

Last name and page number in header

Smith 1

CoCo Smith

Student's name

Professor Jessica Russell

Instructor's name

English 102

Class Name

10 October 2011

Date: Day Month Year

Title of paper

Capitalize major words

Center

No bold, italics, underline, etc.

Indent paragraphs

### How to Write a Paper in MLA Format

When writing a paper in MLA (Modern Language Association) format, the first thing on your page should be a header. It should be in the upper-right corner of the page and contain your last name and the page number. The left side of the first page should contain 4 things: your first and last name, the professor's name, the class, and the date. Notice that the date is written in the order of day, month and then year. The title of the paper should be centered and capitalized. It should not be **bolded**, underlined, *italicized*, or larger than the rest of the text in your paper. All of your text should be Times New Roman 12 pt. font. Everything on the page should be double spaced.

1 inch margins top, bottom, left, and right.

If you need more help learning how to use MLA format, use Purdue University's Online Writing Lab. The website for OWL is <http://owl.purdue.english.edu>. There is also a link to OWL in WebCampus. When writing a paper that requires sources, in-text citations will be crucial. An in-text citation gives the author of the reference credit for their work. If a person would like to summarize, paraphrase or quote another person – an in-text citation is necessary. The following sentence is an example of an in-text citation.

A recent *New York Times* article states that there are at least 6 tricks every dog should know (O'Conner).

Everything is double spaced.

Make sure not to add extra spaces between paragraphs.

Since I did not come up with the idea that every dog should know 6 tricks, I need to give credit to the author of this information. At the end of the sentence, I can insert an in-text citation in parentheses stating the author's last name and the page number(s) where the material can be

located. The article that I am citing does not have page numbers, so I simply left those out. Let's pretend that O'Conner's article was on pages 6 and 7 of *The New York Times*. A correct in-text citation would look just like it does at the end of this sentence (O'Conner 6-7). If the article was only printed on page 6, the in-text citation would look like it does at the end of this sentence (O'Conner 6).



Wondering whether to use quotes or italics on titles?

Think of them like a pie:

The whole pie, or whole source, is italicized. The following whole sources are italicized: a book, magazine, CD, TV series, newspaper, entire website, play, etc.

Using just a piece of the pie, or part of a larger source, requires quotes around the title. The following pieces of larger sources are put in quotation marks: a chapter in a book, magazine article, song, TV episode, newspaper article, certain page on a website, act in a play, etc.

Center and Capitalize both words

Works Cited

O’Conner, Anahad. “Things Every Dog Should Know.” *The New York Times*. 28 Sept. 2011.

Web. 10 Oct. 2011.

The period always goes inside of the quotation marks.

*The Purdue OWL*. Purdue U Writing Lab, 2010. Web. 10 Oct. 2011.

The Works Cited page should be the last page of a paper written in MLA format that required the use of sources.  
The Works Cited should always be on its own page - do not just add it to the bottom of the last page of the essay.  
Make sure you are using the most current formatting guidelines ([www.owl.english.purdue.edu](http://www.owl.english.purdue.edu))  
Put your citations in alphabetical order.  
Never alphabetize sources using the words: A, An, and The (articles). The Purdue OWL was alphabetized using the "P" in Purdue.