

cite article mla 9th edition

How to Cite an Article in MLA 9th Edition: A Comprehensive Guide

cite article mla 9th edition guidelines are crucial for academic integrity and clear communication in scholarly work. This comprehensive guide will demystify the process of citing articles using the Modern Language Association (MLA) 9th edition style. We will cover the fundamental principles, the essential elements required for any article citation, and specific examples for various types of articles, including those found in scholarly journals, magazines, and newspapers, as well as online sources. Understanding these nuances ensures your bibliography is accurate, your sources are properly attributed, and your readers can easily locate the information you've referenced. Mastering MLA 9th edition citation is a skill that benefits students and researchers across numerous disciplines.

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Understanding MLA 9th Edition Citation Principles

MLA 9th edition citation prioritizes author-reader transparency and ease of access to source material. The core philosophy is to provide your reader with enough information to locate the exact source you consulted. This edition emphasizes container logic, meaning you identify the source (the article) and then the larger entity it belongs to (the journal, website, etc.). This approach creates a more flexible and adaptable citation system capable of handling a wider range of source types. The focus remains on the author, title of the source, title of the container, other contributors, version, number, publisher, publication date, and location.

Key to MLA 9th edition is the concept of "core elements." These are specific pieces of information that should be included in a citation whenever they are available. If a particular element is not applicable to your source, you simply omit it. This flexibility allows for consistent citation practices across diverse media. The goal is not to force information where it doesn't exist, but to present what is present in a standardized format. This makes understanding the citation structure essential for every writer. The author-page system of in-text citations is also a cornerstone, directing readers to the specific page number where the referenced information can be found.

Core Components of an MLA Article Citation

Every MLA 9th edition article citation, regardless of its specific type, will generally include a set of core elements. These elements, when assembled correctly, provide a complete bibliographic record for your source. Familiarizing yourself with these components is the first step toward accurate citation.

Author

The author's name is typically the first element in an MLA citation. For one author, you list their last name followed by a comma, then their first name. For example, "Smith, John." If an article has two authors, you list them both, separating their names with "and" and using the standard first-name-last-name format for the second author: "Smith, John, and Jane Doe." For three or more authors, you list the first author's name in the standard last-name, first-name format, followed by "et al.": "Smith, John, et al."

Title of Source

This refers to the specific title of the article itself. It should be enclosed in quotation marks. For instance, "The Future of Renewable Energy." The title should be capitalized according to standard title capitalization rules, meaning major words are capitalized, but articles, prepositions, and conjunctions are not, unless they begin or end the title. This element helps distinguish the specific piece of content you are referencing within a larger publication.

Title of Container

The "container" is the larger work in which the article appears. This could be a scholarly journal, a magazine, a newspaper, or a website. The title of the container is italicized. For example, if the article is from The New York Times, that would be the title of the container. If it's from a journal, it would be the journal's title, such as *Journal of Modern Literature*. This element is crucial for understanding the context of your source.

Other Contributors

This element is used for individuals other than the author who significantly contributed to the work, such as editors or translators. Their role should be indicated (e.g., "edited by," "translated by"). This is less common for standard articles but can be important for specific types of sources.

Version

This element is typically used for editions of books or for specific versions of software or

other media. For most articles, it will not be applicable.

Number

This refers to specific numbering within a container, such as the volume and issue number of a journal. For journals, you will often see a volume number (vol.) followed by an issue number (no.). For example, "vol. 45, no. 2."

Publisher

The publisher is the entity responsible for making the work available. For journals and magazines, this is often the publishing house. For websites, it might be the name of the organization that maintains the site. This element helps identify the origin and authority of the publication.

Publication Date

The date on which the article was published is essential. MLA uses a day-month-year format for dates, for example, "15 Mar. 2023." For journal articles, the year is often the most critical part, but providing the full date when available is best.

Location

This element indicates where the source can be found. For print articles, it's the page numbers. For online articles, it's typically a URL or a DOI (Digital Object Identifier). For example, "pp. 34-45" for print, or "https://www.example.com/article" for online. DOIs are preferred for scholarly articles as they are stable links.

Citing Journal Articles in MLA 9th Edition

Citing journal articles is a common task for academic writers. MLA 9th edition provides a clear structure for these citations, emphasizing the journal title as the primary container. The core elements remain the same, but their application is specific to the nature of academic journals.

Scholarly Journal Article with Print Access

When citing a journal article that you accessed in print, the format will look like this:

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, vol. [Volume Number], no. [Issue Number], [Publication Date, e.g., Month Year or Season Year], pp. [Page Numbers].

