# MLA page format: Quick Start for OpenOffice
*(Note: **Expand this page to full screen** for best viewing.)*

1. Open a new OpenOffice text document.
2. Make 1-inch margins all around (Format / Page / Margins). For some reason OpenOffice usually defaults to .79" all around, but 1" is preferred.
3. Select either Times New Roman or Arial font (not **bold**, not *italic*), 12-point size. Use the selectors on the toolbar, or click Format / Character.
4. Make everything double-spaced.
    a. If you've already started typing, select everything by hitting CTRL-A.
    b. Format / Paragraph / Line spacing / Double.

5. Make a header, even if it's only one page – just to get in the habit.
   a. Choose the "Insert" tab, move cursor to "Header," then click on "Default."
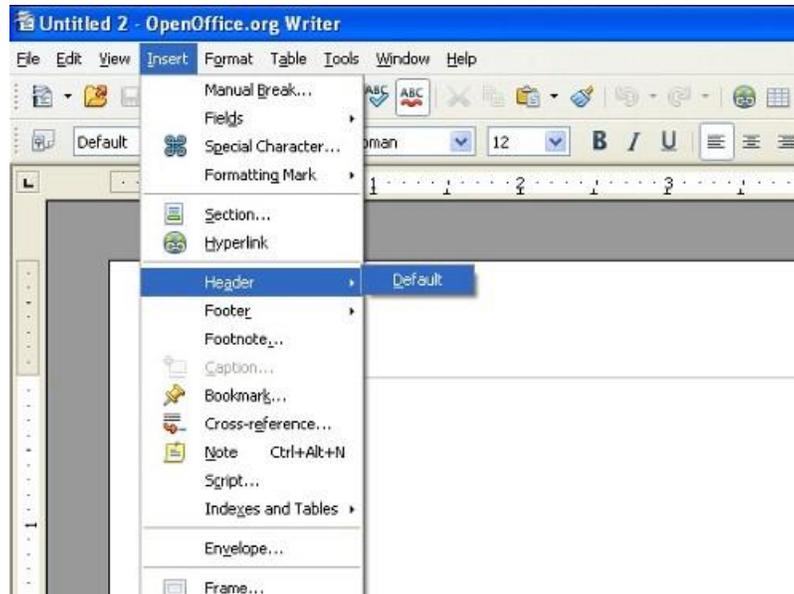
   b. Click the "Align Right" button.
   c. Type your last name and a space.
   d. Click Insert / Fields / Page Number.
   e. Click outside the header and into the text area.
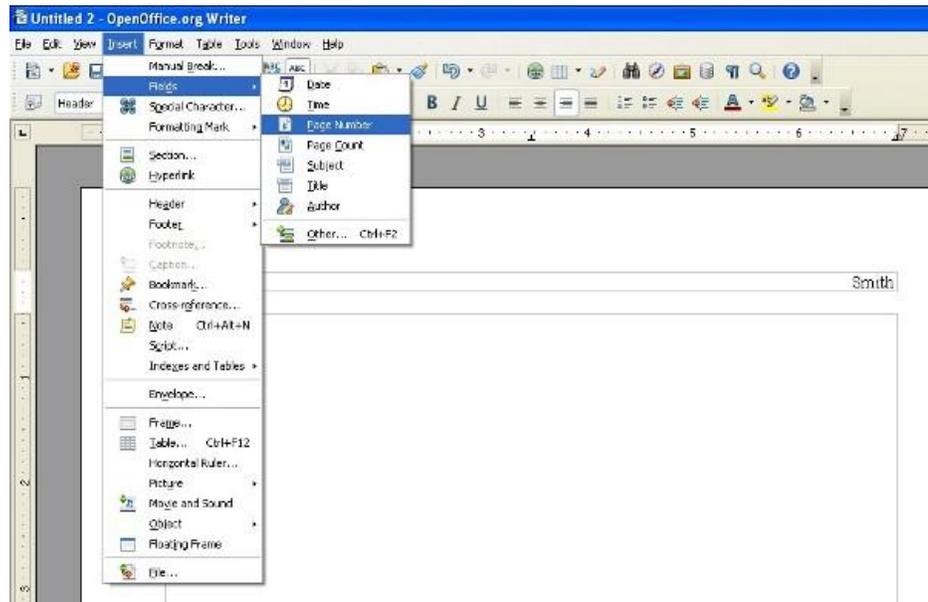
6. In the upper left of the page, type each of these on its own line: your name, Instructor Whoever, class and section number, and the date.
7. On the next line after the date, center the title.
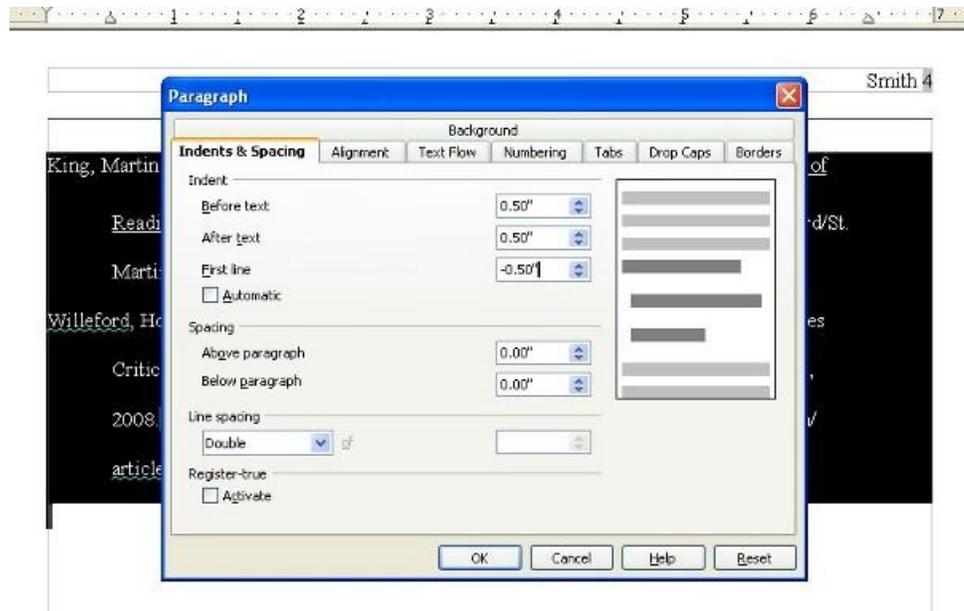8. On the next line after that, justify left, tab in ½" and start typing.

