

COMMUNICATION SKILLS CENTER

ROOM 208, HARRINGTON LEARNING CENTER (508) 854-7488 CSCINFO@QCC.MASS.EDU

Working with MLA Formatting in a Microsoft Word Document

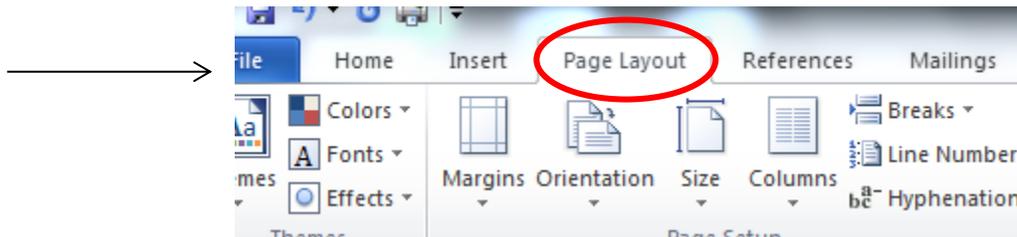
Note: These instructions are compatible to **Microsoft Word 2010**. Most of the instructions are the same if you use a later or earlier version, but there may be a few minor differences between each.

I. Setting Up the Document. To avoid problems in formatting while composing your document, establish the correct settings before you begin typing.

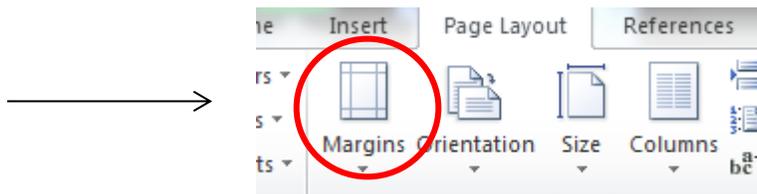
A. Setting the Margins

The margins for an MLA-formatted paper should be **one inch on all sides**.

1. To check or format the margins, click on the Page Layout tab on the toolbar at the top of the document.



2. Click on the button labeled "Margins."



3. A list of options will appear. If it is not already selected, choose the option that is labeled one inch (1") on every side (top, bottom, left, right). Your margins are now all one inch on every side.

B. Setting the Spacing

MLA-formatted papers are **double-spaced**, unless your instructor requires otherwise.

1. To set the spacing, click on the spacing button in the center of the Toolbar.

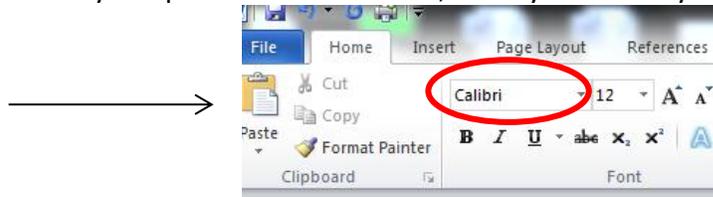


When you click the button, a list of spacing options should appear: 1.0, 1.15, 1.5, etc. Click on “2.0.” This will double-space your document.

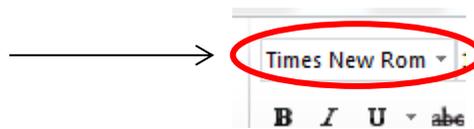
C. Setting the Font Style and Size

MLA-formatted papers are written in the font style **Times New Roman** and the font size **12**, unless your instructor requires otherwise.

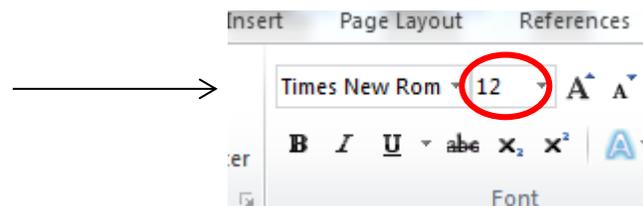
1. To set the font style, on the Toolbar, there is a white box with the name of the font style. When you open a new document, the style is usually set to “Calibri.”



2. To change the style of your text, left click once on the small arrow right next to the style name. A list of style names will appear. Find the font style that you would like to use and click on it once. Your text is now set at that style.



3. On the Toolbar, directly to the right of the font style box, there is a small box with a number in it. This is the **font size box**. When you open a new document, the size is usually set to 11. To change the size of your text, click once on the small arrow right next to the number. A list of numbers will appear. Click once on the number of the font you would like to use. Your text is now set at that size.

