



MLA FORMATTING FAQs



Plagiarism


Have you seen any examples of plagiarism?

What were the consequences?

Intentional Plagiarism

Unintentional Plagiarism

See pages 206-208 in your *Reading & Writing Handbook*



Plagiarism

- We use a documentation style to avoid plagiarism.
- Plagiarism is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- All students are quite capable of generating their own unique thoughts and ideas. Only these “original creations” will be welcome.
- Remember that all sources, including Internet sources, must be cited appropriately when using the author’s exact words or paraphrasing.



Page Layout

Header: right aligned, Your Last Name and Page Number


1" Margins on all sides of the paper

Double-spaced throughout

Times New Roman,
Size 12 Font

See pages 212-215 in your *Reading & Writing Handbook*






CITING SOURCES: IN-TEXT CITATIONS AND WORKS CITED

(CHAPTER 17 IN YOUR *READING & WRITING
HANDBOOK*)

Referring to Titles


- When referring to titles, do so appropriately
 - Books, magazines, newspapers, albums (anything that is independently published) get their titles *Italicized*
 - Short stories, poems, song titles (anything within a larger work) get their titles **“Placed within Quotation Marks”** in the body of the essay

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- **NEVER** put url hyperlinks in the body of an academic essay (they will only appear in your Works Cited section)



In-text Citations


(Burke 3)





See pages 216-223 in
your *Reading & Writing
Handbook*

In-text Citations

- Intext Citations are required in MLA formatting – this way we know what ideas (and/or words) came from what source
- Intext Citations lead us to the Works Cited (MLA) page, where we can obtain the full information for the source, should we choose to look further into it

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- In MLA style, referring to the works of others in your text is done by using what's known as parenthetical citation. Immediately following a quotation from a source or a paraphrase of a source's ideas, you place the author's name and then the relevant page number(s).
 - *Human beings have been described as "symbol-using animals" (Burke 3).*
 - If a work has 2 or more authors, MLA uses "and" in between: (Burke and Jones 3)
 - NOTE: there are no commas, no abbreviations or symbols, just the author's last name and the page number

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- When a source has no known author, use a shortened title of the work instead of an author name.
 - When a source has no page numbers (like on a website), use paragraph numbers instead of page numbers
 - Page or paragraph numbers are mandatory when citing direct quotes
 - They are optional, but encouraged, for paraphrased information
 - When referring to multiple works in a single citation, separate entries with a semicolon
 - (Burke; Jones)




Try to minimize your use of direct quotes because it interrupts the “flow” of your voice in your paper

- Instead rely on PARAPHRASES (you borrow the IDEA, but put it in your own words):
 - Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
 - Set the original aside, and write your paraphrase.
 - Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.
 - Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
 - Record the source (including the page) so that you can credit it easily.
- Remember, we give credit for borrowed IDEAS, not just WORDS



For more information on Paraphrasing

- See Chapter 1 in your *Reading & Writing Handbook*
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Direct Quotes

- Exact words must appear in quotations.
- Direct quotes require a page or paragraph number in the in-text citation
 - (you don't want to skim through 1200 pages of *The Lord of the Rings* to find a quote and its surrounding context – be specific)
 - NOTE: if there are no page numbers, count paragraphs, or refer to a chapter

Block/Long Quotes

- For quotes more than 4 lines of verse or 3 lines of prose, we use “block” or “long” quote formatting instead of simply placing the text in quotation marks
- Start the quote on a new line, indented 1” from the left margin, maintaining double spacing.
- No quotation marks are used (unless there’s a quote within the quote)
- Include the citation after the end punctuation
- NOTE: for verse (poetry) maintain the original line breaks)


The Exception...

- Is common knowledge for your target audience.
 - For example, most college students should know that George Washington was the first US President.
- If you looked it up – include the citation
- When in doubt – include the citation





