

Style Guide for Language Papers and Presentations

This style guide has been created to help you cite sources and format citations in papers and presentations correctly for language classes. Please note that students should adhere to any additional guidance given outside of this style guide. Papers for other sections of the department (such as literature and linguistics) should follow style guidelines given there. The linguistics style guide can be found [here](#).

For work in language classes, please choose between either using the **MLA** (also used in many Lit papers) or the **Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics** (also used in Ling papers) documentation style. While both the MLA and the Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics also give formatting information, please use the formatting requirements below where they differ from these styles. A general overview of paper format and citing sources will be presented here and if more information is needed, please consult the internet. The links below lead to official sites, but it is also possible to find information via Google (e.g. by Googling “how to cite X + MLA”).

- [Official MLA site](#)
- [Official Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics site](#)

In addition to the documentation styles presented here, do keep in mind that there are many English-language documentation styles and you may encounter others during your studies. Also, documentation styles commonly used in English tend to be a bit different from those commonly used in German.

Paper Format

- 1) Use standard **margin sizes**, e.g. 2.5 cm at the top, right and left, 2.0 cm at the bottom.
- 2) Your **font** should be legible & your font size 11 or 12 point (e.g. Calibri 11 or 12, Arial 11, Times New Roman 12).
- 3) Create a **header** for your paper which includes (check with instructor guidelines!):
 - a. Your name and student number (or just student number if instructor has chosen anonymous marking)
 - b. Class name, date of semester, instructor name
 - c. Other information as outlined by instructor such as day/time of class or group number, presentation topic, degree program, feedback method, variety of English used, etc.

→ For language classes, a separate title page is **not** necessary!
- 4) Use a **running head** on the following pages which includes: your name (or your student number for anonymous marking).
- 5) **Page numbers** should be included at the bottom of the pages.

Style Guide for Language Papers

- 6) The **title** should be on the first page, centered at the top of the page. Use [title case](#) for the title of your paper.
- 7) Please use 1.5 **line spacing** for the main text.
- 8) Remember that a **paragraph** is one block of text with no new lines within it. In contrast, an **essay** is made up of several paragraphs, including an introduction and conclusion, and there should be a visible division between the paragraphs through [indenting](#) the first line of each paragraph or leaving a line free between paragraphs.
- 9) You should not use section headings in paragraphs or essays. Only research papers, term papers and reports require section headings.
- 10) The **Works Cited** or **Sources** section should be at the end of your work. It can start immediately below the conclusion and need not be on the next page. Center the subtitle and label the section as Works Cited or Sources. Some instructors will request a **Works Cited** section where you are required to list the sources you have referred to within the final version of your work; in contrast a list of **Sources** includes ALL the sources you read to inform your work whether you cite them in the text/the presentation or not. This will be required for presentations and may be required for some papers. Both should be listed in alphabetical order. [Hanging indentation](#) should be used.
→ Students should use academic sources in their work.
- 11) **Word count** and **citation style** chosen should be included at the end of the paper. Word count refers to the whole essay/report text: the introduction, body and conclusion as well as quotations and parenthetical citations used in the text. It excludes headers, title, Works Cited/Sources list, any end- or footnotes used for additional information, and any appendices or similar.
- 12) Include the following **affidavit** at the very end of your paper. It can be smaller font and single line spacing. If instructor is marking anonymously, add student number instead of signature:

„Hiermit versichere ich, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbständig verfasst und keine anderen als die angegebenen Hilfsmittel benutzt habe. Aus fremden Quellen Übernommenes ist kenntlich gemacht. Mit einer elektronischen Plagiatsüberprüfung dieser Arbeit bin ich einverstanden.“
[Date] [Signature]
- 13) If your instructor has requested you turn in a **hard or paper copy**, print out your essay and staple the pages together. Please avoid any sort of plastic folder or paper clip or folding of pages unless instructed to do so. Always make sure you are aware of your instructor’s desired submission method and the deadline. Late papers may lose marks.
- 14) For **writing style**, remember to use impersonal, academic language and aim to provide an analysis, not just a summary of your sources.