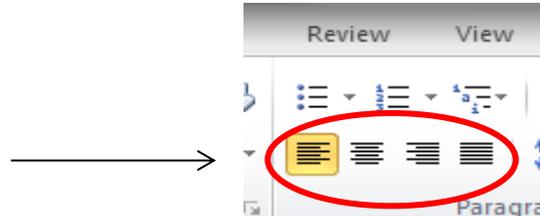


II. Creating Headings. MLA papers require both a single heading on the left side of the first page, and your last name and a page number on the right side of every page.

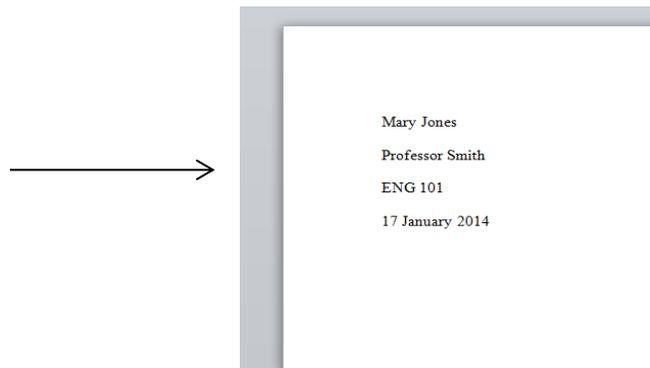
A. Creating an MLA-Formatted First Page Block Heading

MLA-formatted papers require a block heading on the first page that includes your name, your instructor’s name, the name of your class, and the date.

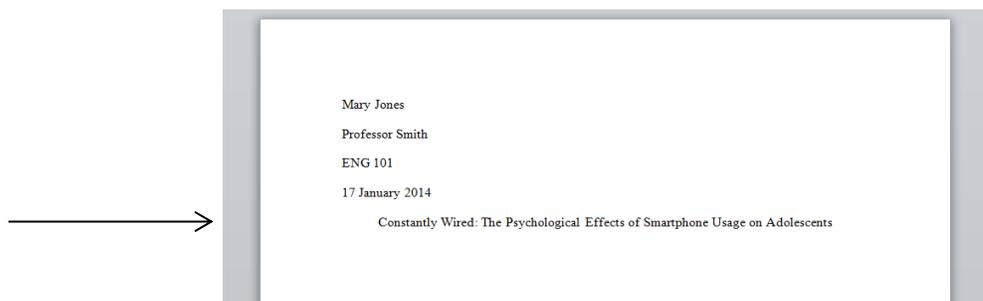
1. To begin your heading, first ensure that your paper is left-aligned. **Alignment** is the way the text is positioned on the page. Most documents, including headings, are **left aligned**, meaning they begin from the left. To change the alignment of your text, place the cursor next to the text you want to align. On the Toolbar in the “Paragraph” box, there are three buttons with small lines in them. Click once on the button to the far left.



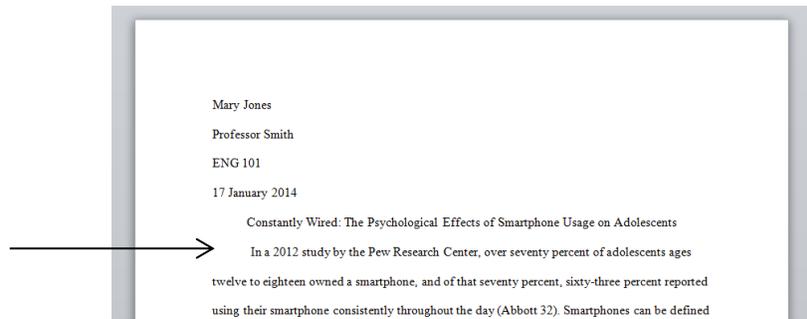
2. Type your name and hit Enter. Then type your professor’s name and hit enter. Then type your course name and hit Enter. Finally, type the date and hit Enter. Your first-page heading is now complete.



3. MLA-formatted papers also require a title directly beneath the first-page heading in the center of the page. To create your title, first center-align your cursor, following step 1 above. Then type your title and hit Enter.



