There is more information available today, in more formats, than ever before, so the way we cite sources needs to evolve to keep pace. MLA 8 was designed to simplify the process, helping writers accurately and intuitively cite sources more easily, requiring that every source type follow the same format. This means that books, websites, periodicals, videos, photographs, and all other types of sources now use this **same standard format**.

MLA 8 requires researchers to locate the same "core elements" from their sources and place them in a standard order in order to create their citations.

The "Core Elements" of an MLA 8 citation, along with their corresponding punctuation marks, include the following (in this order):

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

The appropriate punctuation mark will follow each core element, unless it is the final piece. In this case, the punctuation mark would be a period.

Here's how an actual source looks when cited using MLA 8:

Goodwin, Doris. *Team of Rivals: the Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*.
        Simon & Schuster, 2012.

1. One standard citation format that applies to every source type

In previous editions of the MLA Handbook, researchers were required to locate the citation format for the source that they used. For example, if a magazine was used, researchers needed to locate the specific citation format for periodicals. Due to the various ways that information is now received, in books, websites, lectures, tweets, Facebook posts, etc, it has become unrealistic for MLA to create citation formats for every source type. Now, there is one standard, universal format that researchers can use to create their citations.

2. Inclusion of "containers" in citations

Containers are the elements that "hold" the source. For example, if a television episode is watched on Netflix, Netflix is the container. Both the title of the source and its container are included in a citation.

3. The ability to use pseudonyms for author names

It is now acceptable to use online handles or screen names in place of authors' names.

Example:

@WSJ. "Generation X went from the most successful in terms of homeownership rates in 2004

to the least successful by 2015." *Twitter,* 8 Apr. 2016, 4:30 p.m.,

www.twitter.com/WSJ/status/718532887830753280.

4. Inclusion of URLS

In previous versions of the MLA handbook, it was up to the discretion of the instructor whether URLs should be included in a citation. In MLA 8, it is highly recommended to include a URL in the citation. Even if it becomes outdated, it is still possible to trace the information online from an older URL.

Omit "http://" or "https://" from the URL when including it in the citation.

5. Adding the abbreviations vol. and no. to magazine and journal article citations

In MLA 7, there was no indication that the numbers in periodical citations referred to the volume and issue numbers.

Example of a journal article citation in MLA 7:

DelGuidice, Margaux. "When a Leadership Opportunity Knocks, Answer!" *Library Media*

> *Connection* 30.2 (2011): 48-49. Print.

Example of a journal article citation in MLA 8:

DelGuidice, Margaux. "When a Leadership Opportunity Knocks, Answer!" *Library Media*

> *Connection*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2011, pp. 48-49.

6. Omitting the publisher from some source types

It is not necessary to include the publisher for periodicals or for a website when the name of the site matches the name of the publisher. For periodicals, the name of the publisher is generally insignificant.

7. Omitting the city of publication

In previous versions of the MLA handbook, researchers included the city where the publisher was located. Today, this information generally serves little purpose and the city of publication can often be omitted.

Only include the city of publication if the version of the source differs when published in a different country (Example: British editions of books versus versions printed in the United States).

Features that have not changed, and are the same as MLA 7:

The overall principles of citing and plagiarism

The use of in-text citations and works cited pages

The purpose of a Works Cited list is to display the sources that were used for a project. Showcasing the sources that were used allows others to locate the original sources themselves. In addition, a Works Cited list gives credit to the original authors of the works that were consulted for a project.

Works Cited lists are typically found at the very end of a project. The last page of a research paper, the final slide of a presentation, and the last screen of a video are all appropriate places to display a Works Cited list.

Each source is displayed in a special format, called a citation. This guide explains how to create citations for the Works Cited page. Citations are listed in alphabetical order by the first word in the citation, which is typically the last name of the author.

When there are two or more sources with the same author, only include the author's name in the first citation. In the second or subsequent citations, use three hyphens in place of the author's name, followed by a period.

Example with two or more sources with the same author:

Sparks, Nicholas. *Dear John*. Grand Central, 2007, p. 82.

– – -. *A Walk to Remember*. Warner, 1999.

If the individual is someone other than an author, such as a director or an editor, follow the three hyphens with a comma. Then, include the role of the individual after the comma. Place the citations in alphabetical order by the title of the work when there are multiple works by one author.

Example when individual is someone other than an author:

Allen, Woody. *Getting Even*. Vintage, 1978.

– – -, director. *Midnight in Paris*. Sony Pictures Classics, 2011.

The only instance when it is acceptable to include an author's name more than once in a Works Cited Page is when the author is a coauthor with another individual or team.

Example when the author is a coauthor with another individual or team:

Patterson, James, and Chris Grabenstein. *House of Robots*. Little, Brown and Co., 2014.

Patterson, and Chris Tebbetts. *Middle School: Get Me Out of Here.* Little, Brown and Co., 2012.

When there is no author listed for a source, place it in alphabetical order by the title. Omit words such as A, An, and The. If the title begins with a number, write the number out in word form.

Example when no author is listed:

Twenty-Eight Days Later. Directed by Danny Boyle, produced by Alex Garland, Fox Searchlight

Pictures, 2002.

Example of an MLA Eighth Edition Works Cited Page:

Patterson, James, and Chris Grabenstein. *House of Robots*. Little, Brown and Co., 2014.

Patterson, James, and Chris Tebbetts. *Middle School: Get Me Out of Here.*Little, Brown and Co.,

2012.

Sparks, Nicholas. *Dear John*. Grand Central, 2007, p. 82.

− − − . *A Walk to Remember*. Warner, 1999.

Twenty-Eight Days Later. Directed by Danny Boyle, produced by Alex Garland, Fox Searchlight

Pictures, 2002.