

chicago citation examples for plays

chicago citation examples for plays are crucial for academic integrity and allow readers to locate and verify your sources. Properly citing theatrical works ensures that you give credit to the playwrights, producers, and publishers involved in bringing a play to life. This article will provide a comprehensive guide to Chicago style citation for various types of plays, covering both in-text citations and bibliography entries, and will delve into specific examples for published plays, unpublished scripts, and even live performances. Mastering these citation methods is essential for students, researchers, and anyone working with dramatic literature.

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Understanding Chicago Style for Plays

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) offers a robust framework for citing sources across various disciplines. When it comes to theatrical works, CMOS provides specific guidelines to ensure clarity and consistency. The primary goal is to enable your readers to easily identify the exact play you are referencing and to locate the specific edition or performance. This involves detailing key information such as the playwright, the title of the play, publication details, and, for live performances, the venue and date. Adhering to these conventions demonstrates meticulous research and respect for intellectual property.

Chicago style, particularly in its notes-bibliography system, requires two primary components: in-text citations (usually footnotes or endnotes) and a bibliography. For plays, these components work together to provide complete source attribution. The bibliography lists all the works consulted, while the in-text notes offer specific pointers to the location of the information within those sources. Understanding the nuances of each element is key to effective academic writing.

Citing Published Plays in Chicago Style

Citing a published play is one of the most common scenarios. The key is to accurately represent the information as it appears on the title page and copyright page of the specific edition you are using. Different editions might have varying introductions, notes, or even textual variations, so citing the exact edition is vital.

Bibliography Entry for a Published Play

The standard format for a published play in the bibliography follows a pattern that includes the author's name, the title of the play, and publication details. The author's full name is listed first, followed by the title of the play in italics. Subsequent information includes the place of publication, the publisher, and the year of publication.

- Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Play*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year.

For example, if you are citing William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* from a specific edition:

- Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. Edited by Harold Jenkins. The Arden Shakespeare. London: Arden Shakespeare, 1982.

When a play is published as part of a collection or anthology, the citation needs to reflect this. You would include the title of the collection and the page numbers where the play can be found. The format for a play within an anthology is slightly different, often including the editor of the anthology and the collection's publication details.

Citing Plays from Anthologies

When citing a play that appears in an anthology, the bibliography entry needs to acknowledge both the playwright and the editor or editors of the anthology. The playwright's work is listed first, followed by the title of the play. Then, the title of the anthology (in italics), followed by "edited by" and the editor's name, and finally, the publication details of the anthology, including page numbers.

- Playwright's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Play." In *Title of Anthology*, edited by Editor's Full Name, page numbers. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year.

An example for a play from an anthology:

- Miller, Arthur. "Death of a Salesman." In *American Drama: Seventeen Plays from the American Revolution to the Present*, edited by Arthur H. Scouten and G.R. Kernodle, 589-630. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1960.

Citing Unpublished Plays and Scripts

Unpublished plays, such as drafts or manuscripts held in archives, require a slightly different

citation approach. The emphasis here is on providing enough information for the reader to locate the manuscript, which might include archival information or the name of the holder of the manuscript.

Bibliography Entry for an Unpublished Play

For unpublished plays, you will typically provide the playwright's name, the title of the play, and a description of the material, including its location. If you accessed a manuscript from an archive or a special collection, you must indicate this clearly.

- Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Play*. Unpublished manuscript, Collection Name, Archive Name, Institution Name, Location.

A hypothetical example for an unpublished script:

- Williams, Tennessee. *The Glass Menagerie*. Revised draft, dated March 10, 1944. Typescript. Personal Papers of Tennessee Williams, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

If the unpublished play is available online through a digital archive or repository, you would include the URL and access date, similar to citing online sources.

Citing Live Performances in Chicago Style

Citing a live theatrical performance is distinct from citing a published text. Since performances are ephemeral and unique, the citation should capture the specific event. This includes the title of the play, the playwright, the director, the theatre company, the venue, and the date of the performance.

Bibliography Entry for a Live Performance

In the bibliography, a live performance is treated as a direct experience. You will list the playwright, the title of the play, and then provide details about the specific production you attended. This includes the director, the theatre company, the name of the theatre, and the date of the performance.