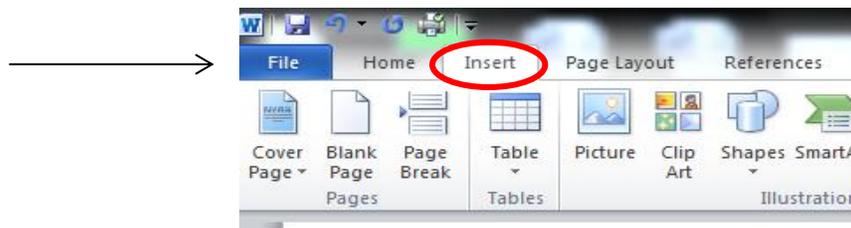
4. MLA-formatted papers require you to begin typing the body of your paper directly beneath the title. To begin typing the body of your paper, left-align your cursor following step 1 above. Then hit Tab on the keyboard. This properly indents your first paragraph. Hit Tab to indent all subsequent paragraphs in your paper.



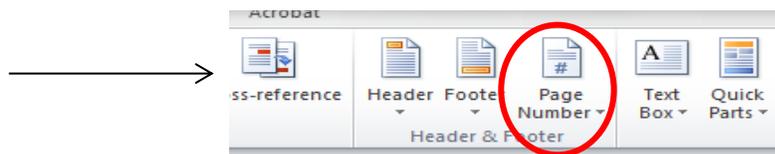
B. Inserting MLA-Formatted Page Numbers

MLA-formatted papers require **your last name and the page number at the top right corner of every page, including the first page and the Works Cited page, if you have one.**

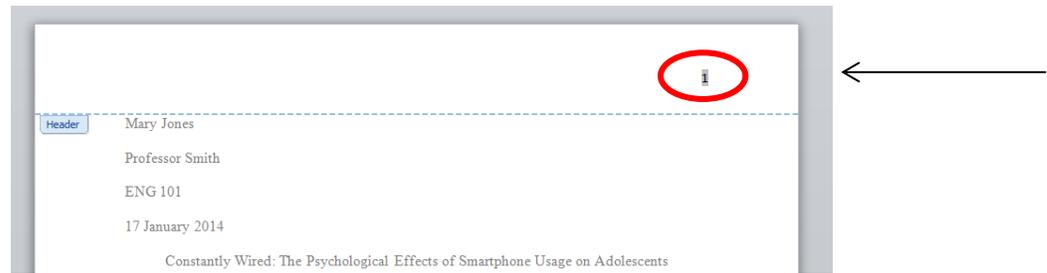
1. To insert page numbers, on the very top of the document, right above the Toolbar, there is a list of menu options, beginning with “Home.” To insert page numbers into your document, click on the option labeled “Insert.”



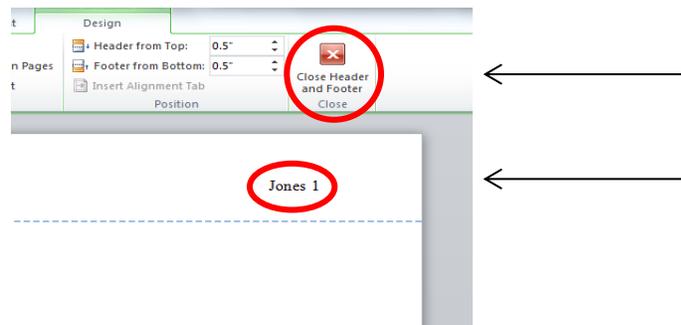
2. A menu of option boxes will appear under it. The fifth option box is titled “Header & Footer.” In that box, there is an option called “Page Number.” Click it once. **Note: Do not click “Header.” The Header will not insert the page numbers correctly.**



3. A menu will appear for you to select where you want to place your page number. Click on the first option that is listed, labeled “Top of the Page.” Another option menu will appear, listing three options: “Plain Number 1,” “Plain Number 2,” and “Plain Number 3.” These correspond to the left, center, and right positions on the page. Click on “Plain Number 3.” That will position your page numbers on the right side of the page. The page numbers should now be listed on the pages of your document. They are manually numbered for you (1,2,3, etc.); you do not have to repeat this process again for every page.



4. To insert your last name, place the cursor in front of the page number and type your last name followed by a space. Then click on the red X in the toolbar labeled “Close Header and Footer.” Your last name and the proper page number should now appear on every page.

