Modern Language Association
In-text (Parenthetical) Citations
In-text (parenthetical) citations

- **In-text citations** let the reader know where your quote, paraphrase, or summary came from by using information from the Works Cited list at the end of your essay.

- The most common information used in the parentheses is the author’s last name and a page number.

- If there is no author, use the **first significant word** in the title of the article.

- The final period goes **after** the closed parentheses.
Examples with authors

• One author:  
  (Fisher 184).

• Two authors:  
  (Fisher and Smith 184).

• Three authors:  
  (Fisher, Smith, and Jones 184).

• Four or more authors:  
  (Fisher et al. 184).
Examples without authors

• Without an author, use the first word in the title. If the first word is *the* or *a*, include the second word as well. Make sure your in-text citation is in the same format as it is listed on the Works Cited sheet:
  (“Internet”). OR (“The Olympics”).

• Articles without authors are usually websites, so there is commonly no page number.

• If the title is in italics (like a DVD), make sure your in-text citation reflects that as well.
  *(Gaudi).*
When you cite more than one source from the same author you must clarify from which source the information came. Include the first word of the title, then alphabetize according to the title on the WC page.


Your in-text citations will look like this:

Works with the same title

- Sometimes you will have works with no author and similar titles. You must clarify from which article your information came.


- Your in-text citations will look like this: ("Animals Used"). AND ("Animal Testing").
Listing the author in the text

- If you refer to the author of your quote in the text, then you do not need to list him or her in the parentheses at the end of the sentence. You only need the page number.

According to Professor Frederick Turner at The University of Texas at Dallas, “no truly great poetry has been written in English since the Second World War” (77).

Paraphrasing and Summarizing

• You **must** include an in-text citation even if you paraphrase or summarize.

• Place your citation at the end of the *sentence* when you paraphrase.

• Place your citation at the end of the *paragraph* when you summarize.

• Failing to cite your paraphrase or summary is plagiarism.
Examples of in-text citations

• Wordsworth argued that Romantic poetry is signified by a “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (263).

• Romantic poetry is characterized by the “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings” (Wordsworth 263).

• Wordsworth extensively explored the role of emotion in the creative process (263).

According to First Lady Michelle Obama, the power of an artistic performance can be diplomatic: “That's the beauty of arts and culture, music and dance. It's a universal voice” (qtd. in Brown).

Block Quotes

• Only use a block quote when the quote is more than four lines long in your paper (that’s five lines long minimum).

• Use block quotes sparingly.

• Most block quotes can be reduced. Only quote the most important information that is absolutely necessary for understanding.

• Try paraphrasing or summarizing instead.
Citing a Block Quote

• Block quotes are formatted differently than in-text quotes:
  • Set quote off by a left indent (do not center).
  • Double space quote.
  • Do not use quotation marks.
  • Final punctuation goes before the citation.
Grammarian and author Joseph Williams argues sentence length and variation are important:

Those who can write individually clear and concise sentences have achieved a good deal, and much more if they can assemble them into coherent passages. But a writer who can’t write clear sentences longer than twenty words or so is like a composer who can write only short jingles. No one can communicate complex ideas in short sentences alone, so you have to know how to assemble a sentence long and complex enough to express complex ideas, but still clear enough to be read easily. (166)
Too Much? Reduce for Clarity

When discussing sentence length and variation, grammarian and author Joseph Williams argues that “no one can communicate complex ideas in short sentences alone, so you have to know how to assemble a sentence long and complex enough to express complex ideas, but still clear enough to be read easily” (166).


The hanging indent is used so that you can tell what is supposed to go in the text or in the parentheses.
Contact Us!

• Our Website:
  • www.untdallas.edu/writingcenter

• Our Email:
  • untdwritingcenter@unt.edu

• Like Us on Facebook:
  • www.facebook.com/UNTDWritingCenter

• YouTube, Blog, and Twitter coming soon!