

MLA In-Text Parenthetical Citations

In MLA style, referring to the works of others in your text is done by using what is known as **parenthetical citation**. This method involves placing relevant source information in parentheses after a quote or a paraphrase.

Author-page style

MLA format follows the author-page method of in-text citation. This means that the author's last name and the page number(s) from which the quotation or paraphrase is taken must appear in the text, and a complete reference should appear on your Works Cited page. The author's name may appear either in the sentence itself or in parentheses following the quotation or paraphrase, but the page number(s) should always appear in the parentheses, not in the text of your sentence. For example:

Wordsworth state that Romantic poetry was marked by a “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (263).

Romantic poetry is characterized by the “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (Wordsworth 263). Wordsworth extensively explored the role of emotion in the creative process (263).

Three or fewer authors

List the authors' last names in the text or in parenthetical citation:

Smith, Yang and Moore argue that tougher gun control is not needed in the United States (76). The authors state “Tighter gun control in the United States erodes Second Amendment right” (Smith, Yang, and Moore 76).

More than three author

Use the work's bibliographic information as a guide for your citation. Provide the first author's last name followed by et al. or list all the last names.

Jones et al. counter Smith, Yang, and Moor's argument by noting that the current spike in gun violence in America compels law makers to adjust gun laws (4).

Or

Legal experts counter Smith, Yang and Moore's argument by noting that the current spike in gun violence in America compels law makers to adjust gun laws (Jones et al. 4).

Or

Jones, Driscoll, Ackerson, and Bell counter Smith, Yang, and Moore's argument by noting that the current spike in gun violence in America compels law makers to adjust gun laws (4).

Print sources with known author

For Print sources like books, magazines, scholarly journal articles, and newspapers provide a signal word or phrase (usually the author's last name) and a page number. If you provide the signal word/phrase in the sentence you do not need to include it in the parenthetical citation.

Human beings have been described by Kenneth Burke as “symbol-using animals” (3).
Human beings have been describe as “symbol-using animals” (Burke 3).

Print sources by a corporate author

When a source has a corporate author, it is acceptable to use the name of the cooperation followed by the page number for the in-text citation. You should also use abbreviations (e.g. Nat’l for national) where appropriate, so as to avoid interrupting the flow of reading with overly long parenthetical citations.

Print sources with no known author

When a source has no known author, use a shortened title of the work instead of an author’s name. Place the title in quotation marks if it’s a short work (such as an article) or italicize it if it’s a longer work (e.g. plays, books, television shows, entire Web sites) and provide a page number.

We see many global warning hotspots in North America likely because this region has “more readily accessible climatic date and more comprehensive programs to monitor and study environmental change...” (“Impact of Global Warming” 6).

For electronic and Internet sources, follow the following guidelines:

- Include in the text the first item that appears in the Work Cited entry that corresponds to the citation (e.g. author name, article name, website name, film name).
- You do not need to give paragraph numbers or page numbers based on your Web browser’s print preview function.
- Unless you must list the Web site name in the signal phrase in order to get the reader to the appropriate entry, do not include URLs in-text. Only provide partial URLs such as when the name of the site includes, for example, a domain name, like *CNN.com* or *Forbes.com* as opposed to writing out <http://www.cnn.com> or <http://www.forbes.com>.