Writing a Bibliography: MLA Format

**Basics** Your list of works cited should begin at the end of the paper with the title, *Works Cited*. Alphabetize the entries in your list by the author’s last name, using the letter-by-letter system (ignore spaces and other punctuation.) If the author’s name is unknown, alphabetize by the title, ignoring any *A, An, or The*.

For dates, spell out the names of months in the text of your paper, but abbreviate them in the list of works cited, except for May, June, and July. Use either the day-month-year style (22 July 1999) or the month-day-year style (July 22, 1999) and be consistent. With the month-day-year style, be sure to add a comma after the year unless another punctuation mark goes there.

**Hanging Indentation**
All MLA citations should use hanging indents, that is, the first line of an entry should be flush left, and the second and subsequent lines should be indented 1/2”.

**Capitalization, Abbreviation, and Punctuation**
The MLA guidelines specify using title case capitalization - capitalize the first words, the last words, and all principal words, including those that follow hyphens in compound terms. Use lowercase abbreviations to identify the parts of a work (e.g., *vol.* for *volume, ed.* for *editor*) except when these designations follow a period. Whenever possible, use the appropriate abbreviated forms for the publisher’s name (*Random* instead of *Random House*).

Separate author, title, and publication information with a period followed by one space. Use a colon and a space to separate a title from a subtitle. Include other kinds of punctuation only if it is part of the title. Use quotation marks to indicate the titles of short works appearing within larger works (e.g., "Memories of Childhood." *American Short Stories*). Also use quotation marks for titles of unpublished works and songs.
Format Examples

WEBSITE or WEBPAGE

Format:
Author's last name, first name (if available). "Title of work within a project or database." Title of site, project, or database. Editor (if available). Electronic publication information (Date of publication or of the latest update, and name of any sponsoring institution or organization). Date of access and <full URL>.

Examples:


BOOKS

Format:
Author's last name, first name. Book title. Additional information. City of publication: Publishing company, publication date.
Examples:


**ENCYCLOPEDIA & DICTIONARY**

Format:
Author's last name, first name. "Title of Article." *Title of Encyclopedia*. Date.

Note: If the dictionary or the encyclopedia arranges articles alphabetically, you may omit volume and page numbers.

Examples:


MAGAZINE & NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Format:
Author’s last name, first name. "Article title." Periodical title Volume # Date: inclusive pages.

Note: If an edition is named on the masthead, add a comma after the date and specify the edition.

Examples:

