MLA Format

The Writing Center
Brigham Young University
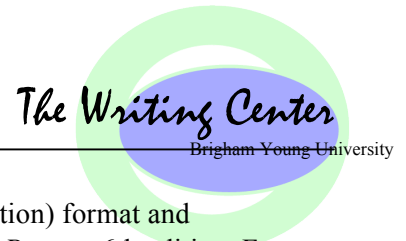
This handout covers basic principles of MLA (Modern Language Association) format and documentation, based on the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th edition. For more help, refer to the *Handbook* (corresponding reference sections are provided in parentheses throughout this handout).

General Format

Use at least 1-inch margins at the left, right, top, and bottom of each page (4.3). Justify the left margin but not the right (4.1). Use a font type and size that is easy to read, such as Times New Roman, 12 pt. (4.1). Double space everything, including block quotations, references, titles, and headings (4.4). Place your last name and the page number within the top margin of each page, right-justified (4.6). Indent ½ inch to begin paragraphs (4.3). (Refer to Figure 1.)

Note: To insert a page header in Microsoft Word, select View, then Header and Footer. This brings up the header box and the Header and Footer toolbar. On the top line of the header box (on any page), right-justify and type your last name followed by 1 space. Then, in the toolbar, click the left-most box with a number sign (#). Then click Close on the toolbar.
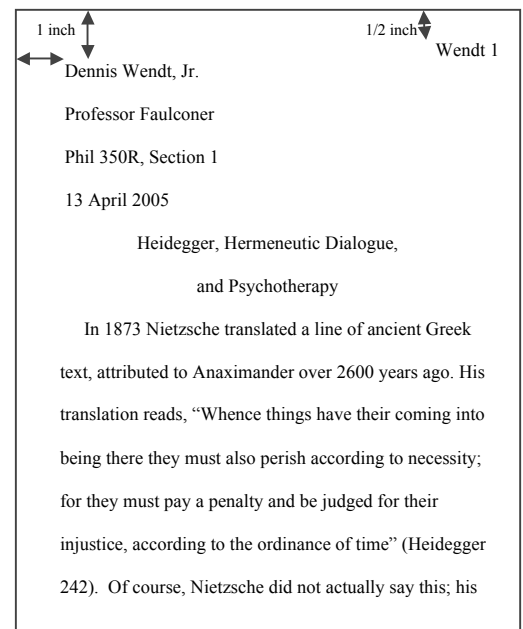
Title and Authorship Information

Your name, your instructor's name, the course number, and the date should be placed at the top-left of the first page, double-spaced, as shown in Figure 1. Center the title on the next double-spaced line, in plain type (not bolded, italicized, underlined, or in a larger font), capitalizing the first letter of all major words. The title may occupy one or two lines, depending on its length. The main text follows on the next double-spaced line, indented ½ inch (4.5).

> 1 inch 　　　　　　　　　　　1/2 inch
> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Wendt 1
> Dennis Wendt, Jr.
>
> Professor Faulconer
>
> Phil 350R, Section 1
>
> 13 April 2005
>
> 　　Heidegger, Hermeneutic Dialogue,
>
> 　　　　and Psychotherapy
>
> 　In 1873 Nietzsche translated a line of ancient Greek text, attributed to Anaximander over 2600 years ago. His translation reads, "Whence things have their coming into being there they must also perish according to necessity; for they must pay a penalty and be judged for their injustice, according to the ordinance of time" (Heidegger 242). Of course, Nietzsche did not actually say this; his

Note: Major words refers to the first word of the title, the first word after a colon, and all other words except articles, coordinating conjunctions, prepositions, and the infinitive to (3.6.1).

In-Text Citation

Each use of information from another source (whether quoted, paraphrased, or summarized) must be properly documented (5.1, 6.1).

Note: Refer to the handout *Plagiarism* for more information.

Whenever possible, cite the source's author and page number (6.1). If the author's name is mentioned in the main text, put the page number in a parenthetical citation at the end of the sentence, after any end quotation marks but before the period (3.7.7).

