

MLA Citation Basics

The Coastline Library is 100% online
Coastline College Library

At the end of this worksheet, students will be able to

- Acknowledge the contributions of others
- Establish credibility for their own work
- Direct readers to source materials
- Apply basic knowledge of how to create and format MLA citations and a Works Cited list

Why do I need a citation?

- Citations are a way to credit the work of others who have made your own research possible
- Citations allow your readers to find your source material
- Citations allow your readers to examine your topic by further reading
- Citations help establish the credibility of your own research

What is a citation?

A citation is a written reference to a specific work such as a book, report, article, or music score produced by a creator (a particular author, editor, or composer). MLA style is used primarily in the humanities field. MLA style requires acknowledgement of a source within the text of a paper along with a corresponding entry on the Works Cited page, located at the end of a document.

Example of an In-text Citation

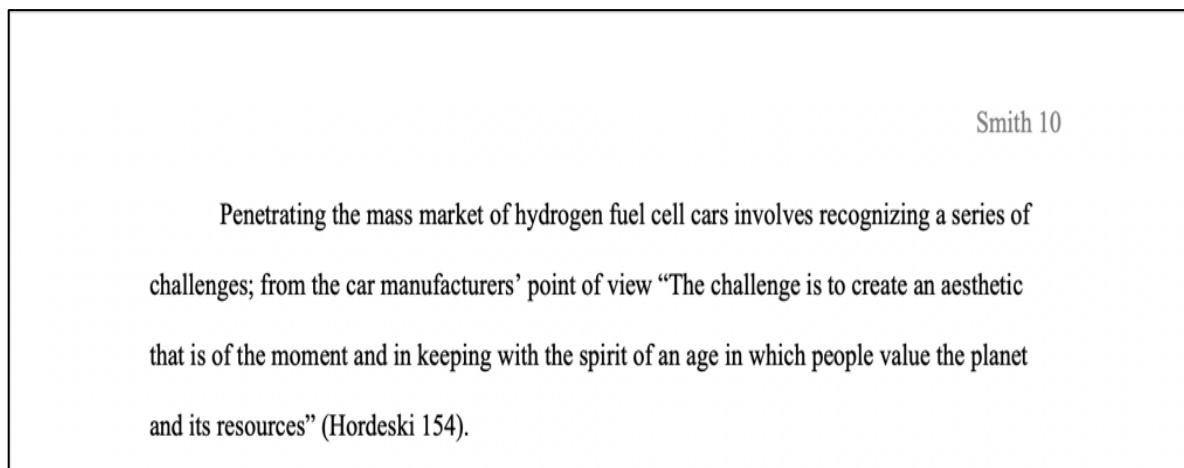


Figure 1 Two-Part Citation Process: In-Text Citation Example

Example of Corresponding Works Cited

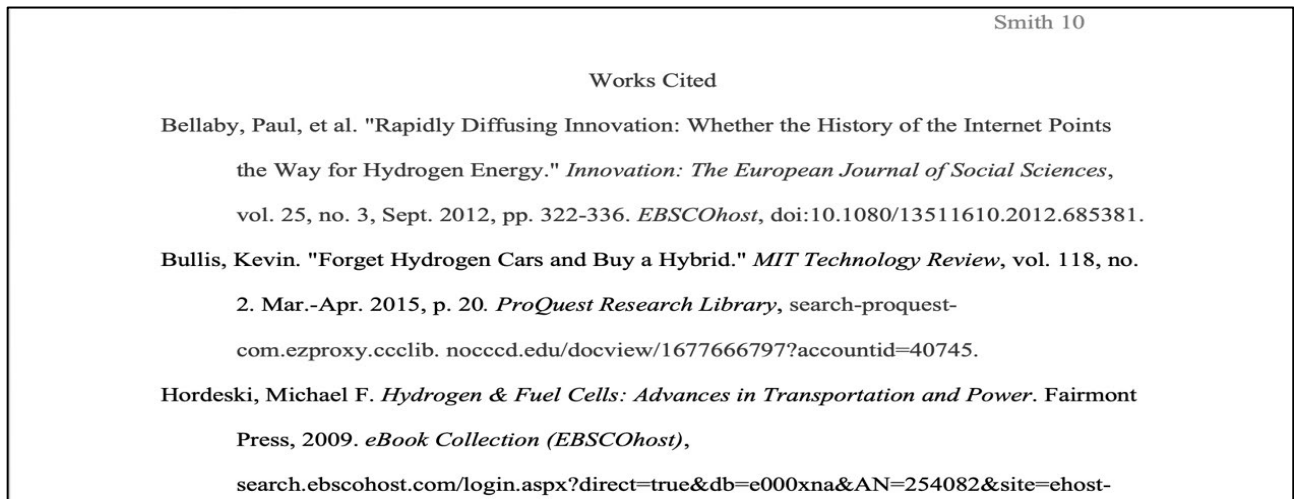


Figure 2 Two Part Citation Process: Works Cited Example

Part 1: Documenting your sources within your paper

What is an In-text Citation?

An in-text citation (parenthetical citation) involves referencing the works of others in your text. A parenthetical citation is the method that requires placing relevant source information in parentheses after a quote, a paraphrase, or a summary. An in-text citation should include the author's last name and the page number if the source is paginated in parentheses. However, if the author has already been introduced in a short introductory statement (signal phrase) leading to a quote, paraphrase, or summary, just enclose the page number only in parenthesis.

Example of a Short Quotation

