Works Cited Quick Guide
MLA Handbook Eighth Edition

The *MLA Handbook* provides a system for documenting sources in your research writing. The eighth edition (published in 2016) bases works-cited entries on basic facts of publication common to most sources. In previous editions, works-cited entries differed based on the type of publication, but the MLA (Modern Language Association) has introduced this facts-of-publication-based system to provide greater flexibility as the diversity of sources for information continues to expand.
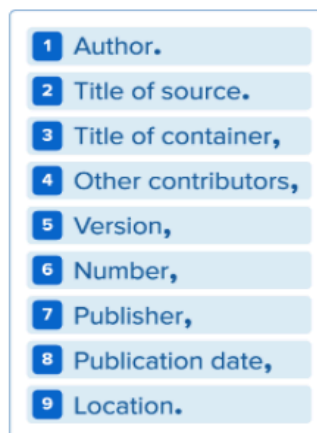
Key Vocabulary

Core Elements (Facts of Publication): the "who, what, how, where, and when" of your source. The most essential pieces of information—the author(s) and title of your source—are always first. Not all sources will have all the information asked for in the facts of publication template. Include the information available; you do NOT need to indicate missing information (previously n.p. was used for no publisher, etc.).

The graphic to the right shows what punctuation to use between each piece of information.

Container: A container describes where you found the information. This could be a publication like a magazine, or it could be a digital format like a website. **Many sources have multiple, "nested" containers**.

Works Cited: A Quick Guide

1. Author.
2. Title of source.
3. Title of container,
4. Other contributors,
5. Version,
6. Number,
7. Publisher,
8. Publication date,
9. Location.

Core Elements

Each entry in the list of works cited is composed of facts common to most works—the MLA core elements. They are assembled in a specific order.

Containers

The concept of containers is crucial to MLA style. When the source being documented forms part of a larger whole, the larger whole can be thought of as a container that holds the source. For example, a short story may be contained in an anthology. The short story is the source, and the anthology is the container.
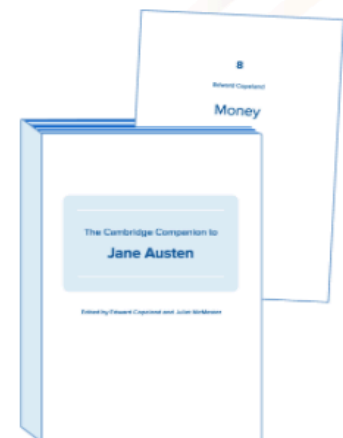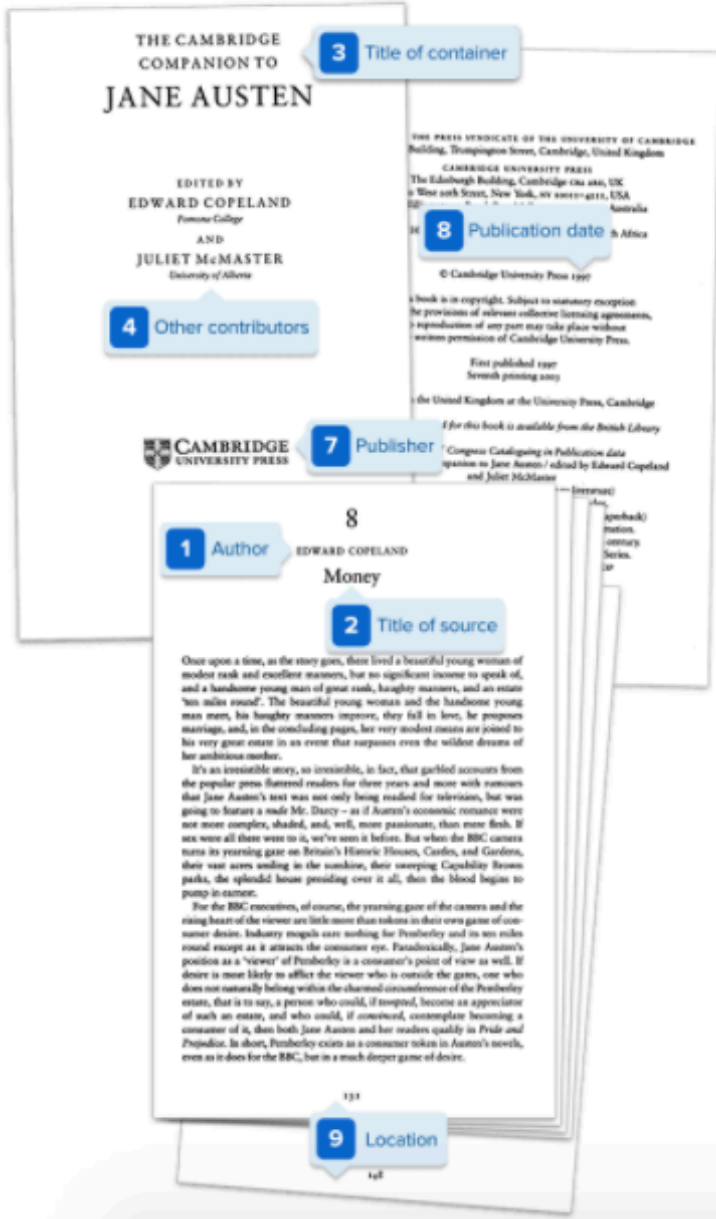
Optional Elements: Your works-cited entries should be based on two goals: establishing the credibility of each source and providing a trail for anyone who wants to find that source. These goals, along with your teacher's requirements, should guide your decisions about what information to include. For example, MLA recommends including URL's [Universal Resource Locator], or permalinks, or DOI's [Digital Object Identifier] for web-based content, but they may not be required. Other optional elements might include translators, editors, original publication dates, genre labels, volume and series information, and access dates.   Optional elements are likely to be placed either after the title and author or at the end of citation. More details about optional elements are available in the online MLA Style Center.