- Playwright's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Play*. Directed by Director's Full Name. Performed by Theatre Company Name at Theatre Name, City, State. Date of Performance.

An example of citing a live performance:

- O'Neill, Eugene. *Long Day's Journey into Night*. Directed by Robert Falls. Performed by the

It is important to note that these types of citations are less common in traditional academic papers unless the analysis of the performance itself is a central focus of the research.

In-Text Citations for Plays

In-text citations in Chicago style (notes-bibliography system) are typically handled through footnotes or endnotes. These notes provide a concise reference to the source and often direct the reader to a full bibliographic entry. For plays, the note should include the playwright's last name, the play title (often abbreviated after the first full citation), and the act, scene, and line numbers, or page numbers depending on the edition and type of play.

Footnote/Endnote for a Published Play

The first time you cite a particular play in your text, your footnote or endnote should be comprehensive. Subsequent citations can be shortened. The note will typically reference the author, title, and the specific location within the text (act, scene, line numbers for older plays, or page numbers for modern plays).

- First citation: Playwright's First Name Last Name, *Title of Play*, Act.Scene.Line (or Page Number), in Edition Details.
- Subsequent citation: Playwright's Last Name, *Abbreviated Title*, Act.Scene.Line (or Page Number).

Example for Shakespeare:

1. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 3.1.56-58, in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans et al. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).
2. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 3.1.59.

Example for a modern play (using page numbers):

1. Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*, 45, in *Death of a Salesman: A Play in Two Acts and a Requiem* (New York: Viking Press, 1949).
2. Miller, *Death of a Salesman*, 52.

When citing unpublished manuscripts or live performances, the in-text citation would refer to the details provided in the bibliography entry, guiding the reader to the specific source from which the information was drawn.

Common Pitfalls and Best Practices for Play Citations

Several common mistakes can occur when citing plays. One frequent error is failing to specify the edition used, which can lead to confusion if different editions have textual variations. Another is not distinguishing between citing a published text and a live performance, each requiring different information.

To avoid these pitfalls, always:

- Use the most current edition of the Chicago Manual of Style.
- Be consistent in your citation format throughout your paper.
- Double-check all names, titles, publication dates, and page numbers.
- When in doubt, consult the official Chicago Manual of Style or your instructor for clarification.
- Ensure your in-text citations directly correspond to your bibliography entries.

Paying close attention to these details will ensure your research is credible and your work is easily verifiable by your readers, making the process of engaging with dramatic literature a more transparent and scholarly endeavor.

FAQ

Q: How do I cite a play that has been adapted into a film?

A: If your focus is on the play itself, you would cite the play as a published or unpublished work. If you are analyzing the film adaptation, you would cite the film according to Chicago style guidelines for audiovisual materials, including director, screenwriter, studio, and release year. It is often beneficial to cite both if discussing the relationship between the play and its cinematic interpretation.

Q: What if the play I am citing does not have a specific act or scene structure?

A: For plays that do not follow a traditional act/scene/line structure (e.g., some experimental or contemporary works), you would typically use page numbers from the edition you are consulting for your in-text citations and bibliography. Ensure you consistently use page numbers for all citations

from that particular text.

Q: Do I need to cite the director of the play if I am only analyzing the text?

A: If you are focusing solely on the published text of the play for your analysis, you generally do not need to include the director's name in your bibliography or in-text citations. The director's name is primarily relevant when citing or discussing a specific live performance.

Q: How do I cite multiple works by the same playwright in my bibliography?

A: When you have multiple works by the same author in your bibliography, you list them alphabetically by title. For subsequent works by the same author after the first entry, you can use a three-em dash (—) in place of the author's name to indicate repetition.

Q: What is the difference between citing a play in footnotes and in the bibliography?

A: Footnotes (or endnotes) provide brief citations within the text to indicate the source of specific information. They direct the reader to the full entry in the bibliography. The bibliography is a comprehensive list of all sources consulted and cited, presented in a standardized format at the end of the paper.

Q: How do I cite a play that has multiple authors?

A: For plays with two authors, list both names in the bibliography entry, connected by "and." For three or more authors, list the first author's name followed by "et al." (meaning "and others"). The first footnote/endnote would include all authors' names if there are two; for three or more, it would also use "et al." after the first author.

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