

MLA IN-TEXT CITATION

MLA format requires a Works Cited list at the end of the paper to indicate which materials or sources were used in a written work. An in-text citation refers to the way you provide your reader with information about your sources **within** the text itself.

Every in-text citation should directly reference a full citation from the Works Cited page. Thus, the information listed in the in-text citation must match the first part of the referenced source on the Works Cited page.

Citations are **required** when summarizing, paraphrasing, or directly quoting an original source.

HOW THIS HANDOUT IS ORGANIZED

In-text citations can be used/structured in various ways, depending on 1) how the writer composes their sentences that include source material, 2) the types of sources being used, and 3) where the information is located within the source.

This handout provides some general information about how to create in-text citations and then gives descriptions and examples of the most popular source types and how to cite them within your text. For each source type, you will find a signal phrase example followed by a parenthetical citation example.

HOW TO WRITE AN MLA IN-TEXT CITATION

There are two conventional ways to write an in-text citation in MLA format:

1. **Signal phrase**

When a source's author or title is directly integrated within the text to introduce information, the location marker (in this case, the page number of the quote) appears in parentheses.

Ex. Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (263).

2. **Parenthetical citation**

When a source's author or title is not directly integrated within the text to introduce information, it is instead included within parentheses with the location marker.

Ex. Romantic poetry is characterized as a natural outburst of emotion (Wordsworth 263).

CONTACT US:

(702) 895-3908 | writingcenter@unlv.edu
unlv.edu/writing-center



LOCATION MARKERS

In MLA format, the location of the information in the original source is almost always included in the in-text citation. Usually, it is a page number but could also be a paragraph, chapter, section, or a time marker.

Source Type	Location Marker	Example
Print	Paragraph	Wordsworth says, ... (par. 4). (Wordsworth par. 1)
	Section	According to Poe, ... (sec. 3). (Poe sec. 3)
	Line	Stein states in the poem, ... (ln. 10). (Stein ln. 10)
Audio/Video	Time	In the podcast, Wordsworth argues, ... (0:41:15). (Wordsworth 0:41:15)

For electronic sources without page numbers, location markers are not necessary. See p. 3 for examples.

SOURCES WITH ONE AUTHOR

When you have an author, include their name and the location marker in the citation.

Wordsworth writes, "... " (10).

... (Wordsworth 10).

Remember that in some languages the surname is written first. Cite them as you would names written in English, with extra precaution on which name to cite.

According to Gao Xinjiang ... (7).

... (Gao 7).

SOURCES WITH MULTIPLE AUTHORS

With two authors:

In their article, Wordsworth and Poe posit that ... (100).

... (Wordsworth and Poe 100).

With more than two authors:

In their article, Wordsworth et al. posit that ...

... (Wordsworth et al. 100).

NO KNOWN AUTHOR

If the source does not have an author, use the title of the cited work in place of the author's last name. You should abbreviate long titles.

According to "Public Health and Alcoholism in Modern Times", ... (6).

... ("Public Health and Alcoholism" 6).

Remember to make sure you use quotation marks and italics correctly, depending on the type of source.

INDIRECT SOURCES

An indirect source refers to a source cited within another source. To cite indirect sources, a signal phrase is necessary, and then you will use **qtd. in**, followed by the main source with the location marker.

In the following example, Wordsworth is quoted in Poe's work:

Wordsworth claims, "... " (qtd. in Poe 99).

Note: Check with your professor before using indirect sources. When possible, cite the original source.

NON-PRINT OR ELECTRONIC SOURCES

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

Electronic sources are sources found online, such as webpages and online journals or magazines. Since location markers are not often available, they are not necessary in creating in-text citations. The most important thing to consider is that the in-text citation must reference the source on the Works Cited page.

According to a salacious article on *CNN.com*, Wordsworth states that ...

In a salacious article, Wordsworth states that ...

NON-PRINT SOURCES

Non-print sources are sources with no written text in them, such as films, podcasts, and lectures/presentations. To create an in-text citation, include the author of the source and the location marker of the information.

In the podcast, *Words Without Limits*, Wordsworth argues that ... (00:30:78).

... (Wordsworth 00:30:78).

CITING MULTIPLE SOURCES IN ONE SENTENCE

To cite multiple sources in the same in-text citation, separate the two parenthetical citations with a semicolon.

According to Wordsworth and Stein. . . (13; 5).

... (Wordsworth 13; Stein 5).

CITING INFORMATION FROM MULTIPLE PAGES IN ONE SOURCE

To use quotes and/or paraphrases from different parts of the same source in one sentence, do one of the following actions:

1. Include in-text citations in different parts of the same sentence to denote multiple quotes from the same source.

According to Wordsworth, people who do not like Corn Flakes “cannot be trusted” (23) and should be subject to “considerable moral questioning” (100).

Though people who do not like Corn Flakes “cannot be trusted” (Wordsworth 23), some wonder about the trustworthiness of individuals who do not like Frosted Flakes (100).

Note: This sample includes the author’s name in the first citation but not in the second. The reader understands that the second piece of information came from the same source as the first.

2. Include multiple locations from the same source in one in-text citation by using a comma to separate location markers.

According to Wordsworth, people who do not like Corn Flakes “cannot be trusted” and should be subject to “considerable moral questioning” (23, 100).

Though people who do not like Corn Flakes “cannot be trusted,” some wonder about the trustworthiness of individuals who do not like Frosted Flakes (Wordsworth 23, 100).

Note: When citing the same source twice, make sure you do not manipulate the author’s meaning.

PUNCTUATION FOR QUOTED MATERIAL

If you use a direct quote, some punctuation belong inside the quotation marks and some belong outside.

Inside	Outside
Commas	Semicolon
Periods	Colon

Question marks and exclamation points belong outside the quote if you add them in, but they go inside the quote if they are part of the original material.

CAN'T FIND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

Beyond this handout, you can find more specific information on formatting your MLA in-text citations in the *Modern Language Association (MLA) Handbook* (9th edition). The Writing Center has copies you can come look at or you can find copies at Lied Library under the call number LB2369 .M52 2021.