

## Research 3 — Citation (MLA vs. CMS)

Citation is critical in academic writing. It details your thorough research, allows readers to retrace your tracks if they want to do further research on your subject, and gives credit where credit is due to the original writer or speaker. Citation styles dictate how we format citation information. Two of the most common style formats are Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) and Modern Language Association (MLA). If your professor does not specify a style, choose the one that feels most appropriate for your paper. There are a few factors to consider. For instance, CMS is used in book publishing, both fiction and nonfiction, while MLA is frequently used in academic journals. Though both formats may be used for disciplines in the humanities, English scholars typically use MLA format, while historians tend to use CMS. MLA format is more economical, whereas CMS format is more detailed and allows for extended commentary on sources. Once you choose a style, be consistent in its application throughout your paper.

The following is a brief sampling of MLA and CMS styles. Keep in mind that both styles have all sorts of variations for different kinds of sources and circumstances; details are published in extensive MLA and CMS style guides, which are available for reference in the Writing Center.

### MLA

MLA format features “in-text” citations, where brief reference information is placed in parentheses directly following the cited information in the paper.

- List the author’s name and page number in parentheses directly following the quoted information: The Art Nouveau movement had “a direct influence on the Bauhaus School of Design in Germany” (Scott 30).
- If the author’s name is referred to in the text, only include the page number in the parentheses: Scott notes that the Art Nouveau movement had “a direct influence on the Bauhaus School of Design in Germany” (30).
- If you cite multiple works by one author, include a short title: (Scott, “Design” 20).
- For web pages, if there is no definite author or title, use a description: (“Home Page”)

Full references for each source are listed on a separate page at the end of the paper in an alphabetical “Works Cited” list. Formats are specific to the source type; here are a few examples:

#### Book

Scott, John. *Art Nouveau*. New York: Penguin Press, 2000.

#### Journal article from an electronic database

Scott, John. “The Impact of Art Nouveau.” *Art and Design* 15.3 (2000): 112-23. Academic Search Premier. EBSCO. RISD Lib., Providence. 10 April 2011 <<http://www.ebscohost.com>>.

#### Work in an anthology or collection of essays

Scott, John. “The Impact of Art Nouveau.” *Modern Design Influences*. Ed. Lauren Jones. Lanham: Scarecrow, 2000. 30-36.

## CMS

CMS citations use consecutive superscript numerals that correspond to footnotes (at the bottom of the page) or endnotes (at the end of the paper on a separate sheet). In addition to the citation information, the notes can also contain additional comments from the author.

- Place a superscript numeral at the end of the sentence that contains the reference:  
Constructivist designers believed that “art should primarily contribute to societal development.”<sup>1</sup>
- The first time a source is referenced, list in the note a complete citation:  
1. John Scott, *An Abbreviated Graphic Design History* (New York: Penguin, 2000), 23.
- If the same source is referenced again, use a shortened citation containing the author’s last name and the page number, or, if you have more than one source by the same author, the title or partial title (less than four words) and the page number(s):  
3. Scott, *An Abbreviated Graphic Design*, 23.
- If the same source and pages are referenced consecutively, the note should read “Ibid.”:  
4. Ibid. If the same source is referenced consecutively with different pages, the note should contain “Ibid.” and the new page number(s): 5. Ibid., 45.

CMS bibliographies alphabetize sources by the author’s last name and are provided on a separate sheet at the end of the paper. The bibliography contains all the sources referenced in the paper, as well as any additional sources consulted in the author’s research. Here are a sample bibliography entries:

### Book

Scott, John. *An Abbreviated Graphic Design History*. New York: Penguin, 2003.

### Journal article from an electronic database

Scott, John, “Constructivist Ideals,” *Art and Design* 115 (2000): 36, accessed April 20, 2011.

### Website

“Constructivism,” last modified January 10, 2001. <http://www.artanddesign.com/constructivism.html>.

## Resources and Further Reading

The Chicago Manual of Style website’s “Citation Quick Guide” provides sample citations for the most common types of sources.

[www.chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org)

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>

The Purdue OWL website provides a thorough formatting and style guide on the MLA format.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Citation generators such as easybib ([www.easybib.com](http://www.easybib.com)) create complete information in works cited lists and bibliographies. They are very convenient, but occasionally inaccurate, so be sure to proof.