Quoting a source means you are stating what someone else has written, word for word, using the author's own words. Enclose the quotation within double quotation marks. Provide the author and specific page citation in the text and include a complete reference on the Works Cited page.

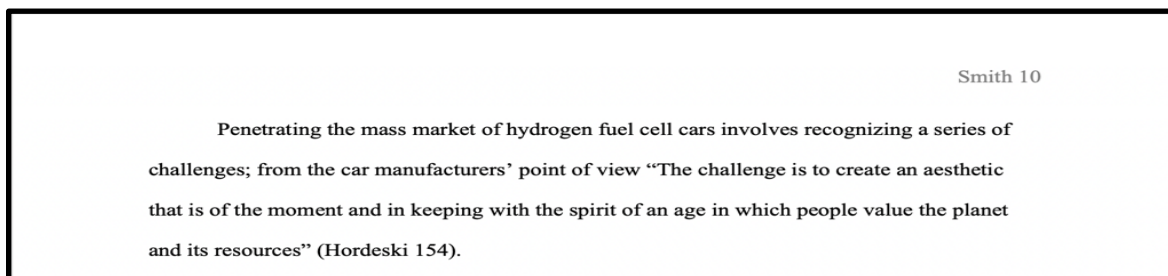


Figure 3 Short Quotation: Parenthetical Citation

Smith 6

According to Romm, “The environmental paradise of a hydrogen economy rests on two pillars: a pollution-free source for the hydrogen itself and the device for converting it into useful energy without generating pollution” (1).

Figure 4 Short Quotation: Signal Phrase

When a quotation is longer than four lines of text, place the direct quotation in a freestanding block of text without quotation marks. Start the quotation on a new line, with the entire quote indented **1/2 inch** from the left margin; maintain double spacing. **After** the closing punctuation mark, provide the author and page number (or page number only if the author has already been introduced) in parenthesis. Include a complete reference on the Works Cited page.

Smith 3

As Bellaby et al. observe in regards to the worldwide widespread adoption of hydrogen energy:
Hydrogen energy has taken off already in places where there is a keen interest in substituting hydrogen for imports of fossil fuels (as in Japan); a comparative advantage in harnessing natural resources (such as Iceland’s geothermal power); or local skills that lend themselves to use of hydrogen energy (as may be found in some recently de-industrialized regions, as in the UK). However, for environmentally sustainable energy to diffuse rapidly on a world scale, there has to be an international commitment to reduce carbon dioxide and other damaging emissions from fossil fuels. This would be for the benefit of future generations, not so much current consumers. For that commitment, high levels of trust and cooperation will be necessary. (334)

Figure 5 Long Quotation

Note: For a source with **three or more authors** like in the above example, list only the first author and replace the additional names with et al.

