When you use the words or ideas of another in your writing, you must cite the sources. If the exact words of the original source are used, quotation marks are necessary. Although paraphrasing or rewording a source does not require quotation marks, documentation is still required. Failure to cite sources of information is plagiarism.

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GENERAL FORMAT

Use margins of one inch for all sides of the text—with exceptions for page numbers. Indent the first word of a paragraph one-half inch from the left margin and set-off quotations one inch from the left margin. Use easily readable font set to no larger than 12 points. Do not justify lines of text at the right margin and double-space the entire research paper, including quotations, notes, and the list of works cited. Leave one space after a period or other concluding punctuation mark.

Consult your instructor for his or her preferences as to titles and pagination. The MLA handbook discusses formatting for your paper’s first page but does not recommend a cover page. Paginate all pages consecutively throughout a research paper in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. Type your last name before the page number.

CITING SOURCES INSIDE YOUR PAPER

Parenthetical documentation (sometimes called “internal documentation”) is used to identify the sources of information you have borrowed (this serves the same purpose as footnotes/endnotes). Parenthetical documentation should be integrated smoothly into the text of your paper, rather than listed separately.

The general rule calls for you to cite the source, preferably at the end of the sentence in which you refer to it, by enclosing the author's last name and the page reference in parentheses. If the author's name is mentioned, you only need to put the page reference in parentheses at the end of the sentence, but if the context does not clearly identify the author, add the author's last name before the reference:

- Tannen has argued this point (178-85).
- This point has already been argued (Tannen 178-85).

A reference directly after a quotation follows the closing quotation mark:

- In the late Renaissance, Machiavelli contended that human beings were by nature "ungrateful" and "mutable" (1240), and Montaigne thought them "miserable and puny" (1343).

If the quotation, whether of poetry or prose, is set off from the text as a block quotation, type a space after the concluding punctuation mark of the quotation and insert the parenthetical reference:
John K. Mahon adds to our understanding of the War of 1812: Financing the war was very difficult at the time. . . . The loans were in the end absorbed by wealthy Americans at great hazard—also, as it turned out, at great profit to them. (385)

WORKS CITED: PRINT

A Works Cited list is an alphabetical list by author’s last name of all sources that contributed ideas and information to your paper. If the author is not named, use the first major word (excluding the articles “A,” “An,” or “The”) to alphabetize. The heading Works Cited is centered one inch from the top of the page in regular, 12-point font. The seventh edition of the MLA requires that you add the publication medium—Print, Web, DVD—to all entries on the Works Cited page.

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Include the anthology itself in your list of works cited and list each selection by its author and title, followed by a cross-reference to the anthology. Note that the anthology is listed with the other works alphabetically.


Kingston, Maxine Hong. “No Name Woman.” Oates and Atwan 383-94.


7. An Article in a Reference Book


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If the author of the complete work is also the writing of the introduction, etc., use only the last name after the word By. If the introduction, preface, etc. has a title, give the title, enclosed in quotation marks, immediately before the name of the part.


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