Leave no blank lines until the end of your paper.

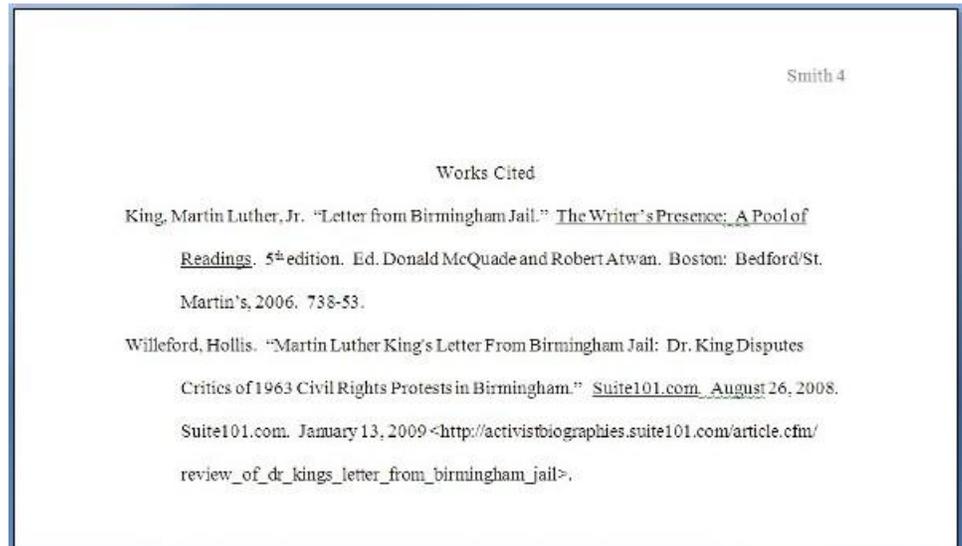Soon your paper should look like the one at right. →
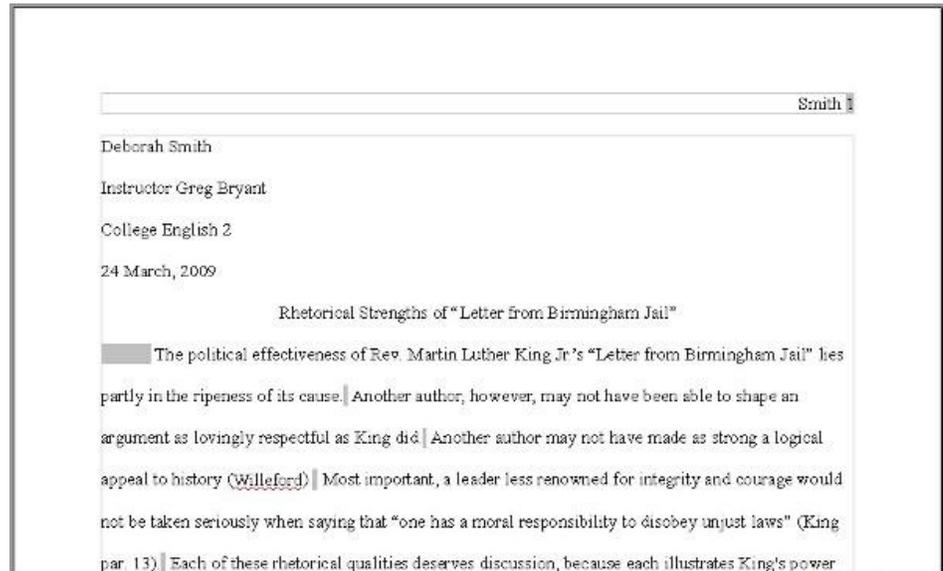
After the paper, if there are outside sources to list, do this:

