

MLA Core Element Guide:

IMPORTANT! -- If any one of these elements does not exist-- for example, if there is no author, just leave that box blank and skip that element in your citation. Some sources may have 2 containers, such as articles found in databases. For sources like that, include as much of each separate container's information as possible. If information repeats (i.e. there is only one publisher that each container shares), only include the information in container 2.

1.) Author's Last Name, First Name. (last name, first name followed by a period)

- "Author" = person responsible for producing the work or the aspect of the work that you are focusing on.
- **Two authors:** include them in the order in which they are presented in the work. Reverse the name, follow it with a comma and *and*, then provide the second name in normal order.
- **Three or more authors:** reverse the first of the names and follow it with a comma and then et al. ("and others")
- **Editor:** List editor with the name reversed, follow it with a comma and add the descriptive word *editor*.
- **Two or more editors:** here use the same rules as for two - three or more authors, but add the descriptive *editor* or *editors* just after.
- **Translated:** (use this only if your focus was on the translation -- then you treat the translator as the author) here you follow the same rules as with authors, but you add the descriptive *translator(s)* just after.
- **Film and TV:** Works in media such as film and TV are usually produced by many people. If your discussion of such work focuses on the contributions of a particular person (such as an actor or screenwriter) begin the entry with his/her name, followed by a comma and an appropriate descriptive label: Creator, Performer, Director, etc.
- **Pseudonyms**, including online usernames, are mostly given like regular author names. Depending on what's provided, an author might be listed as: @MLASuperfan or just a last name, or you may be able to include the author's last name, first name as with any other source.
- **Corporate author:** a work may be created by a corporate author-- an institution, an association, a government agency, or another kind of organization. Example:

United Nations. *Consequences of Rapid Population Growth in Developing Countries*. Taylor and Francis, 1991.

- When a work is published by an organization that is also its author, begin the entry with the title, skipping the author element, and list the organization only as publisher.

2.) Title of Source. The title is the name of the actual item that you are reading/ viewing. For example, if you are reading a short story in an anthology, then the "Title of Source" is the title of the short story, not the title of the anthology. No matter how the title is punctuated on your source, be sure to standardize the capitalization and punctuation here.

A title is placed in quotation marks if the source is part of a larger work. A title is italicized if the source is self-contained and independent (such as a novel) -- Since in those cases the source itself is the actual container. For these types of sources, by writing the title in italics, you are fulfilling the requirement for #3.

- **Self-contained Sources whose titles should be italicized:** books (including collections of essays, poems, or short stories); when a work that is normally independent (such as a novel or play) appears in a collection, the work's title should remain in italics; title of an entire television series; the name of an entire website
- **Source titles that should be placed in quotation marks:** The title of an essay, a story, or a poem in a collection; article titles from periodicals (journals, magazines, and newspapers); title of a single television episode within a series; a posting or an article on a website; a song from an album, etc.
- **When a source is untitled,** provide a generic description of it, neither italicized nor enclosed in quotation marks, in place of a title. Capitalize the first word of the description and any proper nouns in it.
- **Tweets:** Identify a short untitled message, such as a tweet, by reproducing its full text, without changes, in place of a title and enclose it in quotation marks.
- **Emails:** When you document an email message, use its subject as the title. The subject is enclosed in quotation marks and its capitalization is standard.

Container 1

3.) *Title of Container*, (in italics--comma after it) The “container” is the “vessel” in which you found the source. This might be the name of the anthology in which you found a work, the name of a magazine in which you found an article, the name of the website on which you found information. A unified, stand-alone work like a novel or a study would be considered “self-contained,” and for those you would leave this element blank as you would have fulfilled the obligation within #2.

4.) Other Contributors, Aside from an author whose name appears at the start of the start of the entry, other people may be crediting in the source as contributors. If these people are vital to the identification of the work, you must include them. Precede each name listed here with a description of that person’s role. For example: adapted by...directed by...edited by...illustrated by...introduced by...introduction by...narrated by...performance by...translated by... (Please note: a few contributors may need special titles, like: guest editor... general editor... etc.)

5.) Version, If a source includes a notation indicating that it is a version of a work released in more than one form, identify the version here. Examples: Books may have various editions (Second ed., 7th ed., Updated ed.). Other types of versions you may see include the following: unabridged version, director’s cut, version 1.3.1

6.) Number, The source you are documenting may be a part of a numbered sequence; for example, something with multiple volumes or issues.

