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Cheat Sheet for the *MLA Handbook*: 8th Edition

Due to our increased reliance on technology as a source of research, the Modern Language Association has made significant changes to the MLA Handbook. This handout highlights the changes from the 7th Edition. The examples used and the information provided in this handout are taken verbatim from *The MLA Handbook*: 8th Edition. Page numbers for the handbook are provided for further information. Check out our online study source suggestions for practice and further study.

The List of Works Cited Core Elements:

The following chart serves as a skeletal outline for a Works Cited entry.

Order	Portion	Punctuation
1	Author	.
2	Title of source	.
3	Title of container	,
4	Other contributors	,
5	Version	,
6	Number	,
7	Publisher	,
8	Publication date	,
9	Location	.

Authors, pages 20-22:

- List the author's name as it appears in the work. When a source has two authors, include them in the order that they are given in the work, *not* in alphabetical order. Reverse the first name, and leave the second name in normal order. Example:

Dorris, Michael, and Louise Erdrich. *The Crown of Columbus*. HarperCollins Publishers, 1999.

- Pseudonyms and online user names are usually given as regular author names. An example of a Twitter citation:

@persiankiwi. "We have report of large street battles in east & west of Tehran now - #Iraelection."
Twitter, 23 June 2009, 11:15 a.m., twitter.com/persiankiwi/status/2298106072.

- When a source has three or more authors, reverse the first name and follow it with a comma and *et al.*
- When a work is authored and published by the same organization, skip the author element and list the organizer as the publisher.

Labels, pages 23-25:

- One label example:

Nunberg, Geoffrey, editor. *The Future of the Book*. U of California P, 1996.

- Use the same rules as authors when dealing with two and three or more contributors of the same label.
- Keep in mind the context of the work being used. If focusing on a translation, list the translator as the author. When focusing on an episode as a whole, begin the entry with the title. If focusing on a specific actor's performance, begin the entry with the actor's name.

Titles of sources, pages 25-29:

- Give titles and subtitles exactly as they appear, but standardized capitalization and punctuation.
- When a work that was originally published independent appears in a collection (such as a play reprinted in a textbook), the title remains in italics. Example:

Euripides. *The Trojan Woman*. *Ten Plays*, translated by Paul Roche, New American Library, 1998, pp. 457-512.

- When a source is untitled: provide a generic description in the title's place. For example, subscriber comments to an online posting:

Jeanne. *Comment on* "The Reading Brain: Differences between Digital and Print." *So Many Books*. 25 Apr. 2013, 10:30 p.m., somanymanybooksblog.com/2013/04/25/the-reading-brain-differences-between-digital-and-print/#comment-83030.

- Identify short, untitled messages such as tweets by reproducing the full text without any changes:

@persiankiwiw. "We have reports of large street battles in east & west of Tehran now - #Iraelection." *Twitter*, 23 June 2009, 11:15 a.m., twitter.com/persiankiwiw/status/2298106072.

- Use subjects as the titles of email messages. Standardize capitalization and enclose in quotation marks.

Titles of containers, pages 30-36:

- Examples of containers: collections, periodical, television series, entire Web site, etc.
- A source can be part of two different containers.
- Use the following expanded table to site containers:

Order	Portion	Punctuation
1	Author	.
2	Title of source	.
	Container 1:	
3	Title of container	,
4	Other contributors	,
5	Version	,
6	Number	,
7	Publisher	,
8	Publication date,	,
9	Location	.
	Container 2:	
10	Title of container	,
11	Other contributors	,
12	Version	,
13	Number	,
14	Publisher	,
15	Publication date	,
16	Location	.

Example: A short story by Edgar Allan Poe is part of volume 4 of a multi-volume collection of his complete works. The collection was published in 1902 and the edition is available at *HathiTrust Digital Library*.

Order	Portion	Example	Punctuation
1	Author	Poe, Edgar Allan	.
2	Title of source	“The Masque of the Red Death”	.
	Container 1:		
3	Title of container	<i>The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe</i>	,
4	Other contributors	edited by James A. Harrison	,
5	Version		,
6	Number	vol. 4	,
7	Publisher	Thomas Y. Crowell	,
8	Publication date	1902	,
9	Location	pp. 250-58	.
	Container 2:		
10	Title of container	<i>HathiTrust Digital Library</i>	,
11	Other contributors		,
12	Version		,
13	Number		,
14	Publisher		,
15	Publication date		,
16	Location	babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.319240795574368;view-1up;seq=266	.

Citation:

Poe, Edgar Allan. “The Masque of the Red Death.” *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by James A. Harrison, vol. 4, Thomas Y. Crowell, 1902, pp. 250-58. *HathiTrust Digital Library*, babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.319240795574368;view-1up;seq=266.