Finding Information for Citations

Example: A Source in a Single Container

An Essay in a Book Collection

1 Author.
Copeland, Edward.

2 Title of source.
"Money."

CONTAINER 1

3 Title of container,
The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen,

4 Other contributors,
edited by Copeland and Juliet McMaster,

5 Version,

6 Number,

7 Publisher,
Cambridge UP,

8 Publication date,
1997,

9 Location.
pp. 131-48.

Notice that not all information is available for all sources. This source doesn't have a version or a number, so the works-cited entry just skips that information.

FINAL WORKS-CITED-LIST ENTRY

Copeland, Edward. "Money." *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen,* edited by Copeland and Juliet McMaster, Cambridge UP, 1997, pp. 131-48.

Example: A Source in Two Containers

A Journal Article Retrieved from a Database

FINAL WORKS-CITED-LIST ENTRY

Lorensen, Jutta. "Between Image and Word, Color, and Time: Jacob Lawrence's *The Migration Series*." *African American Review*, vol. 40, no. 3, 2006, pp. 571-86. *EBSCOHost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=24093790&site=ehost-live.

1 Author.
Lorensen, Jutta.

2 Title of source.
"Between Image and Word, Color, and Time: Jacob Lawrence's *The Migration Series*."

CONTAINER 1

3 Title of container,
African American Review,

4 Other contributors,

5 Version,

6 Number,
vol. 40, no. 3,

7 Publisher,

8 Publication date,
2006,

9 Location.
pp. 571-86.

CONTAINER 2

3 Title of container,
EBSCOHost,

4 Other contributors,

5 Version,

6 Number,

7 Publisher,

8 Publication date,

9 Location.
search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=24093790&site=ehost-live.

Example Works-Cited Entries

Book

Nerburn, Kent. *Neither Wolf nor Dog: On Forgotten Roads with an Indian Elder*. New World Library,

2002.

Chapter in a Book (one container, optional element--editors)

Copeland, Edward. "Money." *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, edited by Copeland and Juliet

McMaster, Cambridge UP, 1997, pp. 131-48.

Article in a Printed Publication (one container)

Zernike, Kate. "Unsafe behind the Wheel." *New York Times Upfront,* 7 Jan. 2012, pp. 6-7.

Video on a Website (no author, one container, optional element—description, URL, access date)

"Going Home with Maya Angelou." Video interview, *Maya Angelou,*

www.mayaangelou.com/biography/. Accessed 19 June 2017.

Journal Article Found in a Database (two containers, URL, access date)

Lorensen, Jutta. "Between Image and Word, Color, and Time: Jacob Lawrence's *The Migration Series*."

African American Review, vol. 40, no. 3, 2006, p. 571. *EBSCOHost*,

search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=24093790 &site=ehost-live.

Accessed 7 Aug. 2017.

Article Found on a Website (one container, URL, optional element--medium of publication [transcript], access date)

Allende, Isabel. "Tales of Passion." *TED: Ideas Worth Spreading*, Jan. 2008,

www.ted.com/talks/isabel_allende_tells_tales_of_passion/transcript?language=en.

Transcript. Accessed 14 Apr. 2017.

Article Found on *Newsela* (two authors, two containers, optional elements—adaptors and version number, URL, access date)

Beaumont, Thomas, and Julie Pace. "VP Debate: Kaine and Pence Fight for Their Running

Mates." Associated Press via *Newsela*. Adapted by *Newsela* Staff, Version 1190, 5 Oct. 2016,

newsela.com/articles/pence-kaine-vp-debate/id/22542/. Accessed 8 Aug. 2017.