For example: Doe, Jane. "The Impact of Social Media on Adolescent Development." *Journal of Psychology*, vol. 28, no. 3, Summer 2022, pp. 112-130.

Scholarly Journal Article with Online Access (DOI)

If you access a journal article online and it has a DOI, this is the preferred method of citation. The DOI provides a stable, permanent link to the article.

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, vol. [Volume Number], no. [Issue Number], [Publication Date, e.g., Month Year or Season Year], doi:[DOI Number].

For example: Smith, John. "Metaphorical Language in 19th-Century Poetry." *English Literary Review*, vol. 15, no. 1, Jan. 2023, doi:10.1000/ejlr.2023.15.1.101.

Scholarly Journal Article with Online Access (URL)

If a journal article lacks a DOI but is available online, you can provide the URL. Ensure the URL is accurate and leads directly to the article. It's generally advisable to omit "http://" or "https://" unless it's necessary for clarity.

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, vol. [Volume Number], no. [Issue Number], [Publication Date, e.g., Month Year or Season Year], www.journalwebsite.com/article-link.

For example: Garcia, Maria. "The Evolution of Urban Farming." *Sustainability Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 4, Nov. 2021, sustainabilityquarterly.com/urbanfarming-evolution.

Citing Magazine Articles in MLA 9th Edition

Magazine articles are typically shorter and less academically rigorous than journal articles, but proper citation is still essential. The container here is the magazine itself.

Print Magazine Article

For a magazine article found in print, the citation includes the author, article title, magazine title, publication date, and page numbers.

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine*, [Day Month Year], pp. [Page Numbers].

For example: Lee, David. "The Future of Artificial Intelligence." *Tech Today*, 15 Feb. 2023,

pp. 22-25.

Online Magazine Article

When citing an online magazine article, you will typically include the website's URL. If the magazine has a distinct online presence separate from a larger news site, list that as the container.

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine*, [Day Month Year], www.magazinewebsite.com/article-path.

For example: Chen, Li. "Exploring the Great Barrier Reef." *National Geographic*, 20 Jan. 2023, www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/great-barrier-reef-article.

Citing Newspaper Articles in MLA 9th Edition

Newspaper articles, like magazine articles, are often more time-sensitive. The citation format is similar, with the newspaper title serving as the container.

Print Newspaper Article

For print newspaper articles, you'll include the author (if available), article title, newspaper title, publication date, and page numbers. If the article spans multiple pages, list the first page number followed by a hyphen and "ff." (e.g., A1, A4-A5).

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Newspaper*, [Day Month Year], pp. [Page Numbers].

For example: Roberts, Sarah. "Local Election Results Announced." *The Daily Chronicle*, 8 Nov. 2022, pp. B1, B3.

Online Newspaper Article

When citing an online newspaper article, provide the URL. Some online newspapers include section names or dates that can be helpful for location.

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Newspaper*, [Day Month Year], www.newspaperwebsite.com/article-link.

For example: Patel, Rohan. "New City Park Opens Downtown." *Metropolis Gazette*, 1 Dec. 2022, www.metropolismetropolisgazette.com/citypark-opening.

Citing Online Articles in MLA 9th Edition

The landscape of online information is vast, and MLA 9th edition aims to provide a consistent way to cite articles from a variety of online sources, including websites, blogs, and encyclopedias.

General Online Article (Website)

For articles found on general websites where the source is not a journal, magazine, or newspaper, the structure emphasizes the website name as the container.

- Author's Last Name, First Name (if available). "Title of Article." *Title of Website*, Publisher (if different from website name), [Publication Date or Last Updated Date], www.website.com/article-path.

For example: Williams, Emily. "Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation." *Healthline*, Healthline Media, 10 Jan. 2023, www.healthline.com/mindfulness-benefits.

Online Encyclopedia or Reference Work

When citing an article from an online encyclopedia like Wikipedia, include the article title, the encyclopedia's title, and the date you accessed the information. While Wikipedia is generally discouraged in academic settings, this is how you would cite it if permitted.

- "Title of Article." *Name of Encyclopedia*, [Date you accessed it]. www.website.com/article-path.

For example: "Great Depression." *Wikipedia*, 15 Feb. 2023. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Depression.

Blog Post

Blog posts are cited similarly to other online articles, with the blog title as the container.

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Blog Post." *Title of Blog*, [Day Month Year], www.blogwebsite.com/post-link.

For example: Rodriguez, Carlos. "My Thoughts on the Latest Tech Trends." *Tech Insights Blog*, 2 Mar. 2023, www.techinsightsblog.com/tech-trends-thoughts.