NOTE: For multi-volume sets for which you consult one volume: **vol. 4**

- For journals with both volume and issue numbers: **vol.2, no.8**
- For journals or comic books, which just number issues in sequence: **no. 19**
- For television show episodes: **season 4, episode 10**

7.) Publisher, The publisher is the organization responsible for producing the source or making it available to the public. **NOTE:** If two or more organizations are named in the source and seem equally responsible for the work, cite each of them, separating them with a forward slash (/)

- Publisher’s names may be omitted for the following kinds of publications, either because the publisher need not be given or because there is no publisher:
 - A periodical (journal, magazine, newspaper)...A work published by its author/ editor... A website whose title is essentially the same as the name of the publisher...A website not involved in producing the works it makes available, such as databases, YouTube, blog hosting services, or archive hosts, such as JSTOR.

8.) Publication date, This is a tough one. Sources -- especially those published online -- may be associated with more than one publication date. When a source carries more than one date (for example, it’s an article found online that was originally published in a print journal at an earlier date), cite the date that is the most meaningful or relevant to **your** use of the source. In other words, it’s almost always going to be best to use the date of the version of the source that **YOU** are looking at, or for a book, the most recent copyright date.

NOTE: Dates are always written like this: Day Month Year = 15 January 2016

9.) Location. A work’s location depends on the medium of publication. You need to think about where you found the information you are specifically using.

- In print sources, a page number (preceded by a p.) or a range of pages (preceded by a pp.) specifies the location of a text in a container such as an anthology or periodical.
- For an online work, the location is commonly indicated by its URL, or Web address. Generally, a URL will start with “www” or “http.” Both are acceptable. The best type of online location identifier is one that is permanent, such as a permalink (a URL that a publisher promises not to change) or a DOI (digital object identifier) because these are links that never change. Not all publishers assign DOI’s to their publications, but if they do, they will look something like this: doi:10.1353/pmc.200020021.
- The location of a television episode in a DVD set is indicated by the disc number.
- A physical object you experience first hand (such as a piece of art in a museum) is located in a place (The Louvre, France) -- do not include the name of the city.

Container 2 (not all sources will have 2 containers!)

3.) *Title of Container*, (in italics--comma after it) The “container” is the “vessel” in which you found the source. This might be the name of the anthology in which you found a work, the name of a magazine in which you found an article, the name of the website on which you found information. A unified, stand-alone work like a novel or a study would be considered “self-contained,” and for those you would leave this element blank.

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OPTIONAL ELEMENTS:

According to the 8th edition of MLA, "Core elements which should generally be included, if they exist-- may be accompanied by optional elements at the writer's discretion. Some optional elements are added at the end of the entry, while others are placed in the middle, after the core elements that they are related to. Your decision whether to include optional elements depends on their importance to your use of the source." The following is taken or adapted from MLA Handbook 8th edition.

1. Date of Original Publication

- When a source has been republished, consider giving the date of original publication if it will provide the reader with insight into the work's creation or relation to other works.
- The date of original publication is placed immediately after the source's title.

2.) City of Publication

- The traditional practice of citing the city where the publisher of the book was located usually serves little purpose today. There remain a few circumstances in which the city of publication might matter, however.
- Books published before 1900 are conventionally associated with their city of publication. In an entry for a pre-1900 work, you may give the city of publication *in place of the publisher's name*.
- In addition, a publisher with offices in more than one country may release a novel in two versions-- perhaps with different spelling or vocabulary.
- Include the city of publication whenever it might help a reader locate a text released by an unfamiliar publisher located outside North America.
- In these last two cases, you would write the city's name and then put a comma just before the publisher's name.

3.) Date of Access

- Since online works typically can be changed or removed at any time, the date on which you accessed online material is often an important indicator of the version you consulted.
- The date is especially crucial if the source provides no date specifying when it was produced or published.
- Add the date of access to the end of the entry if you choose to do so, like this:

"Under the Gun." *Pretty Little Liars*, season 4, episode 6, ABC Family, 16 July 2013. *Hulu*,

www.hulu.com/watch/511318. Accessed 23 July 2013.

4.) Other Facts about the Source

- There may be other information that will help the reader track down the original source. You might, for instance, include the total number of volumes in a multivolume publication. *You would include this at the end of the citation:*

Wellek, Rene. *A History of Modern Criticism, 1750-1950*. Vol 8, Yale UP, 1992. **8 vols.**

- If the source is an unexpected type of work, you may identify the type with a descriptive term *at the end of the citation:*

Fresh Air. Narrated by Terry Gross, National Public Radio, 20 May 2008. **Transcript.**

- Similarly, a lecture or other address heard in person may be indicated as such

Atwood, Margaret. "Silencing the Scream." *Boundaries of the Imagination Forum*. MLA Annual

Convention, 29 Dec. 1993. Royal York Hotel, Toronto. **Address.**