Quick Reference for 'Citing Sources' Section

Introduction to Using MLA/USSL: Plagiarism and Why Academia Cites	3
Creating a Works Cited/Sources Section	4
Format of In-text Citation	5
Differentiating between Quotations and Paraphrases	6
How Much and When to Quote	6
Integral vs. Non-integral Citation	7
Multi-sentence Paraphrases	7
Indirect Quotations and Paraphrases	7
Common or General Knowledge	8
Citation for Presentations	8
Works Cited for this Document and Bibliography for Further Reading	9
List of Linked Documents with More Information	10

Citing Sources Using MLA or the Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics

A note on **plagiarism** - citing sources is to a certain extent about avoiding plagiarism. Remember that plagiarism is taking someone else's words and ideas and presenting them as your own.

This includes:

- Taking something word for word, be it a sentence, a paragraph or more, from a source and not citing it
- Taking someone's ideas, such as paraphrasing the words of an author and not citing a source
- Taking examples and statistics without citing a source
- Having pictures, tables, etc. on a presentation slide and not citing a source
- Taking the structure of a source and using it as your own structure without citing the source

This list is not exhaustive, but should give you an idea of what needs to be attributed to the source if used in academic work. Plagiarism can lead to an automatic fail in a class.

Despite the importance of avoiding plagiarism, the reasons sources are cited in academia also include:

1. To show that we are not the only academic with these ideas, which gives support to our argument
2. To give our readers the chance to see the quotations in their original context
3. To give our readers the chance to return to the original authors to decide if they agree with our paraphrasing/interpretation or to see more details in the original than presented in our work
4. To give our readers the chance to deepen their knowledge by reading more sources on the subject

Creating a Works Cited/Sources Section

This section should come at the end of any paper, handout or slide deck. See page 2 of this document for details on formatting this section.

MLA

Article on Website

Last name, First name. "Title of Article or Page." *Title of Website*, date published, uploaded or last revised, web address or URL.

Bernstein, Mark. "10 Tips on Writing the Living Web." *A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites*, 16 Aug. 2002, alistapart.com/article/writeliving.

Book by two authors

Last name, First name, and First name Last name. *Title of Book*. Publisher name, year of publication.

Mauk, David, and John Oakland. *American Civilization: An Introduction*. 5th ed. Routledge, 2009.

Journal Article in Database

Last Name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal*, volume number, issue number, year, page range of article. *Database name*, stable link, doi or URL.

Mukherjea, Ananya. "My Vampire Boyfriend: Postfeminism, "Perfect" Masculinity, and the Contemporary Appeal of Paranormal Romance." *Studies in Popular Culture*, vol. 33, no. 2, 2011, pp. 1-20. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23416381>.

[For more examples in the MLA, follow this link.](#)

Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics

Article on Website

Last name, First name. Year of publication, upload or last revision. Title of article. *Title of website*.
Web address or URL. (Date accessed.)

Bernstein, Mark. 2002. 10 tips on writing the living web. *A list apart: For people who make websites*.
alistapart.com/article/writeliving. (4 May 2009.)

Book by two authors

Last name, First name & First name Last name. Year of publication. *Title of book*. City of publication:
Publisher name.

Mauk, David & John Oakland. 2009. *American civilization: An introduction*. 5th edn. New York:
Routledge.

Journal Article in Database

Last name, First name. Year of publication. Title of article. *Title of Journal* volume (issue number). Page
range. stable link, doi or URL. (Date accessed.)

Mukherjea, Ananya. 2011. My vampire boyfriend: Postfeminism, "perfect" masculinity, and the
contemporary appeal of paranormal romance. *Studies in Popular Culture* 33 (2). 1-
20. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23416381>. (18 Aug. 2020.)

[For more examples in the USSS, follow this link.](#)

Style Guide for Language Papers

In-Text Citation

In-text citation should be used on handouts, presentation slides and in papers. Remember everything taken from a source either as a paraphrase or summary (unless it is general/common knowledge) or direct quotation must be cited in text.

