

Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Guide
by Christina Teasley, MLIS
Savannah Technical College, Liberty Campus

This information is a guide to the MLA style used at Savannah Technical College. It is not intended to replace the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 6th edition* (available in the library) as only selected information is included. *Please refer to the printed Handbook kept at the Library Information Desk for other examples.* The pages and chapters in the book are listed below for quick reference.

The Format of the Research Paper (Chapter 4 in the book)
Type the paper using 12-pt Times New Roman font

Double Space Everything!!!!

1 in. → Leave margins of one inch (2.54 cm) on all four sides of every page. Microsoft Word 07 can automatically do this.

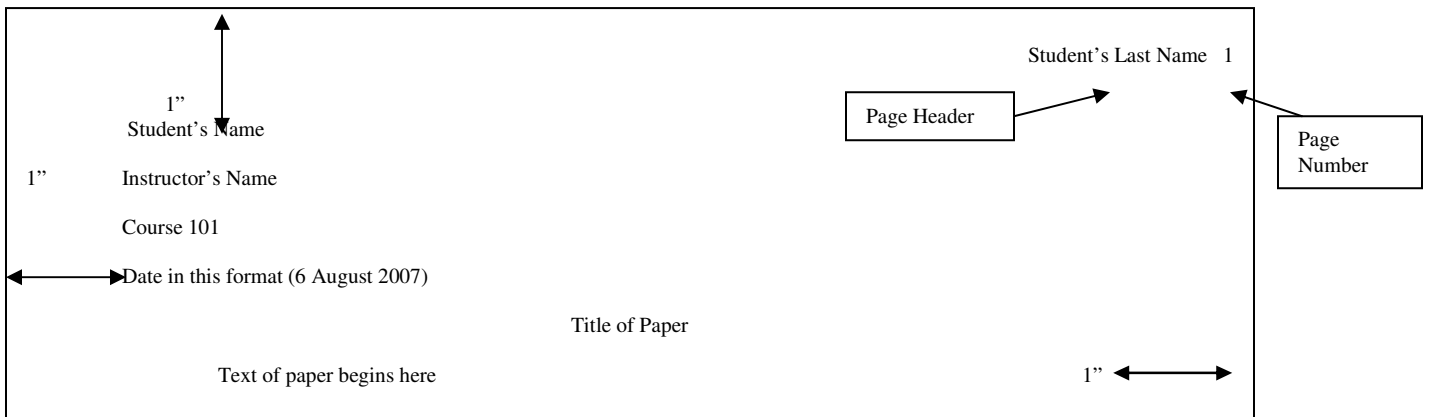
Page Headers and Numbers. Identify each page with your last name and the page number. Number the pages consecutively (1, 2, 3...).

MS Word: Select 'View' from the toolbar and then Header/Footer to insert the page number and your last name. Click the '#' sign in the Header and Footer tool bar to insert the page numbers consecutively. It's a little trickier with Word 07: insert the page number before adding your last name before it.

Number all pages in the upper right-hand corner, to the right of your last name.

MLA research papers do not require a title page but your instructor might – double check.

Example 1: Page 1 (not to scale)



Use the Tab key to indent the first line of every paragraph.

Instructions for Typing Your Paper

Type the title, capitalizing significant words, centered between the left and right margins and positioned in the middle of the page.

Give credit where credit is due: Document your research throughout the paper by citing the author and the page number of the source where the information used in your research can be located. The citation allows the reader to locate the information in the publication where the information was taken. For example (Smith 189) means the author's last name is Smith

