

Your Name

Teacher's Name

Class Title

Day Month Year (i.e. 22 December 2013)

MLA Guidelines for Formatting an Essay

This paper describes how to use Microsoft Word to set up the MLA format for an essay. If you look at the top of a Word document, you'll notice different tabs: "Home," "Insert," "Page Layout," etc. To properly format a paper, you will need to click on the various tabs and the groups within these tabs.

Before you start typing, it is a good idea to set up the proper MLA format for your document. The entire document **must be double-spaced, in Times New Roman size 12 font,**

and have one-inch margins. First, set the spacing by going to the Home Tab, clicking on the "Line and Paragraph Spacing" button in the "Paragraph" group, and choosing "2.0" (Fig. 1). You'll also need to

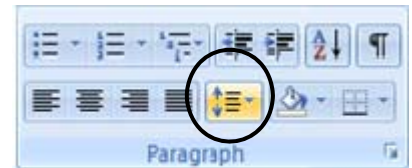


Fig. 1

remove additional spaces in between paragraphs by clicking on the "Line and Paragraph Spacing" button again and clicking "Remove Space After Paragraph."

Next, set the font by selecting "Times New Roman" in the "Font" group

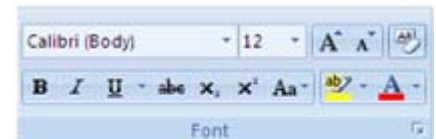


Fig. 2

of the Home tab; then, set the size by selecting "12" in the "Font" group of the Home tab (Fig.

2). Lastly, set the one-inch margins by going to the Page Layout tab,

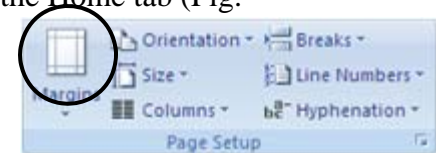


Fig. 3

clicking on the "Margins" button in the Page Setup group (Fig. 3), and

choosing "Normal." If you followed these three steps, the format for your essay is almost complete.

Over →

The next step is typing Your Name, Teacher’s Name, Class Title and Date, as they appear in the sample on the first page (this is called a Heading). After the date, press enter, and type your title. To center your title, go to the Home tab and click on the “Center” button in the Paragraph group (Fig. 4). Do not

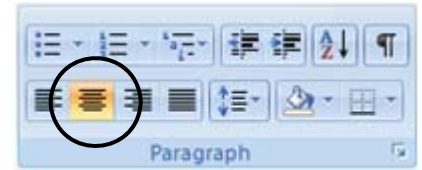


Fig. 4

use quotation marks, bold, or italics for your title. However, you will need to capitalize the first letter of every word except words like *for*, *a*, and *the*, unless it is the first word in the title. After typing your title, press enter once (make sure not to add any extra line spaces before or after the title; your heading and title should look exactly like the sample on this handout). Before you start typing the essay, realign your typing to the left by pressing the “Align Left” button on the Paragraph group. You will also need to press the Tab key on the keyboard once to create the necessary indent.

The final step is to create a header with your Last Name and page number so that these appear on every page. To do this, click on the Insert tab, and then click on the “Page Number” button in the “Header and Footer” group (Fig. 5). Choose



Fig. 5

“Top of the Page” and click on “Plain Number 3” to have the page number inserted in the upper right margin of every page. When a highlighted page number appears at the top right of the page, type in your last name and press the space bar once to create a space between your last name and the page number. Now all you need to do is close out of the Header & Footer by clicking “Close Header and Footer” in the upper right corner (Fig. 6), or by double clicking anywhere on the page other than the header.

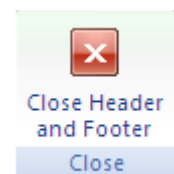


Fig. 6