Format of In-Text Citations

In-text citation is done using brackets (parentheses) with the author's last name and page number (and in the case of the Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics, year of publication). If there are no page numbers, leave them out. When there is no author, whatever comes FIRST in the citation in the Sources or Works Cited section goes in the brackets (parentheses) (e.g. a short form of the title of the source). EVERY source cited in-text must be listed and easy to identify in the Works Cited/Sources section.

MLA

Source by one-two author(s)

(Last name page number(s)) or (Last name and Last name page number(s))

(Mukherjea 2) or (Mauk and Oakland 20)

Source with author and no page numbers

(Last name)

(Bernstein)

[Follow this link for more examples in MLA](#)

Unified Style Sheet for Linguistics

Source by one-two author(s)

(Last name year: page(s)) or (Last name & Last name year: page(s))

(Mukherjea 2011: 2) or (Mauk & Oakland 2009: 20)

Source with author and no page numbers

(Last name year)

(Bernstein 2002)

[Follow this link for more examples in USSS.](#)

Differentiating Between a Quotation and a Paraphrase

Notice that the citation is the same, the only difference is quotations use quotation marks!

Quotation:

MLA: "There has been a long-standing myth that social classes do not exist in the United States" (Duncan and Goddard 134).

USSL: "There has been a long-standing myth that social classes do not exist in the United States" (Duncan & Goddard 2013: 134).

Paraphrase:

MLA: Although many believe that Americans all belong to the same social class, this is not actually the case (Duncan and Goddard 134).

USSL: Although many believe that Americans all belong to the same social class, this is not actually the case (Duncan & Goddard 2013: 134).

- ➔ Do NOT use "cf" or "see" to mark a paraphrase or quotation. [Follow this link for more details.](#)
- ➔ Use page numbers for both a quotation and a paraphrase unless:
 - The source has no page numbers
 - It is a summary of an entire article or book or chapter in a book
 - It is a summary of the plot of a work of fiction

When and How Much to Quote

When should you use a quote rather than a paraphrase?

- When the original has unique or striking wording
- To serve as a passage for analysis
- To provide further evidence of something already stated
- To define or clarify

➔ Particularly in the 2nd case, quotes may be long. Remember to start the quote on a new line, omit quote marks, use single line-spacing and indent the entire block if quotes are more than three or four lines. [See section on punctuation for details.](#)

How much can I quote?

- Rule of thumb: 10% or less of essay/report is fine
- 15% of essay/report is OK if analyzing text passages
- Over 20% of paper/essay is probably not OK

Integral vs. Non-Integral Citation

Notice how the citations change when the name is used in-text (integral) or not. [More details about how to format authors' names and decide on which citation can be found here.](#)

MLA: According to Crystal, “[a] language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country” (3).

USSL: According to Crystal (2003: 3), “[a] language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country.”

-or-

MLA: “A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country” (Crystal 3).

USSL: “A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country” (Crystal 2003: 3).

Multi-Sentence Paraphrases

If you have a 2-3 sentence long paraphrase from one source, citing a source at the end of this paraphrase is not enough. As a rule of thumb, the citation of a paraphrase ends at the parentheses (brackets) and starts at the beginning of the same sentence. If you only put an in-text citation at the end of your multi-sentence paraphrase, you have not cited the first one or two sentences of your paraphrase. In order to show more than one sentence belongs to your in-text citation, you need to make it clear to your reader where the citation starts and ends. [Here are examples of correct multi-sentence paraphrases.](#)

Indirect Quotations and Paraphrases

This is quoting or paraphrasing something you didn't read which was quoted in a source you did read. It can be good to try to access the original, but if you cannot, please do as follows:

MLA: Historian Bernard Bailyn claimed that “Americans live remarkably close to their past” (qtd. in Duncan and Goddard 4).

USSL: Historian Bernard Bailyn (1998) claimed that “Americans live remarkably close to their past” (qtd. in Duncan & Goddard 2013: 4).

Note: a bibliographic citation (i.e. the full citation found at the end of your work) for both works may be necessary in the Works Cited/Sources section. USSL requests this (here both Bailyn's speech and Duncan & Goddard's book). MLA only requires the citation for the work actually used (here only Duncan & Goddard's book).

