

MLA Style Electronic Formats

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The following formats and examples are offered as models for references that might appear in the text and in the "Works Cited" section (bibliography) of a business writer's research paper. These formats are based on Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Fifth Edition (1999), and Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Style Manual*, Second Edition (1998). They also reflect the online guidelines presented at the MLA Web site. To see these guidelines, visit <<http://www.mla.org>> and follow the prompts to "MLA Style" and "Frequently Asked Questions."

In-Text Citations

Normally in works that are printed, in-text citations include, in parentheses, the author's last name and the page cited, as in "(Roever 355)." However, because electronic documents have no pagination or other type of reference markers, the *MLA Handbook* recommends that such parenthetical references be avoided if possible. More preferable are direct references in the text to the name of the author or sponsoring organization.

Example of an In-Text Citation of an Electronic Publication With a Known Author:

William J. Mitchell's City of Bits discusses architecture and urban life in the context of the digital telecommunications revolution.

Example of an In-Text Citation of an Electronic Source Without a Known Author but With a Known Sponsor:

More companies today are using data mining to unlock hidden value in their data. The data mining program "Clementine," described at the SPSS Web site, helps organizations predict market share and detect possible fraud. In the works-cited list, the reader will be able to find a fuller version of each of these brief references by locating the author's name or the organization's name.

Works-Cited List

- To refer to electronic sources, include print information, if available, along with other information necessary for a reader to locate a source. Underline the title of a database, periodical, or Web site. For sites without titles, include a description such as "Home page" (not underlined).
- Although MLA style does not require the insertion of the word "Retrieved" or the word "Accessed" before the access date, you may wish to include one of these words to distinguish a retrieval date from a publication date.
- Use a hanging indent for each entry; that is, indent the second and succeeding lines five spaces.
- Divide an electronic address only at a logical place, such as at a slash ("/"), period, or hyphen.

- The word "online" may be written as "online" or "on-line." Select one of these alternate forms and then use it consistently.
- MLA style requires that the years of journal publications be shown in parentheses. The dates of newspaper publications are not to be shown in parentheses.
- The use of italics in references can result in ambiguities. For printed student writing submitted for grading and for printed writing submitted for professional editing, the MLA therefore suggests the use of underlining. If you wish to use italics instead, check with your instructor or organization before doing so.
- Either one or two spaces may be left after concluding punctuation marks. The use of a single space after a concluding punctuation mark is becoming increasingly common, however. That is the style followed in our forms and examples below.
- MLA style recommends that Web addresses (URLs) and e-mail addresses be enclosed by angle brackets.
- MLA style suggests that writers avoid showing network and e-mail addresses as hyperlinks, unless the document containing them is to be read on screen. (To follow this suggestion, turn off your word processor's automatic hyperlink function.)

[This Web page was specifically designed for *viewing* with a Web browser. Some students who print a copy of it may find that, if the browser they are using is currently configured to print pages with large margins, their printed copy varies in minor ways from what they saw on their computer screens and from what MLA has recommended. For example, the lines of the format examples may occasionally break at non-standard places. With this contingency in mind, we have also prepared a [Microsoft Word version](#) (mla.doc; 19K) of this page that students are invited to download and print.]

1. WORLD WIDE WEB SITE (HOME PAGE)

Basic Form

Name of author or creator (if given). Title of Web site. (If no title is available, provide description such as name of site plus *Home page*, neither underlined nor in quotation marks.) Name of any institution or organization associated with the site. Access date <URL>.

Examples

Gesterland, Richard. WorldBiz.com Page. Retrieved 1 May 2001 <http://www.worldbiz.com/>.

Edmunds.com. Home page. Retrieved 28 Apr. 2000 <http://www.edmunds.com/edweb/>.

Business Ethics Resources on WWW. Centre for Applied Ethics. Retrieved 2 May 2001 <http://www.ethics.ubc.ca/resources/business/>.

2. WORLD WIDE WEB (SECONDARY PAGE)

Basic Form

Name of author or creator, if available. "Title of topic or article" (if given). Title of page (if named). Name of any institution or organization associated with the site. Latest update (if given). Access date <URL>.

Example

Anderson, Greg. "Can the Trooper and SLX Stand Up?" Edmunds.com. Retrieved 12 Mar. 2001 <<http://www.edmunds.com/edweb/anderson/rollover.html>>.

"Privacy Protection in Other Countries." Media Awareness Network. Updated Nov. 1999. Retrieved 2 May 2001 <<http://www.media-awareness.ca/eng/issues/priv/laws/lawintl.htm>>.

"Data Mining Makes the Difference." SPSS, Inc. Retrieved 2 Feb. 2001 <<http://www.spss.com/datamine/>>.

3. BOOK (ONLINE)

Basic Form

Author. "Chapter." Book Title. Publication information for printed source (if available). Date of electronic publication, of the latest update, or of posting, if given. Name of any institution or organization sponsoring or associated with the Web site. Access date <URL>.

Example

Strunk, William, Jr. "Elementary Rules of Usage." The Elements of Style. Project Bartleby Archive, Columbia University. Retrieved 20 Aug. 2001 <<http://www.columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/strunk/strunk.html#11>>.