Contributors, pages 37-38:

- Name creditors when their participation in the work is important to the identity of the work. Examples of common roles of contributors include: adapted by, directed by, edited by, illustrated by, introduction by, narrated by, performance by, and translated by.
- Examples of roles that must be expressed as a noun include guest editors and general editors:

...general editor, Edwin H. Cady.

- If a source has many contributors, include the ones most relevant to the project. For example, focusing on a key episode of a television series:

“Hush.” *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, created by Joss Whedon, performance by Sarah Michelle Gellar, season 4, episode 10, Mutant Enemy, 1999.

- If a source has a contributor that did not play a role in the entire collection, such as a translator that only contributed to one poem in a collection, identify the contributor after the title of the source instead of after the title of the collection.

Version, pages 38-39:

- Books are commonly issued in versions or *editions*. Example:

Newcomb, Horace, editor. *Television: The Critical View*. 7th ed., Oxford UP, 2007.

- Works in other media forms may also appear in versions, such as a director’s cut of a film or an unabridged version of a musical piece.

Number, pages 39-40:

- New abbreviations are now used in MLA format when indicating numbers:
 - vol. for volume
 - no. for number
- Indicate the volume number when consulting one volume of a multiple-volume set:

Baron, Naomi S. “Redefining Reading: The Impact of Digital Communication Media.” *PMLA*, vol. 128, no. 1, Jan. 2013, pp. 193-200.

- When indicating the issue number, the volume number may come first, such as in the previous example, or the number may stand alone.

Kafka, Ben. “The Demon of Writing: Paperwork, Public Safety, and the Reign of Terror.” *representations*, no. 98, 2007, pp. 1-24.

- Label other numbers as appropriate, such as seasons and episodes:

“Hush.” *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, created by Joss Whedon, performance by Sarah Michelle Gellar, season 4, episode 10, Mutant Enemy, 1999.

Publisher, pages 40-42:

- If two publishers appear to be equally responsible for the work, separate the names with a forward slash.
- A blog or social media network may be considered the publisher of the blogs or statuses it hosts.
- The city of publication is now considered obsolete information and can be omitted unless the book was published before 1900.

Publication Date, pages 42-46:

- When more than one date is present, cite the one most meaningful or relevant to the work cited. For example, if citing an online version of an article, ignore the print publication date.
- Write the full date as seen on the original source.
- Include the time with the date when appropriate, such as when citing a modified article or a comment on an article online.
- Cite a range of dates if a project was developed over time, such as a Web project.
- Cite the most recent copyright date if more than one is available.

Location, pages 46-50:

- Due to the changes to MLA format, readers can now identify if a source is print or web based without having to state that information in the citation.
- For print sources, use p. to specify a single page and pp. to cite a range of page numbers:

Baron, Naomi S. "Redefining Reading: The Impact of Digital Communication Media." *PMLA*, vol. 128, no. 1, Jan. 2013, pp. 193-200.

- For online sources, the location is indicated by a URL or Web address:

Hollmichel, Stefanie. "The Reading Brain: Differences between Digital and Print." *So Many Books*, 25 Apr. 2013, somanycbooksblog.com/2013/04/25/the-reading-brain-differences-between-digital-and-print/.

- Online source citations should always include a URL.
- Give the place's name and city when citing a physical object experienced firsthand, such as art:

Bearden, Romare. *The Train*. 1975, [Museum of Modern Art, New York](#).

Optional Elements, pages 50-54:

- Include optional elements if further information could assist readers in finding the source quickly and accurately. Examples include date of original publication, city of publication, etc.
- Unexpected types of works, such as transcripts; lectures; interviews; and reports, should be specified. This modified example appears on the Purdue Online Writing Lab Webpage:

Smith, Jane. "Re: Career Project." Received by Caitlin D. Swisher, [Personal interview](#). 19 May 2014.

- The date of access should be used for online sources only when the original publication date cannot be found.

In-Text Citations:

Textual citations for the 8th editions remain largely unchanged.

- Only use par. or pars. to indicate paragraph numbers with the source numbers paragraphs. Do not independently number paragraphs.
- It is rarely acceptable for a page number to be mentioned in the text.
- Prose and poetry quotations should be set in block quote format when they exceed four lines of text:

The forms of writing that accompany reading

can fill various roles. The simplest is to make parts of a text prominent (by underlining, highlighting, or adding astericks, lines, or squiggles). More-reflective responses are notes written in the margins or in an external locations—a notebook or a computer file. (Baren 194)

All these forms of writing bear in common the reader's desire to add to, complete, or even alter the text.

- When a work is anonymous or is published by the same organization that authored it, the in-text citation contains the title. It may appear in the text it-self or be abbreviated before the page number in parentheses.