

Guidelines for Formatting Your Paper in MLA

This resource is an abridged version of the document cited.

General Guidelines

- Use standard white 8.5 x 11-inch paper.
- Double-space your text.
- Use standard, easy to read, 12 point font such as Times Roman or Arial.
- Leave only one space after periods or other punctuation marks.
- Set margins to 1 inch on all sides.
- Indent the first line of a paragraph one half-inch.
- Create a header that numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin.
- Use italics throughout your essay for the titles of longer works and, only when absolutely necessary, providing emphasis. Underline titles only when hand writing an essay.

Formatting the First Page of Your Paper (see example on the back of this sheet)

- A title page is **not** necessary—use only if your instructor has requested one.
- In the upper left-hand corner of the **first** page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date. Be sure to use double-spaced text.
- Double space again and center the title. **Don't underline your title or put it in quotation marks**
- Use quotation marks and italics when referring to other works in your title, just as you would in your text, e.g.,
 - *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* as Morality Play
 - Human Weariness in "After Apple Picking"
- Double space between the title and the first line of the text.
- Create a header in the upper right-hand corner that includes your last name, followed by a space with a page number; number all pages consecutively with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.), one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. **(Note: Your instructor may ask that you omit last name/page number header on your first page. Always follow their guidelines.)**

(Perdue OWL).

Sample: First Page of an Essay in MLA Style

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|---|
| Smith 1 |
| Pete Smith |
| Dr. B. Boilermaker |
| English 106 |
| 12 October 2008 |
| Building a Dream: Reasons to Expand |
| Ross-Ade Stadium |
| During the 2000 football season, the Purdue Boilermakers won the Big Ten Conference Title, earned their first trip to the Rose Bowl in thirty-four years, and played every game in front of a sold-out crowd. Looking ahead . . . |

(Purdue OWL)

Works Cited

Purdue OWL. "MLA Formatting and Style Guide." *The Purdue OWL*. Purdue U Writing Lab, 10 May 2008. Web. 15 Aug. 2009.
<<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>>.