Sources not only provide information and ideas but can help establish your credibility and strengthen your argument when used as “expert witnesses.” You should cite your sources to avoid plagiarizing words and ideas and to allow readers to find your sources more easily. Consult the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th* ed. (New York: MLA 2009), for additional help.

### A. A Checklist for Working with Sources

- **Did I use the best possible evidence for my assertions?**
  - Are all of my claims supported by evidence? If a section of your paper needs stronger support or if you need to verify a fact, consult with a reference librarian for suggestions.
  - Do my sources present balanced perspectives? If a source you rely on promotes an agenda and ignores alternative viewpoints, you might want to substitute one that is more balanced and less likely to be dismissed by your readers as unreliable. Make sure to address alternative perspectives.
  - Will my readers consider my sources persuasive? A medical research report on a treatment for cancer is more impressive as a source than a magazine article that describes a treatment. If you need scholarly sources, look for those written by researchers that include documented references to other sources.

- **Are my sources integrated into my writing smoothly and correctly?**
  - Have I used more sources than necessary? Use sources to support your ideas, not replace them. If two sources provide similar information, use the one that carries more clout.
  - Do my sources back up what I say—or do they speak for me? When possible, convey information in your own words. Don’t quote a source when a paraphrase or a summary will do.
  - Have I used my sources ethically? Provide a reference for anything that isn’t common knowledge, even if you have used your own words. Facts available in multiple sources—such as dates and well known historical events—are considered common knowledge and do not need to be cited.
  - Have I integrated each source into my text effectively? Never drop in a quotation without introducing it. Use signal phrases such as “according to…” or “…Smith (2001) argues.” Whenever possible, include the author’s credentials: “Physicist Stephen Hawking has noted…”

- **Are my sources cited clearly and completely?**
  - Did I provide a citation for every idea that came from a source? Indicate the original source by naming the author and page.
  - Are complete details for all of my in-text citations provided? Make sure every source referred to in the text can be found easily in your works cited list.
  - Did I provide all the information necessary for my readers to locate my sources? Make sure you provide all required information specified on pages 3-6 of this handout.
B. For MLA-Style In-Text Citations

In-text citations allow your readers to locate the full publication information for sources in the works cited list at the end of your text. Provide author and page numbers for the in-text citations. Readers can look up the author’s name in the alphabetized list of works cited at the end of the paper. The page number will lead them directly to the portion of the work that you are citing.

- Refer to the author’s name in the text and put page numbers in parentheses after the material you are citing. Or you can include the author’s name with the page number in parentheses: Jones asserts… (15) or (Jones 15).
- If there is no author, use a shortened version of the title: (“Mind” 69).
- If there are multiple works by one author, include a short title: (Weeks, “Worst” C1); if there are multiple authors with the same last name, include the first initial (L. Weeks C1).
- Leave out page numbers if the source doesn’t have them. Use a PDF version of an online source if one is available; it will usually include stable page numbers.

C. For an MLA-Style Works Cited List

At the end of your paper, provide all the details readers need to find the sources you used. Arrange the entries alphabetically by authors’ last names (or by titles for works with no author). Some of the information may be hard to find, especially in online sources. The sponsor of a Web site, for instance, may appear at the bottom of an internal page, on the home page, or on an information page (“Contact Us,” “About Us”). Don’t give up too easily; do your best to uncover the information.

If a source has no author, begin with the title. For sources without other required information, use the following abbreviations: “n.d.” (no date), “n. pag.” (no page numbers), and “n.p.” (no publisher, no sponsor for an online source). Include the medium of publication or delivery for all sources (for example, “Print,” “Web,” “Television,” “Film,” “DVD,” “Photograph”). Do not include a URL for online sources (except for a source that would be difficult for readers to find in a search).

### Articles (print)

- **JOURNAL ARTICLE**
  Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Journal* volume.issue (year): page number(s). Medium.

- **MAGAZINE ARTICLE**
  Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Magazine* date: page number(s). Medium.

- **NEWSPAPER ARTICLE**
  Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Newspaper* date, edition [if any], section title, number, or letter [if not part of pager number]: page number(s). Medium.
Books (print)

- **BOOK BY ONE AUTHOR**
  
  Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book.* City: Publisher, year. Medium.
  

