

MLA In-Text Citations

Short Quotations

Prose: **Less than four (4) typed lines of prose** is considered to be a short quotation.

- Quotations should always be incorporated into a sentence of your original prose. A quotation should never stand alone in a sentence.
- Follow each quotation with a parenthetical in-text citation containing:
 - **Author's last name** (unless the author is introduced in your sentence)
 - **Page number** from which the quotation was taken.
- The period comes *after* the parenthetical citation. A question mark or exclamation point should be placed within the quotation if it is part of the quoted section, with a period following the parenthetical citation.

Example:

According to John Brown, the writing center proves to be a “calm and quiet area to learn more about writing techniques” (22).

Poetry: **Three (3) lines or less of a poem** is a short quotation.

- In the parenthetical citation, use line number(s) instead of page numbers
- The first time you quote a poem, use the word “line” or “lines.” In subsequent references, only include the actual line numbers.
- Indicate each line break with a slash (/), placing a space both before and after it.
- Use two slashes to indicate a stanza break.
- A verse play, such as those written by Shakespeare, follows the rules for poetry.

Example:

The closing lines of Frost's poem have a sleepy, dream-like quality: “The only other sound's the sweep / Of easy wind and downy flake // The woods are lovely, dark and deep” (lines 11-13).

Long Quotations

Prose: More than four (4) typed lines of prose is considered a long quotation. Long quotations are formatted as block quotations, where the sentences are in a block of text without any quotation marks.

- Start the quotation on a separate line, indented one inch from the left margin, but maintain the double spacing.
- Introduce the quotation with a complete sentence, followed by a colon.
- Do not use quotation marks because the block format indicates it is a quotation.
- Place the period after the final word of the quotation, rather than after the citation.
- The next line will go back to the original margin if the paragraph continues beyond the quotation.

Example:

After attending the writing center, John described his experience:

The writing tutor that I worked with was beyond helpful in the entire process. She was able to look over my paper with me and ask questions to lead me into finding better ways to write. I felt totally comfortable with her. I was surprised at how fast my appointment went and cannot wait to schedule another meeting with her next week. (Brown 42)

Poetry: More than three (3) lines of poetry is considered a long quotation; the lines are counted by how they appear in the original poem or verse play.

- In poetry, follow the same guidelines as listed above for prose.
- At every line break you will have to start a new line.

Example:

In the poem “Nothing Gold Can Stay,” Robert Frost hints that life is fleeting:

Nature’s first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf’s a flower;
But only so an hour. (1-4)

General Guidelines

- Every in-text citation must correspond to a Works Cited entry and vice versa.
- The in-text citation comes at the end of the cited material, usually at the end of a sentence.
- The general format is (Author Page) style, with no punctuation in between: (Smith 42).
- If no author's name is given, use the first two or three words of the article title in quotation marks, plus the page number: ("The Greenhouse Effect" 220). For a book with no known author, put the shortened title in italics.
- Web-only sources do not use page numbers, so cite only the author's name (or "Page Title" if no author) in the parentheses. If the author's name is used within the text of the sentence, then no parenthetical reference is required.
- Scholarly journal articles have page numbers that must be used, even if accessed online or through a database.
- For a subsequent citation to the same source within a paragraph, only a page number is needed (unless there is any potential for confusion)
- Place the period after the parentheses, not after the quotation or last word in the sentence (except when using block quotation format).

In-text Citation Patterns and Samples

Patterns for In-text Citations	Sample In-text Citations
<p>Single Author</p> <p>(Author page #).</p> <p>When using the author's name in the sentence, give only the page number(s) in the citation.</p>	<p>Human beings have been described as "symbol-using animals" (Burke 3).</p> <p>Kenneth Burke describes human beings as "symbol-using animals" (3).</p>
<p>Two Authors</p> <p>(1st author and 2nd author page #).</p>	<p>Student writers tend to quote too much when using material from outside sources (Graff and Birkenstein 42).</p>
<p>Three Authors</p> <p>(1st author, 2nd author, and 3rd author page #).</p>	<p>"These social facts find a new view of Mexico and its people" (Poll, Pit, and Diaz 22-23).</p>
<p>More than Three Authors</p> <p>(1st Author et al. page #).</p>	<p>"The quadratic equation symbolizes proximity to the divine" (Spencer et al. 354).</p>

<p>No Author – Listed by Title</p> <p>("Shortened Title for Article" page #).</p>	<p>Many global warming hotspots exist in North America ("The Impact of Global" 68).</p>
<p>Organization/Corporation as Author</p> <p>(Org or Corp Name page#).</p> <p>Use standard abbreviations as needed.</p>	<p>The 2001 survey of human resource managers addressed employee discipline (Amer. Management Assn. 5).</p>
<p>Scholarly Journal Article</p> <p>(Author page #).</p> <p>Use page numbers from original publication</p>	<p>"The struggle to revolutionize the institution of marriage is, however, far from over. Next is the battle for divorce equality (Tait 1245).</p>
<p>Internet Document with no Fixed Pages or Section Numbers</p> <p>(Author. If no author, give Shortened Title).</p> <p>Eliminate page #s from in-text citation. Since pagination may differ from printer to printer, page numbers of printouts should not be cited.</p>	<p>"Steinbeck proposed that the American political structure demonized the common man" (Stephan).</p>
<p>Indirect Source (one source quoted in another source)</p> <p>(as qtd. in Author page #).</p> <p>Only the author of the main source will be found on the Works Cited page.</p>	<p>Robert Cahn says, "the national interest might be served better by wilderness than by development" (as qtd. in McDonald 141).</p>
<p>Works in Anthologies</p> <p>(Author page#).</p> <p>Cite the author of the individual piece, not the editor of the collection.</p>	<p>"When Miss Emily Grierson died, our whole town went to her funeral" (Faulkner 696).</p>
<p>Prose Plays</p> <p>(Title act.scene).</p> <p>Cite by Act and Scene if given, by page number if not. For first reference, give a shortened form of the title in addition to page # or division. Subsequently, only use page number or division.</p>	<p>"It is the Oriental in her at war with her Western education" (M. Butterfly 1.10).</p>

<p>Verse Plays</p> <p>(Title act.scene.lines)</p> <p>Cite by division such as act, scene or stanza, and line. For first reference, give a shortened form of the title in addition to division. Subsequently, only use division numbers.</p>	<p>“Faith, that was not so well: yet would I knew/That stroke would prove the worst!” (<i>Othello</i> 4.2.3-4).</p> <p>“Speak of me as I am. Nothing extenuate/Nor set down aught in malice” (5.2.342-43).</p>
<p>Poems</p> <p>(Author line #).</p> <p>Cite by author and line number rather than page number. Use the word “line(s)” the first time, but only the number for subsequent references.</p>	<p>“If ever two were one, then surely we. / If ever man were loved by wife, then thee” (Bradstreet, lines 1-2).</p>
<p>Two Works by Same Author</p> <p>(Author, “Title” page #).</p> <p>Use a shortened form of title in addition to author’s name. It is preferable to use the author’s name or the title of the piece within the sentence so that all three pieces of info need not appear in the parentheses.</p>	<p>“But women grow up thinking they need to look like Barbie, which for most women is impossible” (Barry, “The Ugly Truth” 3).</p> <p>Dave Barry comments on the influences on women’s self-esteem: “[W]omen grow up thinking they need to look like Barbie, which for most women is impossible” (“The Ugly Truth” 3).</p>