# MLA Works Cited Core Elements

Works Cited references are made up of a list of Core Elements. The Core Elements allow writers to create reference citations for any type of source, regardless of the medium.

1. **Author.** Personal author(s), editor(s), corporate author, director
2. **Title of source.** Book title, article title, chapter title, title of TV episode, film title
3. **Title of container.** Book title, journal title, title of TV series
4. **Other contributors.** Translators, performers
5. **Version.** Edition, abridged/unabridged, director’s cut
6. **Number.** Volume and issue numbers, season and episode numbers
7. **Publisher.** Publishers, university presses, organizations, governments, production companies
8. **Publication date.** Use the date most pertinent to you, full dates given in this format: 24 Aug. 2016
9. **Location.** Page number(s), web address, DOI, stable URL, time on a recording, DVD disc number

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## Major Changes to the Eighth Edition

- If a core element does not exist or cannot be found, simply omit the element from the Works Cited entry. Placeholders including "n.d." for "no date" and "n.p." for "no publisher" are no longer used.
- Include a DOI (digital object identifier) when available using the format doi:##############.
- The URL, without http:// or https://, should be included for Web sources. Angle brackets are no longer used.
- The source’s medium (Print. Web., etc.) is no longer included.
- Some sources are whole and some are part of one or two containers and require the repetition of some core elements for each container. Add the elements to your reference entry from Author through to Location, then add any second elements in that same order. For example, journal articles from databases have two containers: the first is the journal in which the article is contained and the second is the database which contains the journal.
- In the Works Cited entry, "p." is used before citing a page number and "pp." is used before citing a page range.
### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material Type</th>
<th>In-text Citation</th>
<th>Works Cited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electronic book (Login required)</td>
<td>(Hardy 58-60)</td>
<td>Hardy, Thomas. <em>Far From the Madding Crowd.</em> The Floating Press, 2009. <em>eBook Collection (EBSCOhost).</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### More Resources

**Ask a librarian!** One-on-one assistance is available in-person, by phone, or email. (772) 462-7600 http://irsc.libguides.com/contactus

**http://irsc.libguides.com/mla** See explanations, more examples, and links to resources to help you master MLA, 8th Ed.

**https://style.mla.org/** View sample papers, FAQs, and downloadable practice templates at the MLA Style Center.
The 8th edition of the MLA style takes a new approach by treating all manner of sources the same, regardless of the medium in which the writer experienced the source. Every source can be described using the core elements. For example, a student may read *The Things They Carried* in an anthology textbook, as an eBook on a Kindle, as a PDF on a computer, as an audiobook, as part of book compiling the author’s short stories, etc. Regardless of the medium, the source content is unchanged. The Works Cited citation will reflect the core elements that do not change (author, title, original publication date), as well as core elements which are representative of the instance of the source the student experienced (title of container, location, publication date of the source read).

**Order of Core Elements**
Generally, a correct MLA citation will be in the order the core elements are listed in the MLA Handbook, with consideration for the repetition of elements in the case of a second container (journal, website, database, anthology, etc.).

**Missing Core Elements**
If a core element does not exist or cannot be found, the MLA Handbook directs writers to simply skip that core element.

If the corporate author is also the publisher, writers should list the corporate author only once as publisher.

**Optional Elements**
Additional elements found in a student’s citation may be optional elements the student chose to include in order to better describe the source. Optional elements include:

- Date of Original Publication
- City of Publication
- Total Number of Volumes: 8 vols.
- Series Name and Number: A Song of Ice and Fire 3.
- Unexpected Type of Work: Transcript. Address.
- Including the Number and Session of Congress for bills, reports, or resolutions from the United States Congress: 107th Congress, 2nd Session, House Report 203.
**Writer’s Use of the Source**

The new MLA style is very flexible, asking writers to cite the information most relevant to their use of the source. Because of this flexibility, correct citations do not all look the same. Two students may cite the same source differently due to their use of the source and both citations could be correct.

Film citations are a good example of this. If the writer discussed the film in general, a complete citation could be:

*Alien.* Twentieth Century Fox, 1979.

If the writer is citing a movie as part of a discussion of the director’s work, the director can be cited as the author (the party most responsible for the creation of the work).


If the writer is focusing on an actor’s performance, the citation can include the actor as an Other contributor.


**Introductions/Forewords/Prefaces/Afterwords**

When citing a portion of a book written by someone other than the author or the majority of a book, as is the case for introductions, prefaces, etc., the writer will follow the format shown below. The author of the portion cited is listed first.


**Capitalization, Italics, and Punctuation**

Works Cited references always begin with a capital letter and end with a period. Names and proper nouns should be capitalized throughout the citation.

Most core elements within a citation will be separated by one comma. The author(s) should be followed by a period. The last core element listed in the citation should be followed by a period, regardless of which element it is.

*Authorlast, Authorfirst. “Article or Book Chapter or Web Page Title.” Second Container Title, edited by Other Contributor, 2nd ed., vol. 1, no. 2, Publisher Unless From a Journal, 2016, pp. 164-9.*

Some citations, particularly those with two containers, may have additional periods within the citation and still be correct.


Notice the period after the author’s name, after the title of the source, after the page range, and at the end of the citation. The page range is the final core element (Location) of the first container so it is followed by a period. The stable URL is the final core element (2nd Location) of the second container, as well as the last element in the citation, so it is followed by a period.

Titles are either:

1. italicized and followed by a period,
2. closed in quotation marks and followed by a period,
3. or italicized and followed by a comma

depending on their status as a container. Whole works like a novel or film function as their own container and fall under the first scenario. A source which is part of a larger work like a journal article or book chapter falls under the second scenario. Containers of smaller works like journals, books with chapters, databases, etc. fall under the third scenario.