- **BOOK BY TWO OR THREE AUTHORS**
  
  Last Name, First Name, First Name Last Name, and First Name Last Name. *Title of Book.* Place: Publisher, year. Medium.
  

- **BOOK BY MORE THAN THREE AUTHORS**
  
  Last Name, First Name (first author), et al. *Title of Book.* Place: Publisher, year. Medium.
  

- **BOOK BY AN EDITOR**
  
  Last Name of Editor, First Name, ed. *Title of Book.* Place: Publisher, year. Medium.
  

- **BOOK WITH AN AUTHOR AND AN EDITOR**
  
  Last Name of Author, First Name. *Title of Book.* Ed. Editor’s First Name Last Name. Place: Publisher, year. Medium.
  

- **AN EDITION OF A BOOK**
  
  Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book.* Number ed. Place: Publisher, year. Medium.
  

- **WORK IN AN ANTHOLOGY OR A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS**
  
  Last Name, First Name. “Title of Essay.” *Title of Anthology.* Ed. Editor’s Name [if different from essay author]. City: Publisher, year. Pages of essay. Medium.
  
Online Sources

- **JOURNAL ARTICLE FROM A DATABASE**
  Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Journal* volume.issue (year): page number(s) [n. pag. if no page numbers in database]. *Name of Database*. Medium. Date accessed.

- **MAGAZINE ARTICLE FROM A DATABASE**
  Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Magazine* date: page number(s) [n. pag. If no page numbers in database]. *Name of Database*. Medium. Date accessed.

- **NEWSPAPER ARTICLE FROM A DATABASE**
  Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Newspaper* date, edition [if any], section title, or letter [if not part of page number]: page number(s). *Name of Database*. Medium. Date accessed.

- **ONLINE MAGAZINE OR NEWSPAPER ARTICLE**
  Last Name, First Name. “Title of Article.” *Title of Online Magazine or Newspaper*. Sponsor of Web Site, date. Medium. Date accessed.

- **ONLINE BOOK**
  Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book* [or Book-Length Work.] *Title of Web Site*. Sponsor of Web Site, update date. Medium. Date accessed.

- **ENTIRE WEB SITE**
  Last Name of Author, First Name [if any]. *Title of Web Site*. Sponsor of Web Site, date. Medium. Date accessed.
SHORT WORK FROM A WEBSITE

Last Name of Author, First Name [if any]. “Title of Short Work.” Title of Web Site. Sponsor of Web Site, date. Medium. Date accessed.


ENTRY IN A WEBLOG (BLOG)

Last Name of Author, First Name. “Title of Blog Entry.” Title of Blog. Sponsor of Web Site, date. Medium. Date accessed.


ENTRY IN A WIKI

“Title of Wiki Entry.” Title of Wiki. Sponsor of Wiki, date. Medium. Date accessed.


E-MAIL MESSAGE

Last Name of Writer, First Name. “Subject Line.” Message to the author. Date. Medium.


Other Sources (including online versions)

WORK OF ART

Last Name of Artist, First Name. Title of Work. Date of Composition. Medium of composition. Institution, City.


WORK OF ART (ONLINE)

Last Name of Artist, First Name. Title of Work. Date of Composition. Institution, City. Title of Web Site. Medium. Date accessed.


GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT


GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT (ONLINE)

ADVERTISEMENT
Product or Company. Advertisement. Print or online publication information.

FILM OR VIDEO
Title. Dir. First Name Last Name. Perf. First Name(s) Last Name(s) [of lead actors]. Distributor, year of release. Medium.

ONLINE VIDEO CLIP
Last Name of Creator, First Name [if any]. “Title of Video Clip.” Title of Web Site. Sponsor of Web Site, date. Medium. Date accessed.

RADIO OR TELEVISION PROGRAM
“Title of Segment or Episode.” Title of Program or Series. By or Narr. or Dir. or Perf. First Name Last Name. Network. Local Station, City, date of broadcast. Medium.

RADIO OR TELEVISION PROGRAM (ONLINE)
“Title of Segment or Episode.” Title of Program or Series. By or Narr. or Dir. or Perf. First Name Last Name. Network, date of broadcast. Title of Web Site. Medium. Date accessed.

PODCAST
Last Name, First Name [if any]. “Title of Podcast.” By or Narr. or Dir. or Perf. First Name Last Name. Title of Web Site. Sponsor of Web Site, date. Medium. Date accessed.