**How to cite an article in a database (MLA)**

How to cite an article from a database in MLA Style. Say you were doing research on southern US literature, and a database search reveals an unexpected connection between Edgar Allan Poe and South Carolina. You want to use ideas from an article about Poe's influence on the southern imagination in your research project, so you need to tell readers where you found the information.

First, let's look at the elements you need to cite the article in MLA Style and where you can find them. Usually, you can find most of the information on the first page of the article or in the journal's table of contents. Here are the authors, and this is the title of the article, the title of the journal, the volume and issue numbers, the date of the issue, and the page numbers. You'll need the name of the database too. Look for it on your initial search screen, or see if there's a link on the article page.

You also need a Web address for the article, ideally a DOI, (or a digital object identifier) or a stable URL or permalink. This article has both a DOI and a stable URL. The DOI is preferred, so you'll use that.

Now that you know where to find the information, let's look at how to arrange the elements of the works cited entry. Begin with the author. Put the last name first, followed by a comma and the first name. If there are two authors, put the second author's first name first. Next, add the title of the article in quotation marks. Then, give the journal title, italicized, the volume and issue numbers, and the date.

Use the complete date the way it's given in the source. It might be month, day, and year, or it might be season and year, as here, or it might just be the year. Abbreviate volume and number. Abbreviate all months except May, June, and July. Seasons, like summer, are not abbreviated. If a day and month were given, you would put the day first before the month.

If the page numbers are given in the source, they go next, and with the name of the database, italicized, and the DOI for the article. If a database does not give a DOI, use the URL for the article. Some URLs, however, are very long and may be hard for readers to return to. In such cases, you may be able to just use the first part of the URL. Check with your instructor.

Once you've put all the elements in the right order, be sure to double check your punctuation. Put a comma after the first author and a period after the last author. Put the title of the article in quotation marks. Put a period inside the closing quotation mark. Put the title of the journal in italics, with commas separating the title, volume, issue, date, put a period after the page numbers. Put the title of the database in italics, and follow it with a comma. After the DOI, end the entry with a period.

Finally, when you add this citation to your works cited list, be sure to set up a hanging indent that indents each line after the first one. And that's how to cite an article from a database in MLA style. If you have more questions about MLA style, consult your handbook’s MLA documentation section.