

In-Text / Parenthetical Citation Directions

Remember: All the sources you mention (cite) in your paper must be listed in your Works Cited. All the sources in your Works Cited must be mentioned (cited in your paper). You can't put anything in your Works Cited that you read but didn't actually quote or paraphrase in the paper!

Purpose and general format of citations

The reader must be able to read your paper and trace back where your information came from by going to the Works Cited, finding the citation, and then locating the source. Most often, this is done by giving the author's last name in a parenthetical citation. If you don't have an author's last name, then you are using whatever word(s) appear first in your Works Cited, usually the title of an article or book. There is a space between the author's name and the page number, but no comma. The punctuation for the sentence comes after the parentheses, not before.

Basic parenthetical citation with an author

Anytime you quote or paraphrase something, or mention a fact that is not generally known, use the author's last name only and if there are page numbers, put them afterwards in parentheses

Human beings have been described as "symbol-using animals" (Burke 3).

Either way, there needs to be a source listed in your Works Cited under the name Burke. If your work does not have pages (for example, a website), then do not include a page number.

Parenthetical citation without author

When a source has no known author, the title of the work instead of an author name, in quotation marks if it's a short work (an article) or italicize it if it's a longer work (like a book).

We see so many global warming hotspots in North America likely because this region has "more readily accessible climatic data and more comprehensive programs to monitor and study environmental change" ("The Impact of Global Warming" 6).

In this example, the article title "The Impact of Global Warming," will appear first in the Works Cited entry, instead of an author name, since you don't have one.

Parenthetical citation when more than one source has the same title and no author

If you have two articles listed in your Works Cited with exactly identical titles and no author, you need to include the main part of the book source in the citation as well so the reader can tell them apart. Put a comma between the article and the book/website title.

("Samurai," *Japan* 23) - article on page 23 of a book titled *Japan*
("Samurai," *Life in Old Japan*) - article from website *Life in Old Japan*

More Information

For more specifics on MLA in-text citations, go to EasyBib.com and choose Citation Guides and then MLA, or search on Google for "Purdue OWL MLA."