Variations and Special Cases for Article Citations

While the core elements provide a strong foundation, some articles present unique citation challenges. MLA 9th edition offers guidance for these scenarios to ensure accuracy and completeness.

Article with No Author

If an article does not list an author, begin the citation with the title of the article (in quotation marks), followed by the other core elements.

- "Title of Article." *Title of Container*, [Publication Information].

For example: "Understanding Climate Change." *Global Environmental News*, 5 Jan. 2023, pp. 10-12.

Article with an Editor

If an article is part of an edited collection or anthology, you would include the editor's name, preceded by "edited by."

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Collection*, edited by Editor's First Name Last Name, Publisher, Year, pp. Page Numbers.

For example: Adams, Robert. "The Ethical Implications of AI." *Essays on Technology and Society*, edited by Susan White, University Press, 2021, pp. 78-95.

Article from a Database

When citing an article obtained from an academic database (like JSTOR, EBSCOhost, etc.), you will include the database name as a container. If the database provides a DOI, use that. If not, the URL for the database record is acceptable.

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Title of Database*, [Publication Information], doi:[DOI Number] or URL.

For example: Baker, Laura. "The Psychology of Consumer Behavior." *JSTOR*, vol. 12, no. 3, 2020, doi:10.1000/jps.2020.12.3.50.

The Importance of Accuracy in MLA Article Citations

Meticulous attention to detail is paramount when citing articles in MLA 9th edition. Even minor errors, such as a misplaced comma, incorrect capitalization, or an omitted punctuation mark, can detract from the professionalism of your work and, more importantly, can lead to accusations of plagiarism. Accurate citations not only give credit where it is due but also allow your readers to verify your research and explore your sources further, which is fundamental to the scholarly dialogue.

Furthermore, consistent and correct citation practices demonstrate respect for the original creators of the work you are referencing. MLA 9th edition is designed to be a clear and comprehensive system, and adhering to its guidelines ensures that your academic integrity is unblemished. By mastering the elements and formats discussed, you equip yourself with a valuable skill that will serve you throughout your academic and professional journey, making your research transparent, credible, and easily navigable for your audience.

FAQ

Q: What is the most significant change in MLA 9th edition regarding citing articles compared to previous editions?

A: The most significant change in MLA 9th edition is the emphasis on "container logic" and the core elements. This approach makes the citation system more flexible and adaptable to new media. It also shifts the focus from specific source types to a set of universal components that are applied regardless of the source, making it more intuitive for various citation scenarios.

Q: Do I always need to include a URL for online articles in MLA 9th edition?

A: You should include a URL for online articles when a DOI is not available. However, if the article is from a well-known online source that is easily searchable or if the URL is excessively long and complex, you might omit it, especially if the publisher or website name provides sufficient identifying information. Always prioritize DOIs when available for scholarly articles.

Q: How do I cite an article with an unknown author in MLA 9th edition?

A: If an article has no author listed, you begin the citation with the title of the article in

quotation marks. The rest of the citation follows the standard format for the type of source (e.g., journal, magazine, website). The title of the article then functions as the first element for both the Works Cited entry and the in-text citation.

Q: What is the correct punctuation for citing an article title and the title of its container in MLA 9th edition?

A: The title of the article (the "source") is always enclosed in quotation marks. The title of the container (e.g., journal, magazine, website) is always italicized. For example: "The State of the Economy." *Business Today*.

Q: How should I handle page numbers for articles that are not consecutively paginated in MLA 9th edition?

A: For articles that are not consecutively paginated (common in online journals or magazines), you should list all the page numbers on which the article appears, separated by commas. For example, pp. A1, A4-A5. If the article is online and has no page numbers, you would typically omit this element and rely on the URL or DOI for location.

Q: Is it necessary to include the publisher's name for all online articles?

A: You should include the publisher's name if it is identifiable and distinct from the title of the website. For example, if an article is on a website named "Example News," and the publisher is "Example Media Group," you would include "Example Media Group" as the publisher. If the website name is the same as the publisher (e.g., "National Geographic" for articles on their site), you can often omit the publisher to avoid redundancy.

Q: What is a DOI, and why is it important in MLA 9th edition citations?

A: A DOI stands for Digital Object Identifier. It's a unique, persistent alphanumeric string used to identify intellectual property objects, most commonly digital objects such as journal articles. It is crucial because it provides a stable and permanent link to the source, even if the original URL changes. MLA 9th edition strongly recommends using the DOI when available for online scholarly articles.

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