

In-Text Citations

Parenthetical Citations

In-text citations are called parenthetical references in MLA. This involves placing information about the source in parentheses after a quote or a paraphrase. The information in the parenthetical references must match the corresponding information in the list of works cited.

The purpose of parenthetical references is to indicate to readers not only what works you used, but what you used from each source and where in the source you found the material. This can be done by inserting a parenthetical reference in your text at the spot where you have used the source's ideas or words.

You should keep parenthetical references as brief and as few as clarity and accuracy permit.

General Guidelines

- Author's last name followed by the page number referenced in work. These are placed in parentheses at end of sentence before period.
[The Soviets were surrounded by enemies \(Waters 119\).](#)
- If author's name is in text only use the page number, it is not necessary to repeat the author's name.
[Waters argues that the Soviets were surrounded by enemies \(119\).](#)

Authors – Identification of source

- **Group or corporate authors:** use full name of group or a shortened form.
[\(Natl. Research Council 15\)](#)
- Do not use abbreviations such as ed. or trans.
- **No author:** use a few words of the title.
[\("The evolving internet"\)](#)
- **Two authors:** Use last name of both, no comma.
[\(Black and Mondoux 123\)](#)
- **Three authors:**
[\(Eddison, Zhu, and Lalonde\)](#)
- **More than three authors:** Give all the last names or just the first and "et al. for the rest
[\(Becker et al. 13\)](#)
[\(Becker, Lafontaine, Robins, Given, and Rush 13\)](#)
- If your work cited page contains multiple references by the same author, include the author's last name and a full or shortened title of their work and the page number.
[\(Feder, The Birth of a Nation 124\)](#)

Location of passage within source

- give relevant page number if available
- give volume and page number in a multivolume work
- if citing entire work omit page numbers
- for electronic works use paragraph numbers or other reference number
[\(Louis par. 20\)](#)
- film, television, broadcasts cannot be cited by numbers

Placement of parenthetical reference in text

- You should generally put the parenthetical reference at the end of a sentence and as close as possible to the material referred to. The parenthetical reference goes before the punctuation mark.

Cole found that "The bones were very fragile" (33-34).

- If the quotation is over 4 lines, you must indent the whole quotation and start the quotation on a new line. No quotation marks are required. Notice the placement of the period is before the brackets for long quotations.

Alberta is occasionally divided into two regions, Northern Alberta and Southern Alberta. The majority of Alberta's population is located in large urban cities, mostly located in the South. Alberta is Canada's most populous Province of all three Canadian prairie provinces. Edmonton is the Capital of Alberta. (Herick 22)