

## MLA 8th Edition Cheat Sheet

### Font size and type

Always choose an easily readable font and set it to 12 point.

### Line spacing

Double-space the entire research paper, including quotations, notes, and the list of works cited. Indent the first line of a paragraph half an inch from the left margin. Indent set-off quotations half an inch as well.

### Margins and paragraphs

A margin of approximately 2.54 centimetres all round, on the left and right edges of the page, as well as the top and bottom, is essential.

### Page numbers

Number all pages consecutively throughout the research paper in the upper right-hand corner, half an inch from the top and flush with the right margin.

### Punctuation

Ensure that all punctuation is correct. Special care needs to be taken with the use of apostrophes, especially in relation to their use to depict ownership. Remember to place the apostrophe after the actual owner/s. For example, the pupil's classroom versus the pupils' classroom. Be aware also of the use of an apostrophe in the word it's. It's refers to "it is", whereas, its refers to "the possessive case singular of it", for example 'Hold the book by its spine.' Take care to also differentiate between your (belonging to you) and you're (you are). Do not use contractions such as can't, haven't, etc.

### Order of pages

Arrange the pages of the paper in the following order:

- Title page
- Abstract (start on a new page after the title page)
- Text (start on a new page after the abstract, or after the title page if the paper does not have an abstract)
- References (start on a new page at the end of the text)
- Footnotes (start on a new page after the references)
- Tables (start each on a new page after the footnotes)
- Figures (start each on a new page after the tables)
- Appendices (start each on a new page after the tables and/or figures)

## Tense

Avoid changes of tense within an assignment, and certainly within the one paragraph. Write in the tense appropriate to the topic e.g. an essay on an historical topic should be written in the past tense, but one describing the status quo would be in present tense.

## Title pages

Students should follow the guidelines of their instructor when determining which title page format is most appropriate. If not instructed otherwise, students should include the following elements on the title page:

- Title of the paper
- Name of each author of the paper
- Course number and name for which the paper is being submitted
- Instructor name
- Assignment due date e.g. 4 November 2019
- Page number

## Running head

Number all pages consecutively throughout the research paper in the upper right-hand corner, half an inch from the top and flush with the right margin. Type your last name, followed by a space, before the page number.

## Tables

Place tables and illustrations as close as possible to the parts of the text to which they relate. A table is usually labeled *Table*, given an arabic numeral, and titled. Type both label and title flush left on separate lines above the table, and capitalize them as titles (do not use all capital letters). Give the source of the table and any notes immediately below the table in a caption.

## Figures and images

Any type of illustrative visual material—for example, a photograph, map, line drawing, graph, or chart—should be labelled *Figure* (usually abbreviated *Fig.*), assigned an Arabic numeral, and given a caption: “Fig. 1. Mary Cassatt, *Mother and Child*, Wichita Art Museum.” A label and caption ordinarily appear directly below the illustration. If the caption of a table or illustration provides complete information about the source and the source is not cited in the text, no entry for the source in the works-cited list is necessary.

## Word limit

Make sure you meet the word limit, but do not exceed it. Usually a latitude of 10% either side is allowed. The total number of words is made up of the actual essay itself and does not include the cover page, abstract, references used in the actual essay, reference list or appendix. Direct quotes are also excluded from this count.