How to Format an MLA Document
MLA Style in Microsoft Word

Use these “How To” tips to properly format your paper in accordance with MLA formatting (though there are multiple ways to accomplish these tasks). These tips are for Microsoft Word programs from 2007 and later.

 Set 1” Margins: Page Layout > Margins > Choose “Normal” Margins
[make sure all margins (Top, Bottom, Left, Right) are set at 1” (this should be the default)]

 Set 12-Point Font: Home > Font > Select “12” for font size and “Times New Roman” for font style > Click OK when done

 Double Space all text in the document: Home or Page Layout > Paragraph > Line Spacing: Double > Spacing Before and After: 0 pt. > click OK when done
[If you do not do this, you will have unnecessary extra spacing between paragraphs, which is not MLA formatting, so points will be deducted.]

 Insert Page Headers = Last Name and Page # (top, right corner of every page): Insert > Page Number > Top of Page > Plain #3 > Once the page number is set in the header area, type your last name to the left of the page number (using proper capitalization) > Add a space between your last name and the page number. (Select the text in the header by holding down the left mouse button and dragging your cursor across the text. Use the Font section in the Home tab to change the text to Times New Roman and 12-point font.)

 Format an MLA-style 4-line Heading (top, left corner of first page only, double spaced text):

Example:
John Doe [student’s name]
Professor Smith [instructor’s name, with title]
ENC 1101-02M [course and section number]
4 April 2016 [assignment’s due date, inverted format]

 Add a Title to every Document: Centered (between the heading and first paragraph), add a Title to every document (usually using a creative title for writing assignments). Appropriately capitalize all key words in the title; do not italicize, quote, bold, or underline your title. Do not add extra blank lines/spacing before or after the title; per MLA guidelines, use even and consistent double spacing throughout the entire paper.

 Check Word Count: At the bottom, left of the screen, you will see “Words” and the number which represents your overall Word Count. If you want to know the Word Count for only a certain portion, highlight only that text, and then you will see 2 numbers: The first number tells you the number of words in the highlighted section; the second number tells you the word count of the entire document.

 Works Cited page [programmed in the same place where you set the Double Spacing]: Home or Page Layout > Paragraph > Make sure the document is still set up for double spacing (as above), as the Works Cited page should also be evenly and consistently double spaced (with no extra lines/spacing between entries) > In the “Indentation” section, in the drop down box for “Special,” choose “Hanging” > Click OK. ➔ As you now type your entries on your Works Cited page, everything will format correctly for you with what is called a “Hanging Indentation” for your Works Cited page.

Keep in mind, if you have typed your Works Cited page, but you have forgotten to set up the Hanging Indentation, you can still fix it: Highlight the entries that need the Hanging Indentation applied, and then follow the steps noted above so that the highlighted passage will be formatted with a Hanging Indentation.