

Yourfirstname Yourlastname

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English 1301

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Producing an MLA Style Paper Using MSWord

This template ("MLA-Template-MSWord") contains pre-settings for the essential features of an MLA style paper: one-inch margins all around, half-inch paragraph indentations, a header with your last name and the page number one-half inch from the edge of the paper and aligned with the right margin, twelve-point Times New Roman font, and double-spaced. The date on this first page updates automatically. For detailed instructions on MLA format see SF Writer, Chapter 16, especially pages 199, 201, and 209.

To use this template when you write a paper, open this template file and save it under a new name by clicking "File" and "Save As". Then use type-over insertions to replace the name in the header (leave the page number) and the information block, and to replace the title. Finally, replace the text in the body of the template by using type-over insertions, or delete the body text in blocks. (Hint: Leave the sample block quotation in place until the end to preserve its paragraph indentation as a model.) I suggest printing this template and measuring the margins and indentations to make sure that your printer is properly configured to produce an MLA page.

Use type-over insertions in the list of "Works Cited" to preserve the hanging indentations. Notice that the works on the "Works Cited" page are alphabetized by the last names of the authors. Here, then, is a sample block quotation:

A quotation that occupies more than four typed lines should be indented one inch from the left margin. It should be double-spaced, without quotation marks at the beginning and end of the quoted material. Its right margin is one inch, just like the rest of the paper. Its parenthetical citation should be placed after the final punctuation mark of the quotation. (Authorlastname 16)

An example of a short quotation is: “MLA documentation usually involves just two steps: creating an in-text note for every source as you use it in a paper or project (Section 16a-1); creating an entry on a Works Cited page for each source used in the project (Section 16a-2)” (Ruskiewicz, Hairston, and Seward 173). The parenthetical citation should be placed inside the final punctuation mark of the sentence.

A parenthetical citation is needed every time you use ideas or information from someone else’s work in your own paper. If you fail to cite all your sources, you are committing the Eighth Deadly Sin of Plagiarism. “Derived from the Latin word plagiarius (“kidnapper”), plagiarism refers to a form of cheating that has been defined as ‘the false assumption of authorship: the wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind, and presenting it as one’s own” (Gibaldi 66).

Consult SF Writer to find the appropriate MLA parenthetical citation and Works Cited forms for more than fifty kinds of sources. To make sure that your “Works Cited” page starts at the top of a page (one inch from the edge of the paper), insert a page break (Ctrl-Enter) at the end of your paper (at this point).