

Student Name

Instructor Name

Class Title

Day Month Year (27 August 2007)

Your Creative Title Here

You want me to be happy, right? (I am sure it is high on your list of priorities!) Here's a way to not only do that, but appease future English instructors (not to mention any other instructor in the humanities) by putting all typewritten papers in MLA format. (MLA stands for the Modern Language Association, an organization of teachers and scholars formed over a century ago whose goal was not to make your life miserable, but to facilitate the inclusion of modern languages in academia alongside those other snazzy, established languages, like Latin and Greek.) It is one of the simplest ways to make a good first impression and requires nothing more than learning a few simple rules.

First of all, always use a normal, 12-point font. Times New Roman, which I'm using here, is a safe bet, throughout your paper. Use the same font and size consistently throughout your paper – no big fonts for titles, no **bold** words for emphasis (or titles) and no **FANCY FONTS** for fun or to be *cutesy* ☺. Underlines should only be used for titles of certain works, like books and movie titles. (Quotation marks should be used for titles of smaller works, such as poems, song titles, and short stories.) The rules may vary depending on the work in question, so consult your instructor for any other concerns.

Second, double space your document consistently from beginning to end. Do not add extra lines before or after a title or between paragraphs; do not single space the

block or indented quotes (more information about this is also available in most grammar books). Double space everything. In Word, you set the spacing by looking under the “Format” window and choosing “Paragraph.” Find the box that says “Line Spacing” and set it to “Double” (This can be done after you have completed the paper, also, by going to “Edit” then “Select All” and then resetting the line spacing.) Margins should be one inch all the way around the paper (go to “File” then “Page Setup”).

Finally, remember to set a header, which is your last name and the page number on the top right hand corner of each and every page, half an inch from the top margin. In Word, go to “View” and select “Header and Footer.” Click the right-justify box, and then type in your last name and a space. Do not type in a page number. Instead, click the little box with #. This will automatically number your pages. There are other plenty of other aspects to MLA format (such as use of numbers, quotes, and citations), which we will discuss in the coming weeks.

Following these simple steps will not only allow you to present your papers in a recognizable, professional format, but also give you countless hours of enjoyment.