

The MLA Format of the Research Paper

I. Printing

A. Standards

1. Use a high quality printer.
2. Choose a standard, easily readable typeface. (e.g. Times New Roman)
3. Use a 12-font size.
4. DO NOT justify the lines of your paper at the right margin.

B. Always keep a hard copy of your paper.

II. Paper

A. Use only 8 1/2-by-11 inch white paper of good quality.

B. Print on one side of the paper.

III. Margins

A. Set one inch margins at the top, bottom, and on both sides.

B. Indent the first word of each paragraph one-half inch from the left margin. When using a word processing program, you may use the Tab key to indent for each paragraph.

C. Indent set-off quotations one inch from the left margin. The right margin should remain normal.

D. For an example, see the sample first page of a research paper in the *Library Handbook*.

IV. Spacing

A. A research paper must be double-spaced throughout, including quotation, notes, outline, and the list of works cited.

B. See the sample pages of a research paper in the *Library Handbook*.

V. Heading and Title

A. A research paper does not need a title page. If your teacher requires a title page, format it according to the instructions you are given.

- B. Beginning one inch from the top of the first page and flush with the left margin, type on separate lines and double space between each line
 - 1. Your name
 - 2. Your teacher's name
 - 3. The course number
 - 4. The date (Day Month Year)
- C. Double space again and center the title.
- D. Double space between the title and the first line of the text.
- E. Do not underline your title or put it in quotations marks or type it in all capital letters.
- F. If you include an outline with your paper, it should precede the paper itself.

VI. Page numbers

- A. Number all pages consecutively throughout the research paper in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin.
 - 1. Type your last name before the page number.
 - 2. Do not use the abbreviation *p.* before a page number.
 - 3. Do not add a period, a hyphen, or any other mark or symbol.
- B. Position the first line of text one inch from the top of the page.
- C. When using a word processor, create a running head that consists of your last name followed by a space and the page number. The word processor may automatically insert your running head on every page of your paper if you do not specify otherwise.

Selected MLA Accepted Forms of Abbreviations Used in the List of Works Cited

Months of the Year

Apr.	June (no abbreviation)
Aug.	Mar.
Dec.	May (no abbreviation)
Feb.	Nov.
Jan.	Oct.
July (no abbreviation)	Sept.

Other Common Abbreviations

anon.	anonymous
chor.	choreographer
cond.	conductor, conducted by
dir.	director
distr.	distributor
ed.	editor, edition, edited by
eg.	for example
et al.	and others
ex.	example
fig.	figure
i.e.	that is
illus.	illustrator, illustration, illustrated by
Jr.	Junior
n.d.	no date of publication
n.p.	no place of publication; no publisher
n.pag.	no pagination
orch.	orchestra, orchestrated by
par.	paragraph
perf.	performer
prod.	producer
Sr.	Senior
supp.	supplement
trans.	translator, translation, translated by
vers.	version
vol.	volume

<http://webpages.pvbears.org/hslibrary/mla.htm>