Supreme Court Ruling Published on a Website (government/organization author, one container, optional element—date of ruling, URL, access date). (Note that the URL is hyperlinked, which adds a line under the URL. Follow your teacher's direction about whether to include or remove hyperlinks.)

United States' Supreme Court. *Brown v. Board of Education*. 17 May 1954. *Legal Information Institute*,

Cornell U Law School, www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/347/483. Accessed 9 Mar. 2017.

Article about a Supreme Court Case Found in a Database (two containers, URL, access date)

Chappell, Kevin. "Topeka 50 Years Later: the Real Story behind the *Brown v. Board*." *Ebony*, vol. 59,

no. 7, May 2004, pp. 114-118. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?

direct=true&db=f5h&AN=13540691&site=ehost-live. Accessed 28 Feb. 2017.

Quote Website (Note that the URL is hyperlinked, which adds a line under the URL. Follow your teacher's direction about whether to include or remove hyperlinks.)

"Zora Neale Hurston Quotes." *Brainy Quote.com*, Xplore, 2017,

www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/z/zora_neale_hurston.html. Accessed 28 Sept. 2017.

Tweet

@persiankiwi. "We have report of large street battles in east & west of Tehran—#Iranelection." *Twitter*,

23 June 2009, 11:15 a.m., twitter.com/persiankiwi/ status/2298106072. Accessed 4 July 2017.

YouTube (Note: sites like *YouTube*, *Netflix*, or *Blogger* that host content created by others should be considered containers, but they are not publishers.)

"The Scottsboro Boys." *YouTube*, uploaded by Emory University, 13 Feb. 2012,

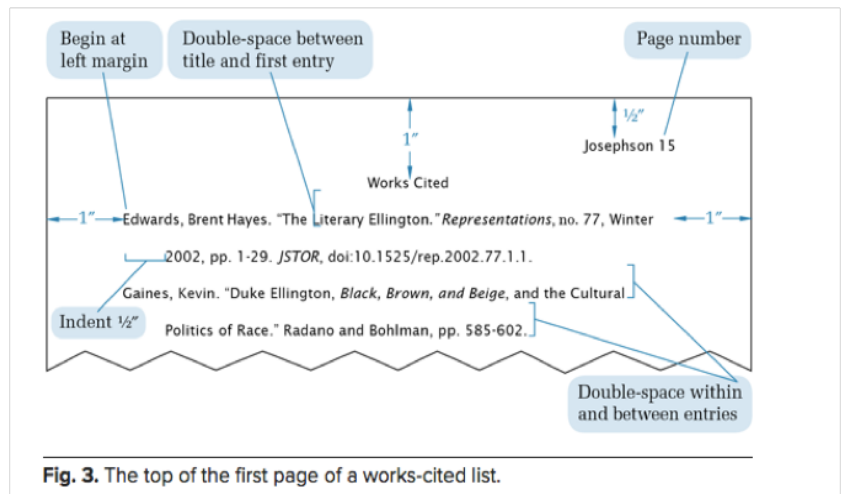https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmsYLmqx3wg. Accessed 4 Mar. 2017.

Resources for More Information

→ *MLA Handbook 8th Edition*

→ *Eden Prairie High Survival Manual* PDQ Section [Parenthetical Documentation & Quotations] https://www.edenpr.org/cms/lib/MN01909581/Centricity/domain/270/english/english_pdq _document_2014.pdf

→ *MLA Style Center* https://style.mla.org/

   o You can download a citation template https://style.mla.org/files/2016/04/practice-template.pdf

→ MLA Section of *Purdue OWL* [Online Writing Lab] https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/08/

Formatting the Works Cited

According to MLA style, you must have a works-cited page at the end of your paper. Draft your works-cited page as you research and write rather than trying to create it after you write. **All entries in the works-cited page must match the ( ) references in your paper.** You should not have any extra, unused sources on your list of works cited.

Page Layout

- Begin your works-cited page on a separate page at the end of your research paper, but paginate it as part of your document. It should have the same one-inch margins and last name, page number header as the rest of your paper. If your Works Cited runs more than one page, don't repeat the title Works Cited on subsequent pages.
- Label the page by centering the words Works Cited at the top of the page (do not italicize the words Works Cited, put them in quotation marks, or type them in a different font style or size). If you have only one source, title your page with the singular Work Cited.

Fig. 3. The top of the first page of a works-cited list.

- Alphabetize entries by the authors' last names. If there is no author, begin the entry with the title of the book or article and alphabetize by the first important word in the title (excluding article: a, an, the).
- Double space all citations, but do not skip lines between entries.
- Use hanging indentation--the first line of any entry should be out to left margin, but indent the second and subsequent lines of each citation by 0.5 inches. In a Word document, use the options in the paragraph menu to format the hanging indentation.

