

Who uses MLA Referencing and what is it?

Produced by the Modern Language Association, the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publication* is mostly used in the Humanities. MLA follows the Harvard referencing approach of:

- brief references each time a source is drawn upon in-text
- matching, fuller descriptions of each source, placed end-of-text.

So what is the Harvard approach to referencing?

A short reference, typically *author surname + page number*, is given each time a source is drawn upon. This source reference is placed **within parentheses (brackets)** - hence the other common term, **parenthetical referencing**.

Why is Harvard referencing so-called?

See the APA leaflet in this series for the features and origins of the Harvard approach to referencing.

What is distinctive about MLA?

Features to note in the examples given in this Quick Guide:

- the date of publication is **not** specified for in-text citations, as it typically would be in Harvard-style
- for end-of-text listing, MLA uses the term *Works Cited* rather than *Bibliography* or *References*
- The medium of publication (e.g. Print, Web, CD, DVD, Exhibition) is specified in the *Works cited* list, which is not generally the case for Harvard-style.

How is the end-of-text 'Works Cited' organised and what should go in it?

The list is organised alphabetically by author surname. The list is organised alphabetically by author surname. It includes only sources referred to explicitly in your text.

So I must list my sources and nothing but my sources?

Yes, follow that principle and you can't go wrong. Your **Works Cited** page should contain a full reference for every work mentioned in your text, but should **not** include details of works which you read while researching your topic but did not choose to use. So be sure to acknowledge all your sources at the point of (each) use in your own work, and then include them in your Works Cited list.

So is MLA Style suitable for all my course work assignments?

You need to take care on selection of a reference style. Different academic disciplines and departments use different referencing systems. That is why many Essex departments provide very full and detailed guidance on how to reference for each of their modules. So be sure to look through the relevant handbooks to find out what system you should use for your Essex course work.

Where can I find full MLA Guide?

The official *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publications* can be borrowed from the Sloman library. You can purchase your own copy directly from the MLA web (www.mla.org), or from other book retailers.

Examples of quotation layout



Short quotation: integrated into the text

Researching the characteristics of modern behaviour, Henshilwood and Marean point out that devised criteria are often "context-specific to the richer European record" and therefore, in their opinion, "of limited value" when used in..... (627).

Full Work Cited reference:

Henshilwood Christopher S. and Curtis W. Marean. The Origin of Modern Human Behavior: Critique of the Models and Their Test Implications. *Current Anthropology*. 44. 5 (Dec. 2003): 627-651. Web.

Longer quotation: use indented paragraph(s) to distinguish from your own text

... to illustrate my point, I have therefore thought it worthwhile to set out the whole of this famous introduction to *Moby Dick* :

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago - never mind how long precisely - having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world. It is a way I have of driving off the spleen, and regulating the circulation. Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street, and methodically knocking people's hats off - then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can. This is my substitute for pistol and ball. With a philosophical flourish Cato throws himself upon his sword; I quietly take to the ship." (Melville 11)

This excerpt reveals several aspects of characterisation which Melville is keen to establish through the use

Full Work Cited reference:

Melville, Herman. *Moby Dick*. 2011, London: Harper Perennial Classics. Print.

