

chicago citation for music theory

Mastering the Chicago Citation for Music Theory

chicago citation for music theory is a crucial skill for academics, researchers, and students in the field, ensuring proper attribution and scholarly integrity. This comprehensive guide delves into the intricacies of the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) as it applies to citing musical sources, from scores and recordings to scholarly articles and books about music. Understanding these guidelines prevents plagiarism and allows readers to easily locate the original works that inform your analysis and arguments. We will explore the nuances of both the Notes-Bibliography and Author-Date systems, highlighting their applications within musicological contexts. Furthermore, this article will provide clear examples and practical advice for citing a wide array of music-related materials, empowering you to confidently present your research.

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Understanding the Chicago Manual of Style for Music Theory

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) is a widely adopted citation style in humanities and social sciences, and its principles are highly applicable to the study of music theory. It offers a flexible framework for presenting scholarly work, with two primary systems: the Notes-Bibliography system and the Author-Date system. For music theory, which often involves detailed analysis of specific musical works and scholarly discourse, the Notes-Bibliography system is frequently preferred due to its ability to accommodate lengthy citations and footnotes/endnotes that can include detailed textual commentary alongside bibliographic information. However, the Author-Date system also has its place, particularly in more empirically focused musicological research or when consistency with other disciplines in a multidisciplinary program is desired.

Regardless of the chosen system, the core principles remain the same:

accuracy, clarity, and consistency. When citing music theory materials, it is essential to be precise in identifying the specific edition of a score, the performers on a recording, or the publication details of a secondary source. The CMOS provides detailed instructions for nearly every conceivable type of source, and while music-specific examples are often found in dedicated musicology citation guides that adhere to CMOS principles, the general rules can be extrapolated and applied effectively. Familiarizing oneself with the latest edition of the CMOS is paramount for ensuring compliance with current academic standards.

The Purpose and Application of Chicago Style in Academia

The primary purpose of any citation style, including Chicago, is to acknowledge the intellectual contributions of others and to provide a verifiable trail for readers to follow. In music theory, this means meticulously citing the original composers, performers, editors, and scholars whose work forms the foundation of your own research. Failing to do so constitutes plagiarism, a serious academic offense. Beyond ethical considerations, proper citation enhances the credibility and authority of your work. It demonstrates that you have engaged with the relevant literature and are capable of situating your ideas within the broader scholarly conversation.

The application of Chicago style in music theory coursework and research spans a variety of formats. Undergraduate essays, graduate theses, conference papers, journal articles, and dissertations all require adherence to a consistent citation standard. While professors and institutions may sometimes specify a preferred citation style, Chicago is a common choice in music departments. Its flexibility allows for the detailed inclusion of performance practice details or specific analytical observations that might be cumbersome in other styles.

Navigating the Two Chicago Citation Systems

The Chicago Manual of Style offers two distinct systems for citing sources: Notes-Bibliography and Author-Date. The choice between them often depends on the specific discipline, the type of research being conducted, and institutional or publisher preferences. For music theory, the Notes-Bibliography system is particularly well-suited due to its capacity for extensive annotation in footnotes or endnotes, which can be invaluable for referencing specific musical passages, explaining analytical techniques, or providing supplementary information without disrupting the main flow of the text. The Author-Date system, on the other hand, is more concise and is often used in fields that require a quick glance at the source's publication date to understand its historical context, or in interdisciplinary work.

The Notes-Bibliography system uses numbered notes (either footnotes or endnotes) to refer readers to sources. Each note corresponds to a citation in a bibliography at the end of the work, which lists all sources cited. The Author-Date system, conversely, uses parenthetical citations in the text (Author, Year, Page) and a reference list at the end, which includes full bibliographic details for all sources cited. Both systems require meticulous attention to detail to ensure accuracy and avoid errors in citation.

The Notes-Bibliography System in Music Theory Citations

The Notes-Bibliography system is a cornerstone of scholarly communication in many humanities fields, including music theory. This system involves numbered notes, placed either at the bottom of each page (footnotes) or at the end of the document (endnotes), which correspond to superscript numbers within the text. Each note provides a citation for the source being referenced. At the end of the work, a bibliography lists all sources consulted and cited, offering a comprehensive overview of the research materials. This approach is particularly beneficial in music theory where detailed references to specific musical passages, variations in editions, or performance interpretations might require explanatory notes.