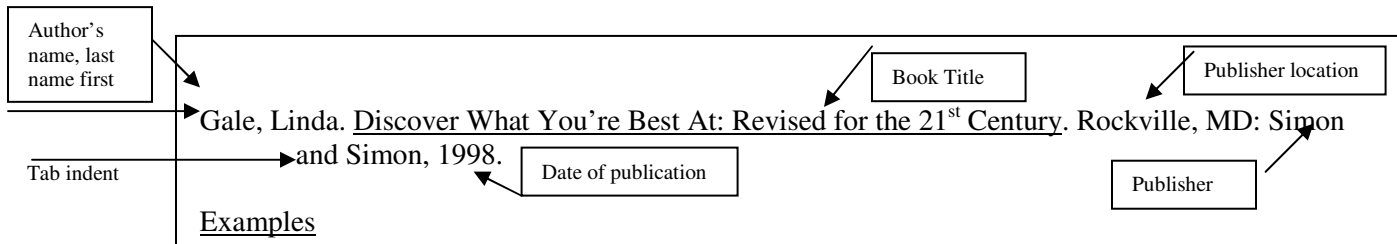
and the information was taken from page 189 of the publication. Cite the source every time it changes in the paper.

Documentation: Preparing the List of Works Cited (Chapter 5)

Start the Works Cited list on a new page after the last page of text. Include the header and the page number in the upper right corner. Type the word 'Works Cited' in uppercase and lowercase letters, centered, at the top of the page. List the works in alphabetical order by author or title if no author is provided. Double-space all entries. MLA publishes references in a *hanging indent* format, meaning that the first line of each reference is set flush left and subsequent lines are indented. It is permissible to indent the entries using the 'Tab' key. Be sure to use the exact punctuation and capitalize appropriately as shown in the examples below.

Example 2: Book, one author

Author's Name. Title of Book. Publication Information



Print Resources

Journal Article, one author (Chapter 5.7.1+)

Author. "Title of Article". Title of Journal, Volume No. (year of publication): page numbers.

Alvin, Simon. "Perceptual Comparisons through the Mind's Eye". Memory & Cognition, 23 (2000): 635-647.

Journal Article, two authors

Becker, Max, and Susan Rozek. . "Welcome to the Energy Crisis." Journal of Social Issues 32 (2003): 230-343.

Magazine Article, one author (5.7.6)

Gardner, Howard. "Do Babies Have a universal Song?" Psychology Today July 2007: 70-77.

Newspaper article, no author (5.7.5)

"Study Finds Free Care Used More." Wall Street Journal 3 Apr. 2006: A1, A25.

Book, two authors (5.6.4+)

William Struck, Jr., and Elton R. White. The Elements of Style. 3rd ed. Cashiers, NC: Macmillan, 1979.

Edited book (5.6.12+)

Letheridge, Sara and Clara R. Cannon, eds. Bilingual Education. Athens, GA: Praeger, 1999.

Videotape (5.8.3)

Deeper into Hypnosis. Dir. David H. Gluck. Miramax, 1979.

Citing Electronic Publications (5.9)

A citation for an electronic publication has five divisions (numbers are just for illustration):

1. Author's name.
2. "Title of the Document."
3. Information about print publication.
4. Information about electronic publication.
5. Access information.

Electronic Articles Based on Print Source

Use papers in .html format when possible for easier formatting.

GALILEO Article Without Page Numbers

Sahelian, Randy. "Achoo!" Better Nutrition, 6 January 2004: 45-48. Academic Index. EBSCO. Savannah Technical College Library. 1 Oct. 2004 <<http://www.galileo.usg.edu>>

Entry in an Online Encyclopedia

Web page, no author, no date

"Metastatic Cancer to the Lung." (n.d.). Medline Plus. 6 Aug. 2007
<<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000097.htm>>.

Web page, no date

Thompson, Gary. n.d. "Youth Coach Handbook." Joe Soccer. 17 Sept. 2006
<<http://www.joesoccer.com/menu.html>>.

Web page, Government author

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Glacial Habitat Restoration Areas. By Charles Williams. Mar. 2004. 18 Sept. 2004. <<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/hunt/hra.htm>>.

Web page, no author, no date

"Eldorado." PlacesNamed.com. n.d. 18 Sept. 2003. <<http://www.placesnamed.com/e/l/eldorado.asp>>.

