MLA format essay checklist

Use this before you submit an essay in MLA format (MLA 9). If your teacher's instructions are different, follow your teacher.

Page setup

- 1 inch margins on every side
- A readable font such as Times New Roman, 12 point, used for everything
- Double-spaced throughout, with no extra space before or after paragraphs
- The first line of each paragraph indented 0.5 inch
- No title page unless your teacher asks for one

Heading and running head

- Four lines at the top left of page 1: your name, your teacher's name, the course and the date
- The date written day first, such as 19 November 2026
- The title centered, in title case, with no bold, italics, underlining or quotation marks
- The running head at the top right of every page: your last name, a space and an automatic page number (Rivera 1)

In-text citations

Source	Citation
One author	(Hall 42)
Two authors	(Ruiz and Patel 49)
Three or more	(Okafor et al. 115)
No page numbers	(Brooks)
No author	("Short Title")

- No comma between the name and the page, and no "p."
- If you name the author in your sentence, give only the page: (42)
- The citation goes after the closing quotation mark and before the period
- A prose quotation longer than four lines is a block quotation: indent it 0.5 inch, drop the quotation marks and put the citation after the final period

Works Cited page

- A new page, with the words Works Cited centered in plain text
- Only the sources you cited, in alphabetical order by the first word of each entry
- A hanging indent of 0.5 inch, and double-spaced with no extra lines between entries

- Whole works (books, journals, websites) in italics; parts (articles, web pages, videos) in quotation marks
- Dates day first, with every month shortened except May, June and July (12 Sept. 2024)
- URLs without http:// or https://, and DOIs as full links starting https://doi.org/

Entry patterns

- Book: Last name, First name. Title. Publisher, Year.
- Journal article: Last name, First name. "Article Title." Journal, vol. #, no. #, Year, pp. #-#, DOI.
- Web page: Last name, First name. "Page Title." Website Name, Day Mon. Year, URL.
- YouTube video with no clear author: "Video Title." YouTube, uploaded by Channel Name, Day Mon. Year, URL.

Final check

- Every in-text citation matches the first word of a Works Cited entry
- Every Works Cited entry is cited somewhere in the essay
- The running head shows the right page number on every page, including Works Cited