Formatting the Entries

- Capitalize article and book titles according to standard grammar rules, even if they are not capitalized in your source. Formatting titles includes italicizing titles of books, magazines, websites, databases, etc., and using quotation marks for the titles of shorter works like articles, poems, chapters, songs, etc.
- Pay attention to the punctuation of the citation. In general, periods are used to separate the author(s) and the source title from the rest of the entry. A period is used between each container, but commas are used between each piece of information about a container. Each citation must end with a period.
- Note that only the first name listed in any citation is inverted (last name first, first name last). This is done for alphabetizing. Any other names in a citation should be written normally. Names in a series (multiple authors, etc.) should be given in the order in which they appear in the source. If you have questions about how to format entries with multiple authors, editors, multiple works by the same author, an organization as an author, etc., consult the *MLA Handbook* or online resources suggested by your teacher.
- When a date appears in works-cited entry, it must be written in the day-month-year style (2 Mar. 2017). Dates written in this style require no commas. With the exceptions of May, June, and July, abbreviate the names of all months (examples Mar., Apr., Sept.).
- When your source has page numbers, use p. or pp. to indicate the page number or range of pages for the article. If your source has no page numbers, like a web page or a text-only PDF, do not add page numbers.
- For online sources, you should include a URL to show readers where you found the source. **Delete "http://" from URLs**. You can shorten URL's if they run more than 3 lines. If available, use a permalink or a DOI (Digital Object Identifier) instead of a full URL.

Note about citation-generators: Many databases (*MEGAfile*, *US History in Context*, etc.) have citation-generators that will get you **close** to a correct entry. You may need to standardize capitalization, check italics for titles, add an access date, and adjust font and other formatting details. Remember that **you** are ultimately responsible for creating correct citation.

Works Cited

Allende, Isabel. "Tales of Passion." *TED: Ideas Worth Spreading*, Jan. 2008,

    www.ted.com/talks/isabel_allende_tells_tales_of_passion/transcript?language=en.

    Transcript. Accessed 14 Apr. 2017.

Beaumont, Thomas, and Julie Pace. "VP Debate: Kaine and Pence Fight for Their Running

    Mates." Associated Press via *Newsela*. Adapted by *Newsela* Staff, Version 1190, 5 Oct.

    2016, newsela.com/articles/pence-kaine-vp-debate/id/22542/. Accessed 8 Aug. 2017.

Chappell, Kevin. "Topeka 50 Years Later: the Real Story behind the *Brown v. Board*." *Ebony*,

    vol. 59, no. 7, May 2004, pp. 114-118. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?

    direct=true&db=f5h&AN=13540691&site=ehost-live. Accessed 28 Feb. 2017.

Clare, Cassandra, et al. *Tales from the Shadowhunter Academy*. Margaret K. McElderry Books,

    2016.

Copeland, Edward. "Money." *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, edited by Copeland

    and Juliet McMaster, Cambridge UP, 1997, pp. 131-48.

"Going Home with Maya Angelou." Video interview, *Maya Angelou,*

    www.mayaangelou.com/biography/. Accessed 19 June 2017.

Lorensen, Jutta. "Between Image and Word, Color, and Time: Jacob Lawrence's *The Migration*

    Series." *African American Review*, vol. 40, no. 3, 2006, p. 571. *EBSCOHost*,

    search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f5h&AN=24093790 &site=ehost-live.

    Accessed 7 Aug. 2017.

Nerburn, Kent. *Neither Wolf nor Dog: On Forgotten Roads with an Indian Elder*. New World

    Library, 2002.

---. *Ordinary Sacred: The Simple Beauty of Everyday Life*. New World Library, 2012.

@persiankiwi. "We have report of large street battles in east & west of Tehran—#Iranelection."

   Twitter, 23 June 2009, 11:15 a.m., twitter.com/persiankiwi/ status/2298106072. Accessed

   4 July 2017.

 "The Scottsboro Boys." *YouTube*, uploaded by Emory University, 13 Feb. 2012,

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmsYLmqx3wg. Accessed 4 Mar. 2017.

United States' Supreme Court. *Brown v. Board of Education*. 17 May 1954. *Legal Information*

   Institute, Cornell U Law School, www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/347/483.

   Accessed 9 Mar. 2017.

Zernike, Kate. "Unsafe behind the Wheel." *New York Times Upfront,* 7 Jan. 2012, pp. 6-7.

"Zora Neale Hurston Quotes." *Brainy Quote.com*, Xplore, 2017,

   www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/z/zora_neale_hurston.html. Accessed 28 Sept.

   2017.