Example: According to Heidegger, it is not "firmly established what we ourselves think with the words 'being' and 'to be'" (252).

If the author's name is not used, then include the author's surname in the parenthetical citation.

Example: The chatter "'tranquilizes' us into thinking that matters are entirely settled and disinclines us to look further" (Inwood 55).

Parenthetical citations vary according to the source, as shown in the examples below. (For each, items need to be cited in parenthetical references only if they are not mentioned in the text.)

2-3 authors: List names in the order they are listed in the source (6.2).

(Westen and Smith 204-24) or (Jones, Callin, and Rundel 14)

4 or more authors: Either list all names or list only the first author's name followed by et. al. Whatever you choose, it should match the works cited entry (5.6.4, 6.2).

(Walken et. al 1131-42).

No author listed: List the first 1-2 words of the title. If the source is an article or chapter, use double quotations; if it is a book, underline (6.4.4).

("Cancer Therapy" A6) or (Depression 24-68)

Multiple sources by same author: When using more than one source by the same author, you must use the titles (see "No author listed," above) so the reader knows which source you are citing (6.4.6):

(Heidegger, "Anaximander's" 19)

Indirect sources: When using a quotation or paraphrase that is a quotation in another source, insert qtd. in (6.4.7).

(qtd. in James 34)

2 or more sources in a single reference: Separate 2 or more sources supporting a single claim with semicolons (6.4.9).

(Inwood 55; Heidegger 252; Piper 12)

Page numbers

Page numbers are required for citations of quoted material, as well as summarized or paraphrased ideas from a specific place in a source (6.4.2). If referring to an entire work, or a work without page numbers, then page numbers are not needed—in this case it is preferable to have the author information directly in the text, meaning no parenthetical reference is needed (6.4.1). In some cases, it may be more appropriate to cite a chapter or section number, like ch. 2 (6.2).

Note: For classical poetry, plays, or religious works, "omit page numbers altogether and cite by division (act, scene, canto, book, part) and line," separating each with a period (6.4.8).

Examples: book 12, line 2 = 12.2
act 3, scene 1, line 44 = 3.1.44
Revelation, chapter 22, verse 3 = Rev. 22.3
Note: first citation include the word line or lines, like lines 5-7. For subsequent citation, only the number is necessary.

For Heidegger, however, technological advancement is not the problem; the problem is that we forget to ask the question of being (Pattison 69). The problem with challenging forth, with seeing things as mere resources, is not that it allows for more efficient means to desired ends, but that it tempts us to be satisfied with the chatter's presumption of finality concerning what things really are. Heidegger warns us to "not allow ourselves to be mesmerized by technology itself and its success" because such can keep us from seeing that it is "an essentially limiting, one-sided, and one-track way of approaching the world" (58, 71).

For many electronic sources, page numbers are not available, but paragraph numbers are provided (6.4.2). If this is the case, then list by paragraph number: par. 5 or pars. 2-3. If paragraph numbers are not available, then list the section heading, if applicable, like (Conclusion). When using a reference number or heading other than a page number, separate the reference from the author's surname with a comma, as in (Jones, ch. 4) or (Parsons, Conclusion).

Quoting

Quote passages exactly as they appear in the original text, using double quotation marks (" ") (3.7.1); however, here are some exceptions.

If additions must be made for clarification, place them in square brackets (3.7.2, 3.7.6).

Example: "According to [Jim]"

If words or phrases must be omitted for clarity, use ellipses (3.7.5)

Example: "Within the next five years . . . new renovations must be made"

When underlining or italicizing certain words for emphasis include the words "emphasis added" (3.3.3., 3.7.6).

Example: "it is a value system" (Hall 32, emphasis added)

If a quote is longer than 4 lines, format it as a block quotation (3.7.2). A block quotation starts on a new line, the entire quotation being indented 1 inch from the left margin, double-spaced, and without quotation marks. The parenthetical citation is placed one space *after* end punctuation.

When quoting multiple lines of poetry, separate lines with a slash (3.7.3).

