MLA FORMAT

Format, Heading, and Page Numbers:
Your paper should have one-inch margins on all four sides. All of the text must be double-spaced, and
the letters should be in 12-point font. The first page should begin with your name typed flush with the
left-hand margin. The second line will consist of your teacher’s name; the third, the name of the
course; the fourth, the date the paper is due; and the fifth line, your title centered. The page numbers
should be preceded by your last name and fall within the top margin, one-half inch from the top of the
page and flush with the right margin, as a header. The first line of each paragraph should be indented
one-half inch or five spaces. Block quotations will have left margins one inch or ten spaces in from
the normal margin of one inch.

Rules to Remember for Quotations:
1. Document any direct quotation from a source as well as any ideas or passages you paraphrase or
summarize by citing the name of the author and the page(s) from which you got the information.
For example: The survey showed that 48% of all marriages end in divorce (Tejas 47).
   As Ross says, “Penn followed his conscience in all matters” (127).

You should use an abbreviated title when the article has no author.
For example: Television ratings wars have escalated during the past ten years (“Leaving
   the Cellar” 102).

2. If the source you are documenting has already been identified and no other source has been
documented yet, use only the page number in parentheses after the sentence containing the next
citation.

3. If you are quoting a source within a source, document it by using the abbreviation “qtd. in”
within the parentheses with the page number.
For example: Wagner said that myth and history stood before him “with opposing claims”
   (qtd. in Winkler 10).

4. If you are using a source with more than one but less than five authors, cite all names in
parentheses.
For example: With the advent of behaviorism, psychology began a new phase of inquiry
   (Cowan, Bar, and Crum 31-34).

For more than five authors, cite the first author’s last name followed by “et al.”
For example: Many readers believe they are “victimized by the writer” (McPherson et al. 38).
Works Cited Entries:

At the end of your paper, on a separate sheet, you should list your sources in alphabetical order on a “Works Cited” page. The heading “Works Cited” should be centered at the top of the page with the same standard one-inch margin, and the first source should begin just one double-spaced line below the heading. The entire page should be double-spaced throughout, and any line of an entry after the first needs to be indented five spaces or one-half inch.

The following are some basic examples of how to list your sources on the “Works Cited” page:

A Book by One Author:

Two or More Books by the Same Author:

An Edited Book:

An Essay, Poem, Short Story, or Article Appearing in a Collection of Works:

A Book by a Corporate Author:

An Article in a Reference Book (Encyclopedia, Dictionary, etc.):


A Newspaper:

A Magazine Article:

Lane, Barbara. “Keeping Track of the King of Television.” People 28 June 1996: 56-60.

An Article in a Scholarly Journal:

A Pamphlet:

A Film or Video Recording:

SIUC Writing Center
www.siu.edu/~write

A Television or Radio Program:


A Sound Recording:


A Letter, a Memo, and an E-Mail Communication or a Public Online Posting:


Mary Frances Salazar. “Howdy, Buddy.” E-mail to Terry Chen. 15 Sept. 1996.

An Interview:

Pei, I. M. Personal interview. 10 Dec. 1990.

An Advertisement:


Material Accessed from a Periodically Published Database on CD-ROM:


“Howdy, Buddy.” E-mail to Terry Chen. 15 Sept. 1996.

A Nonperiodical Publication on CD-ROM:

SIUC Writing Center
www.siu.edu/~write


A Publication on Diskette:

Material Accessed through an Electronic Source:
Basically, sources accessed through an electronic source must include the following: author; title; publication for the print version, if any; publication information for the online version (title of the site, date of last update, and the name of organization sponsoring the site); date of your access; and the electronic address, or URL.

For Example:


--Prepared by Rebecca S. Borah. Based on a handout by Virginia Crank.