

Quick Guide to MLA Parenthetical Documentation Spartanburg Community College Library

Creating an entry in a Works Cited list and using parenthetical documentation:

1. Determine the type of material you are citing: book, anthology, pamphlet, print magazine or journal article, magazine or journal article from online library database, website, interview, movie, etc. **See the SCC Library's MLA Format Handout or the *MLA Handbook* table of contents and/or index.**
 2. Parenthetical documentation, or in-text citation, refers the reader back to the Works Cited page; therefore, always complete the Works Cited entry before the parenthetical reference.
 3. If you quote, paraphrase or summarize a source in your paper, it needs to be cited parenthetically. The entry contains just enough information to help the reader find the source on the Works Cited page.
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Works Cited Examples: See *MLA Format Handout* or *MLA Handbook* for more information

"Everyday Victims: Civilians in the Burundian War." *Human Rights Watch*. Human Rights Watch, Dec. 2003. Web. 1 Aug. 2009.
<<http://www.hwr.org>>.

Hennessy, Michael. "W.H. Auden." *Critical Survey of Poetry*. Ed. Frank N. Magill. Rev. ed. Vol. 1. Pasadena: Salem, 1991. 80-89.
Print.

"Noon." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. Print.

- Entries are double spaced. The 2nd line of an entry is indented 5 spaces. Indentation is achieved using "Hanging Indent." (In Microsoft Word, select Format—Paragraph—Indentation—Special—Hanging).
 - The Works Cited list is in alphabetical order by first word of citation, excluding "the," "a" or "an."
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Parenthetical Documentation Examples: See *MLA Handbook*, 7th ed, pp. 213-32, for more information *Whatever is listed first in the Works Cited entry (author, title of article, etc) is used in the parenthetical citation*

A typical entry is usually made up of the author's last name and the page reference:

Note: the period goes outside the parenthesis

During his lifetime, W.H. Auden's writing was very popular with both critics and readers (Hennessy 81).

If the author is mentioned in the sentence, include only the page number(s) in the parenthetical entry:

Michael Hennessy tells how Auden's writing was popular with both contemporary readers and critics (81).

If no author, use the full title (if brief) or a shortened version of the title and the page number(s). Follow the same format as the Works Cited entry; i.e., if the title is in quotes in the Works Cited entry, it is in quotes in the parenthetical entry:

In ancient Rome, noon was the ninth hour of the day, which would be three o'clock in the evening ("Noon" 508).

If the source has no page numbers, as is the case with many internet sources, no page number can be given in the parenthetical entry. Keep in mind that although website printouts often show page numbers, different printers don't always provide the same page breaks:

According to one source, the attacks on civilians were growing ("Everyday Victims").

NOTE: If the Web source gives paragraph or section numbers, give the abbreviation "par." or "sec." in the parentheses:

(Jones, par. 6).

*This is just a brief overview. For more information, please see the *MLA Handbook*, 7th ed.*