Example of a Paraphrase

To paraphrase is to put someone else’s ideas in your own words. Summarizing involves using your own words to draw out the main argument(s) of the original work (a novel, article, film, etc.), but reducing its length. Include a complete reference on the Works Cited page.

Smith 2

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) states that fuel cell vehicles (FCVs) have become commercially available, predominantly in areas like California where there is access to hydrogen fueling stations, and production is expected to increase as hydrogen infrastructure and its technology expand (“Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vehicles”).

Figure 6 Paraphrase

Note: If the author is the same organization that published the source as in the above example, use the source title in your in-text citation. If the source title is long, provide a brief version of the title in your in-text citation and give the full title in the citation on your Works Cited page. Many web sources lack page numbers. Treat the source as unpaginated.

Part 2: Creating a Works Cited Page

How do I create a citation?

Below you will find the core elements of a citation in the works cited list. These key elements are presented in the order in which they should appear; each element is also followed by the required punctuation mark. When available, use all of the information required to create bibliographic citations:

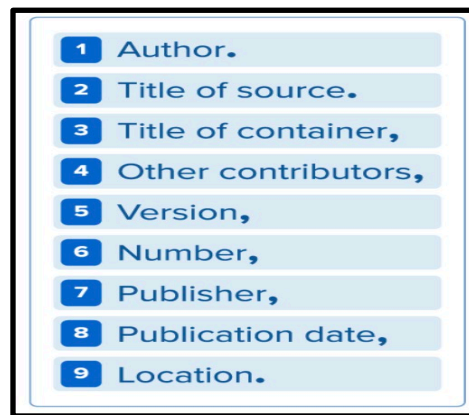


Figure 7 Core Elements of a Citation.

MLA Style Center

Common Sources: Core Elements of Citations:

Journal Article: Identifying its core elements

1. Authors (more than two) 2. "Article Title" 3. Title of Container (Journal/Magazine Title) and publication information (vol., issue, date, pages) 5. Database Name, Location (either URL or DOI).

Figure 8: Journal Article: Location of Core Elements

Journal Article: Formatted citation

Bellaby, Paul, et al. "Rapidly Diffusing Innovation: Whether the History of the Internet Points the Way for Hydrogen Energy." *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 25, no. 3, Sept. 2012, pp. 322-336. EBSCOhost, doi:10.1080/13511610.2012.685381.

Webpage: Identifying its core elements

1. Author (in this example the organization both authored and published the information)
2. "Webpage Title" 3. Title of Container 4. Publication date 5. Location (URL).

Figure 9: Government Source

Webpage: Formatted citation

"Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vehicles." *Green Vehicle Guide*, Environmental Protection Agency, 05 Dec. 2017, www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/hydrogen-fuel-cell-vehicles.

eBook: Identifying its core elements

1. Author 2. eBook Title 3. Publisher. 4. Publication date 5. Title of Container (Database) Location (URL).

Figure 10: eBook

This handout is based on the MLA handbook, 8th ed. Please note, it is undergoing revisions to reflect the changes of the 9th edition published in April 2021.

eBook: Formatted citation:

Hordeski, Michael F. *Hydrogen & Fuel Cells: Advances in Transportation and Power*. Fairmont Press, 2009. eBook Collection (EBSCOhost), search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=254082&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Works Cited List Guidelines

The Works Cited page should appear on a new page at the end of your paper. Label this page Works Cited (or Work Cited if only one source was used). Center this title at the top of the page (do not bold, underline or italicize the title). Each cited source must appear on this list. All citation entries should be double-spaced and organized by the author's last name in alphabetical (A-Z) order. The first line of a citation entry should be flushed to the left margin while the second and the subsequent lines should have a 0.5 inch hanging indent from the left margin.

