

# MLA WORKS CITED: PHOTOGRAPHS / VISUAL ART

How to reference artwork as a source and as an illustration

How you use your photograph or work of visual art will determine how you document it. You can reference a photo or work of art as **information** or use them as an **illustration**.

## A PHOTO / WORK OF ART USED AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION:

- The entry will vary depending on whether you viewed the item in person, at a museum or gallery, or in a book, in an online database, or on a website.
- The date, medium, location, and similar details may be included—whatever seems relevant.
- In-text citations can include just the artist's name (**Da Vinci**). Add page numbers if the image was taken from a book. Use the artist's name, not the author or editor (**Da Vinci 241**).

### At a museum, gallery, or exhibit:

Garvis, Albert. *Mill at Midday*. 1951, oil on wood, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, permanent collection.

- If the photo or work of art is **untitled**, briefly describe what the photo contains.

Notman, William. *Ships in Montreal harbour*. Late 19th century, black-and-white photograph, McCord Museum. Montreal.

### In a book:

Banks, Josiah. *Cape Spear*. 1939. Oil on canvas. Private collection. *The Works of Josiah Wood*, edited by Susan Tully, Cornell UP, 1971, plate 54.

Gates, Sam. *April Sunset*. 2010, photograph. *Images of Canada*. 3rd ed., compiled by George Green, Macmillan, 1966, p. 17.

### In an online database or on a website:

Harris, Elaine B. *Icarus*. 1949, watercolour. *ArtzMatrix*, [www.artzmatrix.org/ebh/icar/71.0](http://www.artzmatrix.org/ebh/icar/71.0).

- When the artist uses a username instead of their real name, spell it exactly as it appears online.

puffin@sea. *Fishing Village*. 2012, photograph. Flickr, [www.flickr.com/puffin@sea/28314pt/12-08-16](http://www.flickr.com/puffin@sea/28314pt/12-08-16).

- If the user who uploaded the image is important for your research, include them in the reference.

Manoleas, Stefanos. *Photo of the Akropolis, Athens, black and white*. *Twitter*, uploaded by Zbiggi [@wojtysiak22]. 8 Jul. 2022, <https://twitter.com/wojtysiak22/status/1545492280257249280>.



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Continued

## USING A PHOTO OR WORK OF ART AS AN ILLUSTRATION:

- If you provide a full reference in the illustration's caption, you do not need to include it in your Works Cited. A shorter caption can be used to point to a complete Works Cited entry.
- Reproduce the image in the body of your paper, close to the discussion that relates to it.
- Label it as **Figure 1** and refer the reader to it in your text.
- Under the image, write a caption with the same reference number ("Fig. 1."). Captions should be double-spaced. **You may include the date, medium, location, etc.** You may also add comments of your own at the end.

## SHORT CAPTION:

### Photo of a work of art found in a book



Fig. 1. Elizabeth Cooper, *Yew Trees at Dawn*, acrylic on canvas, 1985.

### Works Cited page:

Cooper, Elizabeth. *Yew Trees at Dawn*. *Contemporary Landscapes*, edited by Lewis Hertz, Hindman Press, 1995, p. 55.

## FULL REFERENCE CAPTION:

### Untitled photo found in a book



Fig. 2. Fishermen and their boat, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. Early twentieth century. *Cast Your Nets*, by James Spracklin, Memorial UP, 1980, p. 67.

### Photo found online; comment added



Fig. 3. Thomas Hurlburt, *Cluttered Room*, photograph, 2010. *Instagram*, [www.instagram.com/thomas-hurlburt/736525](http://www.instagram.com/thomas-hurlburt/736525). Note Hurlburt's effective use of a wide-angle lens.

### Photo of a work of art found online



Fig. 4. Rana Adiga, Photograph of *The Lazar House* by William Blake, black ink and watercolour, 1795. *PicGallery*, [www.picgallery.org/wb/lazar-house/6592.op7/](http://www.picgallery.org/wb/lazar-house/6592.op7/).

For more information, consult the *MLA Handbook* or contact the Academic Skills Centre.