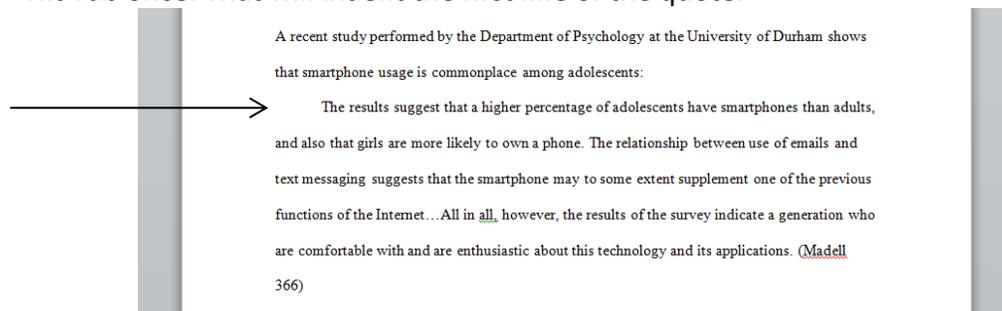


III. Formatting Lengthy Quotes and the Works Cited Page

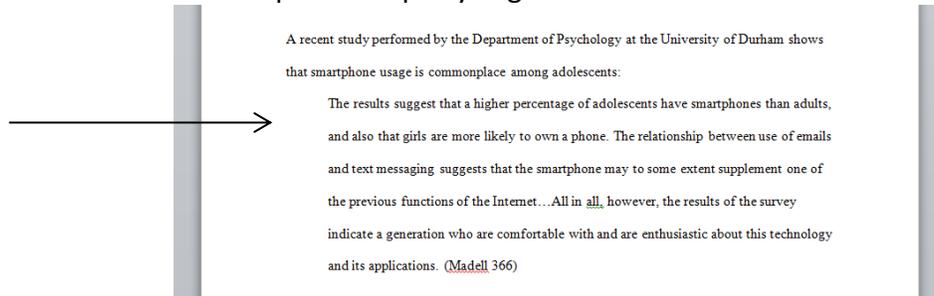
A. Formatting Quotes or Research More than Four Typed Lines

In MLA-formatted papers, any direct quote from your research that is four or more lines long when typed in the paper requires **blocking**. This means that the quote must begin on a separate line and be indented.

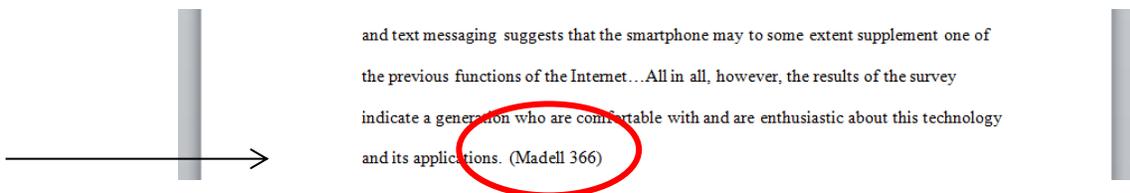
1. After the quote is fully typed in the paper, place the cursor at the start of the quote and hit Enter.
2. Hit Tab once. That will indent the first line of the quote.



3. Place the cursor in front of the second line of the quote and hit Enter. This should align the second line with the first line of the quote. This may also automatically align the remainder of the lines of the quote. If it does not, repeat step 3 for each line until the entire quote is equally aligned.



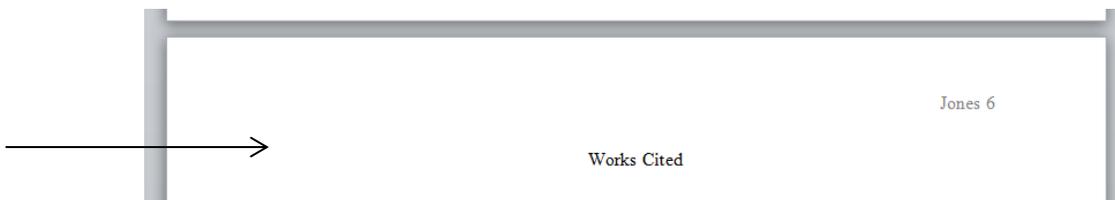
4. You do not need to insert quotation marks for blocked quotes. The punctuation mark should come at the end of the quote, and your citation will follow after the punctuation mark.