1. Leave a few blank lines (Enter-Enter-Enter) or create a new page (CTRL-Enter).
2. Center the words "Works Cited" (without the quotation marks).
3. On the next line, left justify, and define a "Hanging indent" paragraph style like this: Click Format / paragraph, then choose the Indents & Spacing tab. Beside "Before text" put 0.5, "After text" 0.5, and "First line" -0.5 (see figure at right).

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College English 2

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Rhetorical Strengths of "Letter from Birmingham Jail"

The political effectiveness of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail" lies partly in the ripeness of its cause. Another author, however, may not have been able to shape an argument as lovingly respectful as King did. Another author may not have made as strong a logical appeal to history (Willeford). Most important, a leader less renowned for integrity and courage would not be taken seriously when saying that "one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws" (King par. 13). Each of these rhetorical qualities deserves discussion, because each illustrates King's power

King, Martin

Readi

Marti

Willeford, Ho

Critic

2008.

article

Paragraph

Background

Indents & Spacing | Alignment | Text Flow | Numbering | Tabs | Drop Caps | Borders

Indent

Before text — 0.50"

After text — 0.50"

First line — -0.50"

☐ Automatic

Spacing

Above paragraph — 0.00"

Below paragraph — 0.00"

Line spacing

Double — of

Register-true

☐ Activate

OK | Cancel | Help | Reset

4. Create the list of sources according to the MLA format described in *Pocket Keys for Writers,* Ann Raimes. (Another good resource is the online Citation Machine. There are others, too.)
5. Alphabetize the list.

Your Works Cited page should look like the one at right. →

Works Cited

King, Martin Luther, Jr. "Letter from Birmingham Jail." The Writer's Presence: A Pool of
    Readings. 5th edition. Ed. Donald McQuade and Robert Atwan. Boston: Bedford/St.
    Martin's, 2006. 738-53.

Willeford, Hollis. "Martin Luther King's Letter From Birmingham Jail: Dr. King Disputes
    Critics of 1963 Civil Rights Protests in Birmingham." Suite101.com. August 26, 2008.
    Suite101.com. January 13, 2009 <http://activistbiographies.suite101.com/article.cfm/
    review_of_dr_kings_letter_from_birmingham_jail>.

Other notes:
- You can slip a line break into a URL after any slash (except the double-slash after http://) just by hitting "Shift-Enter." This keeps the paragraph wrapping with the "hanging" indent while it breaks the URL into chunks that fit on the line. See the "Willeford" example on the Works Cited page above.
- Protect yourself from plagiarism:
  - Keep a list of all your sources by building your "Works Cited" as you work, at the bottom of your document.
  - Insert the in-text citations as you go. See the examples on the first-page example above.
  - If you use other people's words, put them in quotation marks.
  - Cite and list every source, even if you only borrowed other people's ideas and put them into your own words.
  - You can cite a source either by page number (King 743) or by paragraph number (King par. 13).