Using the Notes-Bibliography system effectively in music theory involves understanding how to adapt its general rules to the unique types of sources encountered in the discipline. This includes musical scores, recordings, scholarly articles, books, dissertations, and even lectures or presentations. The system's strength lies in its ability to provide both brief in-text references and more detailed explanations within the notes themselves, offering a rich context for the reader.

Crafting Footnotes and Endnotes for Music Theory Sources

When employing the Notes-Bibliography system for music theory, crafting clear and informative footnotes or endnotes is paramount. The first time a source is cited, the note should contain a full bibliographic description. Subsequent citations of the same source can be shortened, often using a "short-title" format, typically the author's last name and a shortened version of the title, along with the relevant page number or musical measure. For music theory, it is often crucial to include more than just the page number; for instance, referencing specific measures, musical examples, or even beat numbers within a complex rhythmic passage can be essential for scholarly precision.

A typical full note for a book might include the author's name, title (*italicized*), publication information, and the specific page number. For

musical scores, the composer, title of the work, opus or catalogue number, edition details, and the specific page or measure are vital. For recordings, details about the artist, album title, record label, and catalog number, alongside the specific track or excerpt being referenced, are necessary. The goal is to provide enough information for the reader to uniquely identify and locate the cited material.

Compiling a Comprehensive Music Theory Bibliography

The bibliography, which accompanies the notes, serves as a consolidated list of all sources cited in the paper, thesis, or book. It is typically organized alphabetically by the author's last name. In the Notes-Bibliography system, the bibliography entries often mirror the information provided in the full first notes, but they are presented in a slightly different format, usually with the author's last name preceding their first name. This alphabetical arrangement allows readers to quickly scan for specific authors and their contributions.

For music theory, the bibliography might include a diverse range of materials. This could range from complete editions of Bach's fugues to theoretical treatises by Schenker, analytical articles on contemporary jazz harmony, and critical reviews of new recordings. Ensuring that each entry is complete and accurately formatted according to CMOS guidelines is crucial for the overall professionalism and scholarly rigor of the work. A well-organized bibliography enhances the reader's ability to engage with your research by providing direct access to your source materials.

Citing Musical Scores Using Chicago Style

Citing musical scores accurately is fundamental for any music theory research. The Chicago Manual of Style provides guidelines that, when adapted for musical works, ensure that readers can identify the specific composition, edition, and location within the score being referenced. This precision is vital for analytical work, as different editions might contain varying editorial markings, performance suggestions, or even textual discrepancies. Whether you are citing a complete opera, a symphony, a solo piano piece, or a song, the details you include are crucial for scholarly integrity.

When citing scores, consider the composer, the title of the work, its opus or catalogue number, and importantly, the specific edition you are using. If the score is part of a larger collection or anthology, this information must also be included. For notes, referencing specific page numbers is standard, but for music theory analysis, it is often more precise and helpful to reference specific measures or even sections within a movement. This allows for direct identification of the musical material under discussion.

Essential Elements for Citing a Musical Composition

The essential elements for citing a musical composition under the Chicago Manual of Style, particularly when using the Notes-Bibliography system, include:

- The composer's full name.
- The title of the work, italicized (e.g., *Symphony No. 5*).
- The opus number or other standard catalogue number (e.g., Op. 67, BWV 248).
- The edition details, including the editor or arranger if applicable, and the publisher and year of publication.
- For notes, the specific page number and/or measure numbers being referenced.

For example, a footnote citation for Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5 in C minor*, Op. 67, might look something like this: Ludwig van Beethoven, *Symphony No. 5 in C minor*, Op. 67, ed. by Jonathan Del Mar (London: Bärenreiter, 2007), score p. 45, m. 1-8. The bibliography entry would follow a similar format but with the author's last name first: Beethoven, Ludwig van. *Symphony No. 5 in C minor*, Op. 67. Edited by Jonathan Del Mar. London: Bärenreiter, 2007.

Citing Different Types of Musical Scores

The principles for citing musical scores can be adapted for various formats. For vocal music, such as opera or art songs, it is important to note the librettist and any translators if those aspects are relevant to your analysis. For chamber music or orchestral works, the instrumentation might also be a relevant detail. When citing a specific movement within a larger work, you should clearly indicate this. For instance, if you are referencing the first movement of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5*, you would specify this alongside the work's overall title.

