

# MLA/APA Style Comparison



**Writing Center**

989-964-6061, [www.svsu.edu/writingcenter](http://www.svsu.edu/writingcenter)

This handout is based on *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Fifth Edition and *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Sixth Edition.

MLA Format Basic	APA Format Basics
Generally used in the Humanities and Fine Arts	Used in the Social Sciences; may also be used in other disciplines (e.g., Nursing, Education)
Authoritativeness based on the content of sources along with credibility of the author	Authoritativeness based on how current the information is, where it was published, and how credible the author is
Listing Sources	Listing Sources
List of Sources: <b>Works Cited</b>	List of Sources: <b>References</b>
Includes all sources cited in the text	Includes all sources cited in the text <i>except</i> personal interviews and other non-retrievable data (includes all sources that can be referred back to)
Uses author's complete name, last name first	Uses author's last name, but only the initials of the first and middle names
Must contain in order: author, title of article/book, city of publisher, and date	Must contain in order: author, year of publication, title of article/book, and publishing information
Uses only the city for the place of publication	Uses city along with state when in the United States; uses city, state or province, and country when outside the United States except for cities well known for publishing. See APA manual for details
Uses hanging indent	Recommends hanging indent
Reverses the first and last names of the first author only. Lists co-authors as they appear on the source	Reverses every co-author's first and last name
Uses quotation marks around article titles, underlines book and journal titles	Does not use quotation marks around, or underlining of, article titles. Italicizes book and journal titles
Uses commas between the names of multiple authors, with the word <i>and</i> before the last author's name	Uses commas between the names of multiple authors with the ampersand (&) before the last author's name
Capitalizes each significant word of the title and subtitle and all proper names	Capitalizes only the <i>first word</i> of the title and the subtitle of articles and books. Capitalizes all <i>proper names</i> and periodical titles/names
Double-spaces throughout (unless otherwise instructed)	Double-spaces throughout (unless otherwise instructed)

In-text Citations	In-text Citations
Citation at the end of the cited passage, with author's last name and page number only; e.g., "quotation" (Estes 158); summary or paraphrase (Estes 202).	Often integrates citation within the sentence before the cited passage; e.g., Some studies (Estes & Skinner, 1940) have suggested . . .
	Includes author's last name and the publication date separated by a comma, e.g., (Johnson, 1992). For quotations, includes page number; e.g., (Johnson, 1992, p. 140)

**Works Cited entry of a book in MLA format:**

Last name of author, first name. Title of Book. City of publication: publisher, year.

The following is a list of possible components of an MLA book entry in the order in which they need to appear; **bold-faced** items are required for all sources; other items will be appropriate for some sources:

1. **Author's name**
2. Title of a part or chapter of the book (enclosed in quotation marks)
3. **Title of the book** (underlined)
4. Name of the editor, translator, or compiler, e.g., Ed. Samuel Winter.
5. Edition used, e.g., 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.
6. Number(s) of the volume(s) used, e.g., 9 vols
7. **Place of publication** (city), **name of publisher, and date of publication**
8. Page numbers, e.g., 54.

Atwood, Margaret. Alias Grace. New York: Bantam Doubleday, 1996.

Notes

See the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers 6<sup>th</sup> ed., section 5.6, for information on how to cite additional components.

See Writing Center handouts: "MLA Format: Works Cited" and "MLA Electronic References Format" for more examples on how to cite particular sources in MLA format.

**References entry of a book in APA format:**

Last name of author, first and middle initial. (date of publication). *Title of book*. City, state/province or country of publication: publisher.

The following is a list of possible components of an APA book entry in the order in which they need to appear; **bold-faced** items are required for all sources; other items will be appropriate for some sources:

1. **Author** (if there is no author, but there is an editor, place here with Ed. following name)  
e.g., I. M. Markson, Ed.
2. **Date of publication** (in parentheses)
3. **Title of book** (italicized)
4. Edition in parentheses, e.g., (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)
5. Editor in addition to an author, e.g., T.S. Smith & C.Q. Eliot, Eds.
6. **Place of publication** (city and state): **Publisher**

Timpson, W. M. (1996). *Concepts and choices for teaching: Meeting the challenges in higher education*. Madison, WI: Magna Publications.