

MLA Style: Parenthetical Citations

Whenever you quote or paraphrase information from one of your sources in the body of your paper, you must include a note in parentheses to identify the source of each passage or idea. Such a note usually consists of an author's last name and page number(s) in the parentheses. These parenthetical citations should appear within the passages where the researched information appears, typically at the end of the sentence and before the period. However, there are variations on this rule. Here are some examples of MLA parenthetical citations:

Author's name mentioned in your sentence:

According to Richard Freedman, "Unions perform a great service to the working people of this country" (27).

You may want to mention the author's name in this way when you are stating his or her specific opinion, or when the author is an important or well-known person.

Author's name not mentioned in your sentence:

Despite what some social scientists believe, "unions perform a great service to the working people of this country" (Freedman 27).

Including a quotation in your own sentence like this is a great way to incorporate research smoothly into your paper.

Citing a source with more than one author:

Suicide is becoming the number-one killer among young adolescents (Hyde and Forsyth 62).

Citing an author who wrote two or more sources included on your reference page:

"I feel you're feeling anger," says Kramer after his wife had clobbered him with an iron pot (Michaels, Men's Club 172).

Citing a work listed by its title on your reference page:

In Los Angeles, police brutality is commonplace, especially in poor neighborhoods (Law and Disorder 19).

Block quotes (direct quotations four lines or longer) are indented ten spaces, **double-spaced**, and not enclosed in quotation marks. The parenthetical citation comes **after** the quote's end punctuation. Example:

Although humans of varying races may have very different appearances, those differences are not as significant as they may seem:

Physical diversity appeared among our human ancestors as the result of living in different geographic regions of the world. In regions of intense heat, for example, humans developed darker skin (from the natural pigment melanin) as

protection from the sun; in regions with moderate climates, people have lighter skin. Such differences are literally only skin deep because all human beings the world over are members of a single biological species. (Macdonald 354)

Your research (quotes and paraphrasing) should always be incorporated into your own prose in some way. This quick reference sheet is compiled from several editions of the *SF Writer and guides to MLA Documentation*. For more examples and rules regarding research incorporation and in-text citations, consult an MLA handbook, or visit the friendly advisors at the Writing Center, 112 Hollenbeck Hall.