If you are citing from an online digital score, you will need to include the URL and the date you accessed the material, following the CMOS guidelines for electronic resources. This ensures that your reader can locate the digital version of the score, even if it is online. The key is to be as specific as possible, providing all necessary information for unambiguous identification of the musical material discussed.

Citing Sound Recordings in Music Theory Research

Sound recordings are indispensable resources for music theory research, providing direct access to performances that can be analyzed for their interpretive nuances, stylistic features, and historical context. Citing these recordings accurately using Chicago style is crucial for scholarly transparency and allows your audience to experience the specific performance you are referencing. Whether you are discussing the harmonic choices in a jazz improvisation, the rhythmic precision of an orchestral ensemble, or the vocal delivery in an opera, the recording details must be clearly presented.

The Chicago Manual of Style, while not always having music-specific examples for every possible scenario, offers a robust framework for citing audio-visual materials. The key is to capture the essential information that uniquely identifies the recording and the specific excerpt or performance being discussed. This includes the performers, the composers, the work itself, and the recording's production details.

Key Information for Citing Audio Recordings

When citing sound recordings in music theory, several key pieces of information are essential for a complete citation. These typically include:

- The names of the primary performers or ensembles.
- The composer of the music.
- The title of the specific work or track being cited.
- The album title (if applicable).
- The record label and catalog number.
- The year of the recording or the year of the album's release.
- For notes, the specific track number and time code or duration of the excerpt if needed.

For example, a footnote citation for a recording of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* might look like this: Igor Stravinsky, *The Rite of Spring*, performed by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Boulez, Deutsche Grammophon, 453 048-2, 1999, track 12, 0:30-1:45. The corresponding bibliography entry would be: Stravinsky, Igor. *The Rite of Spring*. Performed by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Boulez. Deutsche

Addressing Specific Recording Formats and Issues

The Chicago style accommodates various recording formats, including LPs, CDs, digital downloads, and streaming services. For digital recordings, include the URL and the date of access. If you are citing a specific interpretation or performance characteristic that is only apparent in a particular recording, be sure to highlight this. For instance, if the tempo of a specific passage in Mahler's Symphony No. 2 is crucial to your analytical point, citing the precise moments on the recording becomes vital.

Sometimes, recordings might have multiple conductors, soloists, or ensembles involved. In such cases, list the most prominent individuals or groups first and follow CMOS guidelines for listing additional credits. If you are referencing a compilation album or a live recording with audience noise or spoken introductions, these details might also be relevant depending on the focus of your analysis. The overarching principle is to provide enough information for your reader to find and listen to the exact performance you are discussing.

Citing Books and Articles About Music Theory

Beyond the musical works themselves and their recordings, music theory research heavily relies on scholarly books and articles. These secondary sources provide theoretical frameworks, historical context, critical analyses, and diverse perspectives that enrich your own arguments. The Chicago Manual of Style offers clear guidelines for citing these published works, ensuring that you properly attribute the ideas and research of others. Whether you are citing a foundational text on counterpoint or a recent article on post-tonal harmony, accuracy is key.

When citing books, the essential information includes the author's name, the full title of the book (*italicized*), the edition if not the first, the publisher, and the year of publication. For journal articles, you will need the author's name, the article title (in quotation marks), the journal title (*italicized*), the volume and issue numbers, and the page range of the article, followed by the publication year. These details allow your readers to easily locate the source material.

Citing Books: Primary and Secondary Sources

Books are often the bedrock of music theory scholarship, serving as both primary theoretical treatises and secondary critical analyses. When citing a book, ensure you are using the most complete bibliographic information

available. For a primary theoretical text, such as Arnold Schoenberg's *Theory of Harmony*, the original publication date might be important, but you will likely be citing a modern edition. For secondary sources, such as a biography of a composer or a critical study of a musical period, the author's full name, the book's title, publisher, and publication year are essential.

In the Notes-Bibliography system, a full note for a book would typically include the author's name, the italicized title, publication details, and the specific page number(s) referenced. For example: Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 78. The bibliography entry would be: Agawu, Kofi. *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Citing Journal Articles and Other Periodicals

Journal articles are crucial for staying current with musicological discourse. When citing an article, precision in detailing the journal's publication information is vital, as journals can be large and contain numerous articles. The Chicago Manual of Style requires the author's name, the article's title in quotation marks, the journal's title in italics, followed by the volume and issue numbers, the date of publication, and the page range of the article. If the article is published online, you will also need to include the URL and access date.