To double-space, you can use your word-processing program as follows:

- Highlight the citations or text
- Go to the Home tab and find the Paragraph section
- Display the drop-down menu of the Line-spacing
- Choose 2.0

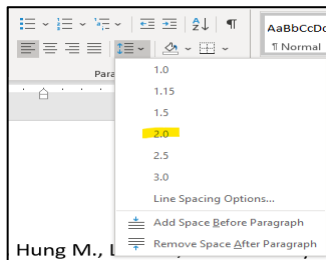


Figure 11 Line Spacing

To create the hanging indent, use the paragraph-formatting option:

- Highlight the entire citation with your cursor and right click
- Select the option paragraph
- Under the option Indentation, select Special and Hanging (Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style)

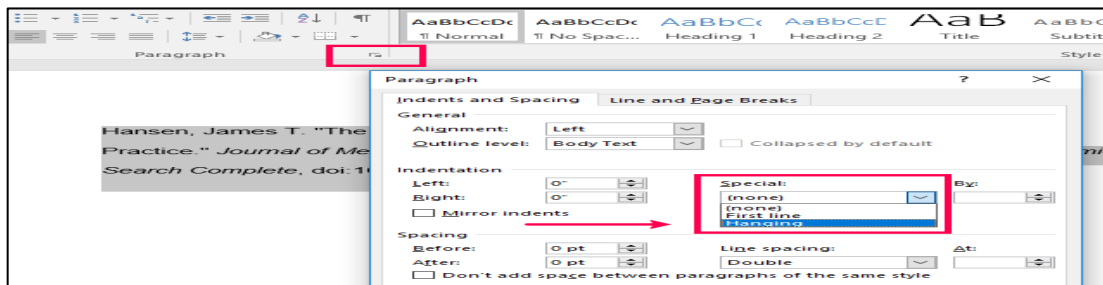


Figure 12 Hanging Indentation

Works Cited Page Example

The works cited page example shown below includes all citation entries for the sources used in

This handout is based on the MLA handbook, 8th ed. Please note, it is undergoing revisions to reflect the changes of the 9th edition published in April 2021.

this handout. For a journal article citation example, see the entry for Bellaby, for a magazine article citation see Bullis, for print and electronic book citation examples see Romm and Hordeski respectively, for an electronic book chapter see Bron, and for a website citation example see the entry for the US Environmental Protection Agency. Remember that the Works Cited page should appear on a new page at the end of your paper.

Works Cited

Bellaby, Paul, et al. "Rapidly Diffusing Innovation: Whether the History of the Internet

Points the Way for Hydrogen Energy." *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 25, no. 3, Sept. 2012, pp. 322-336. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1080/13511610.2012.685381.

Bron, Michael, and Christina Roth. "Fuel Cell Catalysis from a Materials Perspective." *New and Future Development in Catalysis*, edited by Steven L. Suib, Elsevier, 2013, pp. 271-305. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*, search.ebscohostcom/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=485208&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Bullis, Kevin. "Forget Hydrogen Cars and Buy a Hybrid." *MIT Technology Review*, vol. 118, no. 2. Mar.-Apr. 2015, p. 20. *ProQuest Research Library*, search-proquest-com.ezproxy.ccclib.nocccd.edu/docview/1677666797?accountid=40745.

Hordeski, Michael F. *Hydrogen & Fuel Cells: Advances in Transportation and Power*.

Fairmont Press, 2009. *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=254082&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

"Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vehicles." *Green Vehicle Guide*, Environmental Protection Agency, 05 Dec. 2017, www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/hydrogen-fuel-cell-vehicles.

Romm, Joseph J. *The Hype about Hydrogen: Fact and Fiction in the Race to Save the Climate*. Island Press, 2013.