Essex Referencing Quick Guides



- APA Style
- OSCOLA
- Chicago
- IEEE
- MLA

Essex University Skills Centre

MLA Style

Referencing Quick Guide Series



Example of an alphabetical list of references in the MLA Style

Sound recording	Works Cited
Perf = performance; Cond. = conductor	Beethoven, Ludwig van. <i>The 9 Symphonies</i> . Perf. NBC Symphony Orchestra. Cond. Arturo Toscanini. RCA, 2003. CD.
News Journal Article	Brubaker, Bill. "New Health Center Targets County's Uninsured Patients." <i>Washington Post</i> 24 May 2007: LZ01. Print.
With no author name published, so article title comes first.	"Business: Global Warming's Boom Town; Tourism in Greenland." <i>The Economist</i> 26 May, 2007: 82. Print.
Journal Article	De Goya, Francisco. J. <i>The Family of Charles IV</i> . 1800. Museo del Prado, Madrid. Oil on canvas.
14.3 = journal volumes are serialised. This article is in the 3 rd issue for the year : 575-599 = page numbers	Haraway, Donna. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." <i>Feminist Studies</i> , 14.3. 1988: 575-599. Print.
Website	Harris, Muriel. "Talk to Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers." <i>A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers One to One</i> . Ed. Ben Rafoth. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2000: 24-34. Print.
Anonymous is known to be a 'contributor' rather than website author. nd = no date (but note web-accessed date)	e-how contributor. "How to Make Vegetarian Chili." <i>eHow</i> . Demand Media, n.d. Web. Accessed 24 Feb. 2014.
Online newspaper:	Landau, Robert and John Pashdag. <i>Outrageous L.A.</i> San Francisco: Chronicle, 1984. Print.
feature article Web. Pub. = the online version of the newspaper	Paton, Graeme. "Stop Calling Teachers 'Miss' or 'Sir', Pupils are Told" <i>Telegraph.co.uk</i> . 13 May. 2014. Web. Pub.
Broadcast TV	Nixon, Sean. <i>Hard looks: Masculinities, Spectatorship and Contemporary Consumption</i> . London: UCL Press. 1996: Print.
(episode title followed by series title). 19 Jul. 1998 = 1 st transmission date	"The Blessing Way." <i>The X-Files</i> . Fox. WXIA, Atlanta. 19 Jul. 1998. Television.
Recorded Television	"The One Where Chandler Can't Cry." <i>Friends: The Complete Sixth Season</i> . Writ. Andrew Reich and Ted Cohen. Dir. Kevin Bright. Warner Brothers, 2004. DVD.
	<i>The Usual Suspects</i> . Dir. Bryan Singer. Perf. Kevin Spacey, Gabriel Byrne, Chazz Palminteri, Stephen Baldwin, and Benicio del Toro. Polygram, 1995. Film.

Note precise use of full stops and commas after items of information.

Yes, we agree, it is annoying and looks finicky. But that is the official MLA style.



Newspaper Article

With name of newspaper in italics

Painting

Giving location of the original

Chapter from an edited book

Ed = editor of the compilation book
Portsmouth = place of p

Book: two authors.

Note layout for 2nd author's name

Book: one author.

Note how capital letters are used in the title.

Film

Begin with film title.
Dir. = Director; Perf. = performed by

MLA guidance on URLs
The MLA no longer requires that writers give URL for sources cited, but your department may still require that you do so. So check your Department handbook on this!

Examples of in-text references in MLA Style



First names or initials are not needed for in-text reference.

Brumm and Moore suggest that current assessment criteria need to be reviewed (157).

'Top and tailing' (i.e. using reference details each side of the reference) makes quite clear the start and end of the citation.

Several studies propose that a number of artefacts are indicative of modern behaviour (McBrearty and Brooks 453; Henshilwood and Marean 627).

'End-position-only' citation – needs to be used with caution. The start and end of the citation must be clear Here the phrase 'several studies' indicates the start.

According to Guff, characters, not ideas, ruled comedy in Roman times (qtd. in Bull 234).

A secondary citation: the student has seen Guff's ideas quoted in an article by Bull.

A report by The Institute for Development and Policy Management (Manchester University) explains that the results were collated from a number of sources (IDPM Transaction 24).

Corporate publication - note that a reduced document title (IDPM) is used in the parenthesis.

Borkman initially refers to such reconstructions as inevitably leading to 'barbarous distortions of historical records' (Foundations 44), though in a later work his attitude appears to soften slightly and he concedes that such practices may be 'acceptable when no intact documentation is available' (Principles 112).

More than one work by the same author – use abbreviated titles: *Foundations* refers to "*Foundations of Modern Historiography*"; *Principles* refers to "*The Principles of Historical Analysis*". Both works are by Borkman. The full title of both works would be included in 'Works Cited'.

Gibbs, Toner and Snyder find no evidence to link the two phenomena (13).

Two or three authors - all names are mentioned.

Yang, Don, Dill, Rogers and Green use such examples to counter accusations of bias (26).

Multiple (more than 3) authors - either form of citation shown here is OK.

Yang et al. use such examples to counter accusations of bias (26).