "Article title." Journal Name. Month Year: pg. #.

Ex: Smith, William B. "Green Men on Mars." Science for Americans. Feb. 1999: 17-19.

*Note: use page # + as in "21+" if the pages are not consecutive like in a newspaper or popular magazine, or 17-19 in a range if the pages are consecutive.

Article in Newspaper

Author Last, First. "Article title." Newspaper Name. day month year: section +.

Ex: Doe, John. "Debunking the Moon Landing." The Washington Times. 24 March 2000: A1+

The following are related to web sources:

Personal/professional sites

Smith, William. Home Page. 30 May 1997. 4 July 2000. <<http://www.smithies.net>>.

*Note that "30 May 1997" indicates when the page was created and "4 July 2000" when the page was last updated.

Space Scientists, Inc. Home Page. 24 April 1995. <<http://www.spacesci.com>>.

Also, note that when typing the terminal ">." of the website, you must hit "backspace" or the website will show up with the hyperlink rather than the preferred <____>.

Online Book

Author Last, First. Book Title. Ed. Author First Last. Original publication date. Online publication date. <<http://www.oxfordbooks.com/Tolstoy/warandpeace.html>>.

Online Article

Author Last, First. "Article title." Online Journal Name. Vol.Issue [ex. 9.1] (year pub.) Access date [day month year]. <<http://www.----.html>>.

Ex. Smith, William B. "Green Men Attack Moon Men." *Science for Real*. 45.2. (2006.) July 17, 2006. <<http://www.----.html>>.

Info Database

Name. created date. Organization/Database Name (such as Library of Congress). Access date. URL.

Ex. Helping People Learn. 10 Sept. 2000. Library of Congress. 18 May 2000.
<<http://database.loc.gov/>>.

Taken from <<http://www.mla.org/style>>. The MLA style website.