4. BOOK REVIEW (ONLINE)

Basic Form

Author of review. Review of Book Title by Author. Journal or Magazine Title: Volume, Issue, or other identifying number (Year of publication in parentheses): pages (if given). Access date <URL>.

Example

Hansen, Richard. Review of A Pragmatic Approach to Business Ethics by Alex Michalos. The Online Journal of Ethics 1.1 (1995). Retrieved 5 May 2001 <<http://condor.depaul.edu/ethics/michalos.html>>.

5. ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLE (ONLINE)

Basic Form

Author (if given). "Title of Material Accessed." Date of material (if given). Title of Encyclopedia. Publication information for any print version of the source if available. Date of electronic publication, of the latest update, or of posting (if known). [search term if necessary for retrieval]. Access date <URL>.

Example

"Stock Market Crash of 1929." Britannica Online. Vers. 98.2. April, 1998. Encyclopaedia Britannica. Retrieved 20 August 1999 <<http://www.eb.com:180/cgi-bin/g?DocF=micro/567/22.html>>.

6. ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLE (CD-ROM)

Basic Form

Author (if given). "Title of Material Accessed." Date of material (if given). Title of Encyclopedia. Edition, release, or version (if relevant). CD-ROM. Name of vendor (if relevant). Electronic publication date.

Example

"Genetic Engineering." Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia. Version 2.0. CD-ROM. Compton's NewMedia, Inc., 1994.

7. JOURNAL ARTICLE (ONLINE)

Basic Form

Author. "Article Title." Journal Title Volume.Issue or other identifying number (Year of publication in parentheses): paging. Access date <URL>.

Example

Koehn, Daryl. "The Ethics of Handwriting Analysis in Pre-Employment Screening." The Online Journal of Ethics 1.1 (1995). Retrieved 2 June 2001 <<http://condor.depaul.edu/ethics/hand.html>>.

8. MAGAZINE ARTICLE (ONLINE)

Basic Form

Author. "Article Title." Magazine Title. Date: page (for magazines published every month or two months, do not give volume and issue numbers even if they are listed). Access date <URL>.

Example

Murphy, H. Lee. "Saturn's Orbit Still High With Consumers." Marketing News Online. 31 Aug. 1998. Retrieved 1 Sept. 2001 <<http://www.ama.org/pubs/mn/0818/n1.htm>>.

9. NEWSPAPER ARTICLE (ONLINE)

Basic Form

Author. "Article Title." Newspaper Title. Date, edition, section: page (if given). Database name (if applicable). Access date <URL>.

Example

Verhovek, Sam Howe. "Some in Seattle Believe Two Microsofts Might Be Better Than One." The New York Times. 1 May 2000. Retrieved 3 June 2001 <http://www.nytimes.com/library/tech/00/05/biztech_articles/01seat.html>.

10. DOCUMENT WITHIN DATABASE (ONLINE)

Basic Form

Name of author (if given). "Title of material." Name of database. Name of sponsoring institution or organization (if relevant). Access date <URL>.

Example

"Ben & Jerry's Homemade, Inc." Hoover's Online. Hoover's Company Information. Retrieved 20 Jan. 2001 <www.hoovers.com/co/capsule/3/0,2163,12763,00.html>.

11. POSTING (ONLINE)

Basic Form

Author (if given). "Title of document" (as given in subject line). Online posting. Date. Name of forum (if known). Access date <URL>.

Examples

Manning, Kelly Bert. "E-Businesses and Privacy Leadership." Online posting. 7 Apr. 2001. Society Privacy Forum. Retrieved 26 Apr. 2001 <alt.comp.society.privacy>.

Stevens, Melissa. "Take Our Daughters to Work Day." Online posting. 24 Apr. 2001. Career and Workplace Issues Forum. Retrieved 2 May 2001 <http://forums.nytimes.com/webin/WebX?13@@efded73>.

12. DISCUSSION LIST MESSAGE (ARCHIVED)

Basic Form

Author. "Subject of Message." Date. Online posting. Discussion List. Access date <URL>.

Example

Sandwen, Janice. "GSA's Airline City-Pair Contracts." 8 May 2000. Online posting. Travel. Retrieved 11 Aug. 2001 <LISTSERV@financenet.gov/Get950809>.

13. PERSONAL E-MAIL MESSAGE

Basic Form

Sender (sender's e-mail address). "Subject of Message." E-mail to Recipient (recipient's e-mail address). Message date.

Example

Omar, Bill W. (bomar@aol.com). "Excellent Web Sites for Job Seekers." E-mail to Mary Ellen Guffey (meguffey@westwords.com). 10 Apr. 2001.

*Dr. Guffey is the author of *Business Communication: Process and Product*, 4e (South-Western College Publishing, 2003); *Essentials of Business Communication*, 6e (South-Western College Publishing, 2004); *Business English*, 8e (South-Western College Publishing, 2005); and *Professional English*, 1e (South-Western College Publishing, 2005). She and Carolyn M. Seefer are co-authors of *Essentials of College English*, 3e (South-Western College Publishing, 2005).

