MLA 8th Edition Changes

1. One standard citation format that applies to every source type

Due to the various ways that information is now received, in books, websites, lectures, tweets, Facebook posts, etc., it has become unrealistic for MLA to create citation formats for every source type. Now, there is one standard, universal format that researchers can use to create their citations.

2. Inclusion of “containers” in citations.

Containers are the elements that “hold” the source. For example, if a television episode is watched on Netflix, Netflix is the container. Both the title of the source and its container are included in a citation.


Alesso. “Tear the Roof Up.” Forever, 2015, track 4. Spotify, open.spotify.com/track/2ze8tFyaI1W6db1pJWBpGq


3. The ability to use pseudonyms for author names

It is now acceptable to use online handles or screen names in place of authors’ names.

@WSJ. “Generation X went from the most successful in terms of homeownership rates in 2004 to the least successful by 2015.” Twitter, 8 Apr. 2016, 4:30 p.m., twitter.com/WSJ/status/718532887830753280

4. Inclusion of URLs

In previous versions of the MLA handbook, it was up to the discretion of the instructor whether URLs should be included in a citation. In MLA 8, it is highly recommended to include a URL in the citation. Even if it becomes outdated, it is still possible to trace the information online from an older URL.

Omit “http://” or “https://” from the URL when including it in the citation.
5. **Adding the abbreviations vol. and no. to magazine and journal article citations.**

In MLA 7, there was no indication that the numbers in periodical citations referred to the volume and issue numbers.

*Example of a journal article citation in MLA 7:*


*An example of a journal article citation in MLA 8:*


6. **Omitting the publisher from some source types**

It is not necessary to include the publisher for periodicals or for a web site when the name of the site matches the name of the publisher. For periodicals, the name of the publisher is generally insignificant.

7. **Omitting the city of publication**

In previous versions of the MLA handbook, researchers included the city where the publisher was located. Today, this information generally serves little purpose and the city of publication can often be omitted.

Only include the city of publication if the version of the source differs when published in a different country (Example: British editions of books versus versions printed in the United States).

*Example of a single author book citation in MLA 7:*


*Example of a single author book citation in MLA 8:*