Style Guide for Language Papers

If your indirect citation includes work from two different sources, include both names in text, making it clear they are authors of two different works. Integral citation may work best:

MLA: Smith summarized the studies of both Johnson and Miller ... (5).

USSL: Smith (2020: 5) summarized the studies of both Johnson (2010) and Miller (2009) ...

If you need to use non-integral citation, make it clear that both Johnson and Miller are indirect citations by either adding “both qtd in” or (Johnson qtd in Smith 5; Miller qtd in Ibid) or (Johnson 2019 qtd in Smith 2020: 5; Miller 2009 qtd in Ibid).

Common or General Knowledge

There is no need to cite common or general knowledge, but many students are confused about what this is. Here is the definition from OWL at Purdue:

Generally speaking, you can regard something as common knowledge if you find the same information undocumented in at least five credible sources. Additionally, it might be common knowledge if ... [it is] something that a person could easily find in general reference sources. But when in doubt, cite; if the citation turns out to be unnecessary, your teacher or editor will tell you. (“Is It Plagiarism”)

Here are some concrete examples:

- *Virginia Woolf was born in 1882.* → common knowledge
 - *Most people need a mortgage to buy their first house.* → not common knowledge: paraphrases with “most” refer to an actual number, so a source where the number was found needs to be cited.
 - *The media influence society.* → not common knowledge: while this may generally be accepted, there is a lot of debate about how exactly the media influence society and to what extent. Cite a source for whose theory of this influence is being used in this particular work
- ➔ At times, rephrasing with hedging language can also solve issues with needing to cite something generally accepted (e.g. *Many people seem to need a mortgage to buy their first house in the US* or *The media is considered to influence society to some extent*, which would not need a citation)

[More information on mechanics and punctuation can be found here.](#)

Citation for Presentations

For information on citing in presentations, including how to cite on slides/handouts and in-speech, and how to cite graphics and pictures, [please consult this document.](#)

Works Cited

"Is it Plagiarism Yet?" *OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab*. Purdue University. 2016.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/avoiding_plagiarism/is_it_plagiarism.html. 12 Sept. 2016.

Bibliography

This document will not cover everything you may need to cite. If you have questions, look to additional sources to answer them.

MLA Citation

MLA Handbook. 8th ed. The Modern Language Association of America, 2016.

The Purdue Online Writing Lab at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Various Styles

Glenn, Cheryl. *The Hodges Harbrace Handbook*. 17th ed. Cengage Learning, 2008.

Godfrey, Jeanne. *How to Use Your Reading in Your Essays*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Lester, James D., and James D. Lester, Jr. *Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide*. 13th ed. Pearson Longman, 2010.

Pears, Richard, and Graham Shields. *Cite Them Right*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Williams, Anneli. *Research: Improve your reading and referencing skills*. Collins EAP, 2013.

Writing & Critical Thinking

Bailey, Stephen. *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students*. Routledge, 2006.

Cottrell, Stella. *Critical Thinking Skills*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

---. *Skills for Success*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

---. *The Study Skills Handbook*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Creame, Phyllis and Mary R. Lea. *Writing at University: A Guide for Students*. OUP, 2008.

Gillett, Andy, et al. *Inside Track Successful Academic Writing*. Pearson Longman, 2009.

Greetham, Bryan. *How to write better essays*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

McWhorter, Kathleen T. *Study & Critical Thinking Skills in College*. HarperCollins, 1996.

Oshima, Alice., and Ann Hogue. *Writing Academic English*. Pearson Longman, 2006.

Savage, Alice, et al. *Effective Academic Writing*. OUP, 2006.

VanderMey, Randall, et al. *Research and Writing. The College Writer*. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004.

Style Guide for Language Papers

List of Linked Documents

These can all be found as links throughout the document above, so they can be accessed for more information. To allow easy overview of all information available from Sprachpraxis, the full list is given here (also with links).

[Creating a Works Cited/Sources Section/In-Text Citations Further MLA Examples](#)

[Creating a Works Cited/Sources Section/In-Text Citations Further USSL Examples](#)

[More Details on Mechanics](#)

[Multi-Sentence Paraphrases](#)

[Citing Sources in Presentations](#)