Personal Communication/Interview

Personal communications may be things such as email messages, interviews, speeches, and telephone conversations. To cite an interview you conducted, give the name of the person interviewed, the kind of interview (Personal interview, Telephone interview, E-mail interview), and the date or dates.

Pei, I.M. Personal interview. 22 July 1993.

Documentation: Citing Sources in the Text (Chapter 6)

The surname (last name) of the author and the page number are inserted in the text either at the beginning or the end of the information from a source. For example:

Rushkoff breaks down the methods of control...(199).

In the book *Coercion* (Rushkoff 199), the author breaks down the methods of control...

In the book *Coercion*, Rushkoff breaks down the methods of control...(199).

The author of the book *Coercion* breaks down the methods of control... (Rushkoff 199).

Tip: Authors of quality papers use various ways to cite their sources to keep their readers interested.

Tip: You may find it easier to cite your sources as you write the paper instead of waiting until you have finished the whole paper. Regardless of how you do it, keep track of who wrote what so you can cite it appropriately.

When a work has two authors, always cite both names every time the reference occurs in the text: In their 1995 study, Johnson and Johnston demonstrated... (248).

A study of 2,500 eligible bachelors...(Johnson and Johnson 248)

Refer to the *Manual* for more than two authors or for information on citing editors.

Groups as Authors

The names of groups that serve as authors are usually spelled out (example: American Psychological Association), but some are abbreviated after the first time they are cited.

1st citation: In 2001 the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) studied...

2nd citation: The results of the NIMH study...

Works with No Author

When a work has no author (common with Internet sites), cite the title and the year (if author, title and year are not available rethink using the source). Use double quotation marks (“ ”) around the title of an article or chapter, and italicize the title of a book, periodical, brochure, or report. For example:

on free care (“Study Finds” 198)

the book *College Bound Seniors* (197)

Some general rules for MLA Works Cited pages:

- If the Works Cited takes up more than one page, do not re-type the words ‘Works Cited’ on sequential pages, simply continue your list.
- Works cited in the text must appear in the Works Cited list; conversely, each entry in the Works Cited must be cited in the text.
- Dates: give the date followed by the month abbreviated followed by the year when including periodicals in your Works Cited page (e.g. 18 Sept. 2006). Do not use abbreviations in the text. If no date is available, common with web sites, write n.d. for ‘no date’.
- Include volume numbers for magazines, scholarly journals, and newsletters. Include the issue number for journals if and only if each issue begins on 1.

MLA Style Guide Checklist

Use this checklist each time you write a paper to make sure it is formatted in proper MLA format. The full checklist can be found in Appendix A of the *Manual*.

_____The paper's font is 12-point Times New Roman

_____Everything is double-spaced

_____The margins are set at 1-inch on all four sides of each page (MS Word is automatically set to 1" margins)

_____Each and every page is numbered consecutively (1,2,3...) in the upper right-hand corner (Use View – Header & Footer in upper right-hand corner)

_____Each page is identified with the your last name in the upper right-hand corner to the left of the page number

_____The first page includes the student's name, professor's name, course number and date properly formatted AND the beginning of text

- _____ The title is double-spaced and centered above the text
- _____ The research is properly cited throughout the text of the article
- _____ Sources are cited both in the text and in the Works Cited list
- _____ The works cited are on a separate sheet with the word `Works Cited` centered at the top of the page
- _____ Works cited are alphabetized by the author's last name or the first keyword of the title if no author information is given
- _____ All works cited are double-spaced in a hanging indent format
- _____ Spelling/grammar check has been performed
- _____ At least one person has read over the paper to catch spelling and grammar mistakes the computer missed

Work Cited:

Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 6th ed. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003.

Disclaimer: This guide is not designed to replace the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 6th ed. Further, all attempts have been made to make this an accurate guide but the author is not an MLA expert and does not accept responsibility for inaccuracies. Refer to the Manual (available in the library) for further assistance.