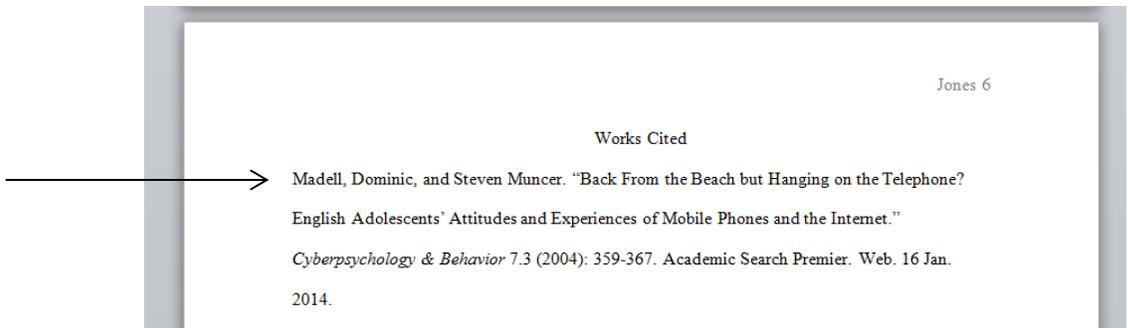
B. Creating an MLA-Formatted Works Cited Page

An MLA-formatted Works Cited page is the final page of an MLA-formatted research paper. It is separate from the final page of text, even if the final page of your paper is not entirely filled with text.

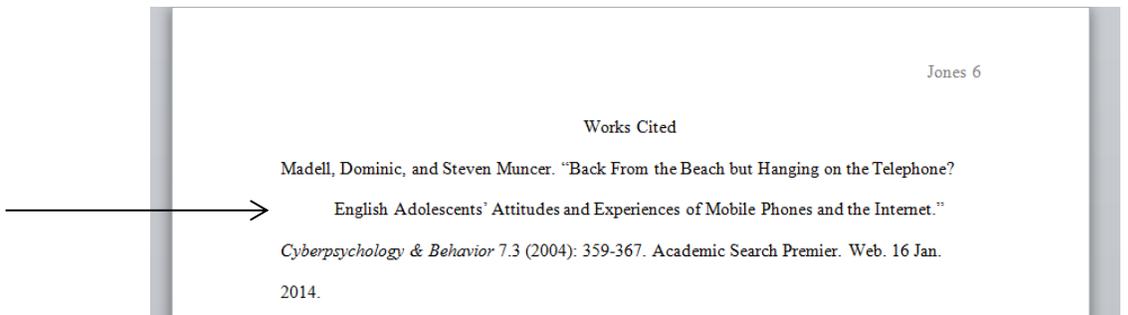
1. To set up your Works Cited page, center align the text. Write "Works Cited" at the top of the page and hit Enter.



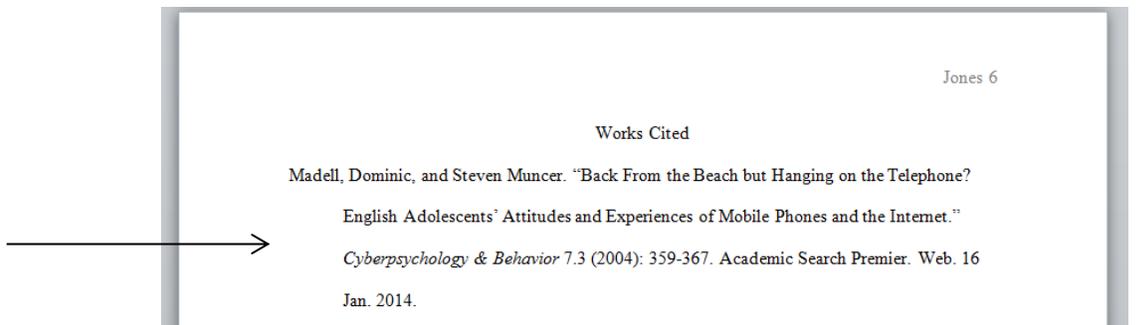
2. Left align the text. Write your first entry in its entirety.



3. If the entry is made up of more than one line, you will need to indent all subsequent lines after the first one. Place the cursor in front of the second line. Hit Enter and then Tab. The text should indent itself.



4. Follow step 3 for the subsequent lines. In some cases, you may only have to hit Enter and the line may position itself correctly.



Follow steps 2-4 for all subsequent Works Cited entries.