The MLA Works Cited List

The new edition of the *MLA Handbook* (8th ed.) marks a significant departure from its previous approach. It is leaner and less prescriptive than any recent version, and it emphasizes that there may be more than one way to document a given source. Although the title, "Works Cited," is retained, the *Handbook* notes that a more inclusive title such as "Works Consulted" may be appropriate. Items in the Works Cited list are in alphabetical order, arranged by the first word of the item (usually the first author's surname). Italics are applied to titles of major works. MLA no longer considers print to be the "normal" format. Here is the basic system:

1. Author's Name (last, first).  
   Frye, Northrop.

2. Title of source (in italics).  
   Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays.

3. Title of container,

4. Other contributors,

5. Version,

6. Number,

7. Publisher,  
   Princeton UP,

8. Publication date,  
   2000.

9. Location.

Only the first author’s name is reversed; the second author’s name is not. If there are three or more authors, the first author’s name is reversed, and those of the rest are replaced with "et al." ("and others"). The publisher’s location "serves little purpose today" (51) and is omitted except for early printed books. The Works Cited entry for the sample work would look like this (note the punctuation):


This is a straightforward reference citation, but there are numerous variations covered by the *MLA Handbook*. Some of the more common ones are outlined below.
A poem, an essay, a chapter, or part of a larger work:


**Note:** Note that a comma separates the title of the poem from the specification “edited by.” The poem title is enclosed in double quotation marks between the author’s name and the book title. The edition follows the editors’ names, and the words “university” and “press” are abbreviated, with no space between “U” and “P.” The page range “616-17” (the leading “6” of “617” is omitted) indicates the page numbers where Layton’s poem may be found.

An introduction, preface, foreword, or afterword written by someone other than the book’s principal editor or author:


**Note:** If the foreword had a unique title, it would be inserted between the author’s name and the word “Foreword.”

A book with two or more authors:


**Note:** The abbreviation “et al.” is used when the work has three or more authors. The order of the authors’ names within the reference corresponds to the order as listed in the publication rather than alphabetical order. The parts of the first author’s name are reversed; the second author’s name is not reversed.
The work of the editors, not the authors, of an anthology:


A translation:


A book with the title of another major work in its title:


Note: Note that the book series (*Twentieth Century Interpretations*) now appears as the final element of the entry. Because *Hamlet* is normally in italics, here within an italicized title it appears in Roman font (plain).

A manuscript or typescript:


Note: MS is used for manuscript (work written by hand) and “typescript” indicates a work prepared by machine—computer or typewriter. Also, give the name and location of the library, research institution or personal collection. If there is no title for the MS or TS, give a description (e.g., *Notebook*).
An article in a periodical:


Note: The new format includes the abbreviations “vol.” and “no.” for “volume” and “number.” If the month is specified, it is provided in abbreviated form (e.g., “Jan.”).

A website:


Note: The URL is a live link, and a period follows it.

A comic book:


Note: Again, “number” is abbreviated as “no.” Both the issue title and the series title are set in italic font.