

# MLA In-Text Citation Guidelines

When writing, strive to blend information from a variety of sources. To acknowledge the original source material *always* do one of two things: 1) directly quote the material or 2) paraphrase the information. Either way needs in-text citations (also called parenthetical citations) to create a pathway from the writing assignment to the original sources.

★★★ In-text citations will pair with the entries listed in the works cited page! ★★★

An in-text citation from print material often gives the author’s last name and the page number like this:

DIRECT QUOTE

“Scrooge had as little of what is called fancy about him” (Dickens 19).

-or-

PARAPHRASE

Scrooge was not an ostentatious man (Dickens 19).

**Pay close attention to the citation placement and punctuation!**

However, there are many other circumstances to consider:

IF THE...	THEN...
print source has two authors	use both last names and the page # (Smith and Jones 31).
print source has more than two authors	use the last name of the first author listed, et al. and the page # (Smith, et al. 152).
author provided more than one source	use the last name and the title of the book and page # (Jones, <i>Urban Transportation</i> 47). (Jones, <i>Mass Transit</i> 98) .
article does not identify an author	use the article title in quotation marks ("Media in the 1940s" 13).
book does not identify an author	use the book title in <i>italics</i> and the page # ( <i>History of Transportation</i> 54).
source is a webpage or database article	use the author(s) and no page number (Frederick).
webpage or database article does not have an author	use the title of the web page or database article in quotation marks ("Urban Subway Systems").
author is unknown and more than one source had the same article title	use the article title (quotation marks) and the source title ( <i>italics</i> ) ("William Shakespeare," <i>Discovering Authors</i> ). ("William Shakespeare," <i>Biography Resource Center</i> ).

Please refer to the [Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) for further assistance.

For practice creating in-text citations, try this [online activity](#).

Helpful hints:

- Indented block quotes (more than four lines) place the in-text citation *after* the ending punctuation.
- The examples of in-text citations (shown above) model correct punctuation.