Works Cited Page

See pages 223-227 in your
Reading & Writing Handbook




Works Cited Page

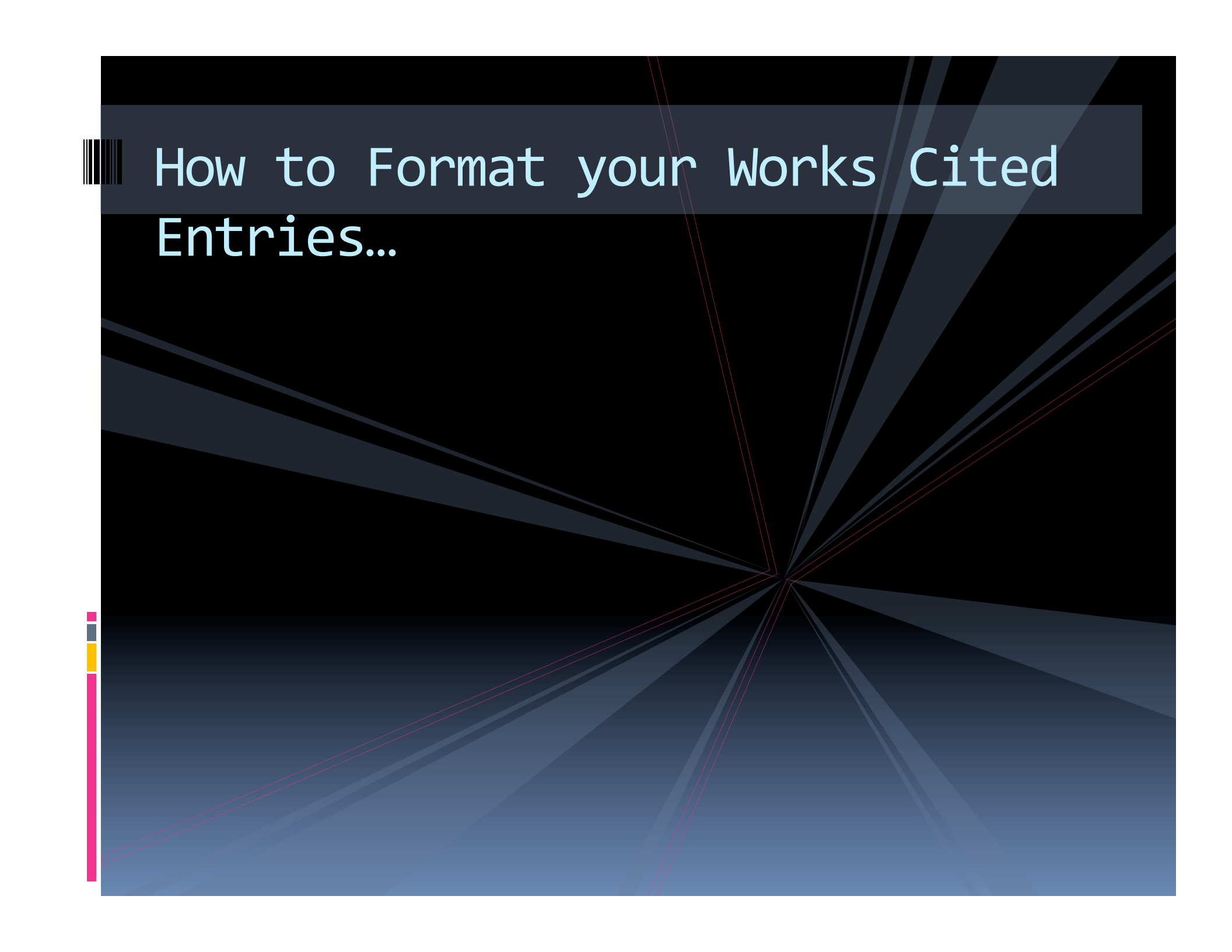
- Always start your list of sources on a new page and label it appropriately (Work(s) Cited – centered, with no fancy styling)
- All works included, must have at least 1 in-text citation in the body of the paper (if it does not, it shouldn't be included)



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- Alphabetize your sources! (this becomes more and more important, the more research you do – for example, for my dissertation I’ve already looked at over 200 sources – do you really want to play a guessing game looking for them all?)
 - Double-space all entries, but do not skip lines between entries


- Use a hanging indent for all entries (it looks the opposite of a paragraph – the first line is flush-left with the margin, all subsequent lines are indented 1/2" in)
 - This is what a hanging indent should look like on your Works Cite page
- If you used an electronic database to view the electronic copy of a source also in print, you must include the electronic information as well (no shortcuts!)




How to Format your Works Cited Entries...



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- Step 1: What type of source am I looking at?
 - Book
 - Periodical
 - Electronic

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- Narrow it down further...
 - Books
 - Is there an editor?
 - Is it a chapter or article in a collection?
 - Periodicals
 - Magazine
 - Newspaper
 - Scholarly Journal
 - Electronic
 - Website
 - Online database

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- Step 2: Find the template
 - [Use the Purdue OWL](#)
 - Use your *Reading & Writing Handbook*
 - Use the *MLA Handbook*
 - Step 3: Plug the information from your source into the template

Your Resources

- Use the tools available to you to complete your Works Cited page appropriately
 - Word 2007 (and newer) has a tab labeled “References” that can help
 - The library databases have a “golden ticket” that will help you with various documentation styles
 - The OWL (Online Writing Lab) at Purdue University is one of my favorite resources!
 - <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>
 - Use Noodle Tools (available through [Baker Library](#))

- Remember to always double-check the “real” formatting if you use one of the electronic helper tools, they’re not perfect!
 - Word 2007 likes to use underlines instead of italics
 - Word 2007 also does not include page numbers in intext citations)
 - Some of the databases in the library like to use ALL CAPS
 - Also remember in article titles only proper nouns and the first letter of the first word get the first letter capitalized

For a sample MLA paper, see pages 228-231 in your *Reading & Writing Handbook*

**WRITING IS *NEVER* FINISHED...
JUST DUE!**