Example: "A morning run / In solitude"

Works Cited List

Every cited source must be documented in the works cited list (5.3). Begin the list on a new page. Label `Works Cited` on the top line, centered. List references in alphabetical order, double spaced, in hanging indention format (all but the first line of each entry are indented ½ inch from left margin), as shown in Figure 3 (5.4-5.5).

Note: When 2 or more entries have the exact same author, substitute three hyphens followed by a period (---.) for the author's name on all but the first entry, alphabetizing by title (5.6.3). When 2 or more entries have the same first author, alphabetize according to the last name of the second author (5.5). In addition, when alphabetizing, ignore articles *A*, *An*, or *The* at the beginning of titles with an unknown author (5.5).

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Works Cited

Davis, Martha and Janet, ed. <u>Body Movement and Nonverbal Communication</u>. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1982.

Fast, Julius. <u>Body Language</u>. New York: Evans, 970.

Hall, Edward. <u>The Hidden Dimension</u>. New York: Doubleday, 1966.

Maines, David. "Tactile Relationships in the Subways as Affected by Racial, Sexual, and Crowded Seating Settings." <u>Journal of Environmental Psychology</u> 2 (1977): 100-8.

Works Cited List Entries

For reference list entries, list the author's name first, followed by the title. Other needed information varies, depending on the source. Examples for common types of sources are shown below, along with basic guidelines. For more help, refer to the *Handbook* (ch. 5).

Note: For one author, list the surname first, as in *Shelley, Mary* (5.6.1). For a work with 2 or more authors, list in the order they are credited in the original source. Place the surname first only for the first author: Houp, Kenneth, Thomas Pearsall, and Elizabeth Tebeaux (5.6.4). Indicate editors as shown: Smith, Fred, ed. *or* Wayne, Henry, and Frank Swenson, eds. If no author is listed, or if the work is anonymous, simply omit author information and put the title first: Newspaper article (5.6.11).

Book (5.6)

Shelley, Mary. <u>Frankenstein</u>. New York: Bantam Books, 1818.

Underline book titles, but not the period that follows. Many instructors accept italicizing, but MLA suggests underlining because it is easier to read (3.3).

Journal article (5.7.1-5.7.4)

```
Bodner, George R. "The Apple Ate My Paper." College English 46
        (1984): 610-11.
```

Place article titles in quotes. Underline journal names (see "Book" example), followed by a space, but no punctuation. The volume number (46) comes next*, followed by the publication year in parentheses, as shown. After a colon, list page numbers for the entire article, as shown.

*If the journal is paginated by issue (rather than volume), insert the issue number after the volume number, separated by a period. For example, `38.9` means volume 38, issue 9, paginated by issue.

Magazine article (5.7.6)

```
Moritz, Michael. "A Hard-Core Technoid." Time 16 Apr. 1984: 62-63.
```

Do not include volume or issue numbers. For daily/weekly magazines, list the month and date, as shown. For monthlies, list the month. Abbreviate all months except May, June, and July.

Newspaper article (5.7.5)*

```
"Cancer Therapy Brings New Hope." Salt Lake Tribune 17 Aug. 1996:
        A6.
```

Like a magazine article entry (see above), except with the following provisions: First, if a city's name is not included in the name of a local or regional newspaper, then place the city in brackets, as in `Post Register [Idaho Falls].` Second, if an article is printed on 2 or more discontinuous pages, list only the first page followed by a plus sign (+), as in `A1+.`

*This example illustrates how to cite a source when no author is listed. If an author is listed, follow the standard format.

Internet source (5.9)*

```
Knox, Brenda. "The Don Quixote Exhibit." May 1996. Johns Hopkins
        University. 1 June 2004 <http://quixote.mse.jhu.edu>.
```

The first date listed (May 1996) is the month and year of the last published change. This is followed by the name of the institution or organization sponsoring the site, if applicable. The next date indicates the day, month, and year of when the site was accessed. This is followed by the URL, enclosed in angle brackets (< >).

*Documentation for Internet articles can be far more complicated than this example, depending on the type of source. Refer to the *Handbook* (5.9, mostly pp. 214-15) for details.

Dennis Wendt, Jr., Aug. 2005