For example, a footnote citing an article might read: Richard Taruskin, "The limits of Musicology," *The New York Times*, April 25, 1999. For a scholarly journal article: Susan McClary, "The Blasphemy of Dissonance: A Historical Perspective on Musical Taboo," *Music Theory Spectrum* 29, no. 2 (2007): 245. The bibliography entry would be: McClary, Susan. "The Blasphemy of Dissonance: A Historical Perspective on Musical Taboo." *Music Theory Spectrum* 29, no. 2 (2007): 245-272.

The Author-Date System for Music Theory Citations

While the Notes-Bibliography system is prevalent in many humanities disciplines, the Author-Date system is also a viable and sometimes preferred method for Chicago-style citations in music theory. This system emphasizes the author and the publication date of the source directly within the text, using parenthetical citations. It is often favored in interdisciplinary contexts or in fields where the historical context of a source, as indicated by its publication date, is particularly important. For music theory research that might engage with empirical studies or social science approaches to music, the Author-Date system can provide a clear and concise way to attribute sources.

The fundamental principle of the Author-Date system is to keep the citation brief within the text, allowing for a smoother reading experience, and then to provide the full bibliographic details in a reference list at the end of the work. This reference list is crucial, as it contains all the information necessary for readers to locate the sources you have consulted and cited. When adapting this system for music theory, the same principles of accuracy and specificity apply as with the Notes-Bibliography system, but the presentation of that information differs.

Structure of In-Text Citations in the Author-Date System

In the Author-Date system, in-text citations are typically enclosed in parentheses and include the author's last name and the year of publication. If you are referencing a specific part of a source, such as a particular page or section of a musical score, you would include that information as well. For example, a citation within the text might appear as (Schenker 1979, 56) or (Agawu 1991, 112). When quoting directly, it is essential to include the page number. For music theory, referencing measure numbers or specific musical examples might be more relevant than page numbers in some instances, and this should be clearly indicated.

It is also common to integrate the author's name into the sentence itself, followed by the year of publication in parentheses. For instance: "As Schenker (1979) argued, the concept of *Umlinie* is fundamental to tonal analysis." This method can make the prose flow more naturally while still providing the necessary citation information. The key is to ensure that every piece of information within the parentheses corresponds directly to an entry in the reference list.

Creating the Reference List for Author-Date Citations

The reference list at the end of a document using the Author-Date system is analogous to the bibliography in the Notes-Bibliography system, but it is specifically titled "Reference List." This list is organized alphabetically by the author's last name. Each entry provides the full bibliographic details for every source cited in the text. The format for entries is similar to that of the bibliography in the Notes-Bibliography system, with the author's last name preceding their first name.

For music theory, the reference list will contain entries for books, articles, scores, recordings, and any other sources used. For instance, a reference list entry for a book would look like: Agawu, Kofi. 1991. *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. A journal article entry might be: McClary, Susan. 2007.

"The Blasphemy of Dissonance: A Historical Perspective on Musical Taboo." *Music Theory Spectrum* 29 (2): 245-272. The accuracy and completeness of this reference list are critical for the integrity of the citation process.

Common Challenges and Solutions in Chicago Citation for Music Theory

Citing music theory sources can present unique challenges due to the specialized nature of the materials involved. From complex musical scores with intricate notational systems to recordings with multiple performers and editions, ensuring accuracy and clarity requires careful attention. The Chicago Manual of Style provides a solid framework, but applying it to music-specific contexts sometimes demands thoughtful interpretation and adaptation. Understanding these common challenges and their solutions can significantly streamline the citation process.

One frequent hurdle is accurately representing multi-composer works or collaborative projects. Another is citing performance-specific details that might not be immediately apparent from a standard bibliographic entry. Furthermore, the proliferation of digital resources for scores and recordings adds another layer of complexity. By anticipating these issues and consulting the relevant sections of the CMOS or specialized music citation guides that follow its principles, researchers can maintain scholarly rigor.

Citing Works with Multiple Authors or Editors

When a musical work or a scholarly book has multiple authors or editors, Chicago style provides clear instructions. For the Notes-Bibliography system, if there are two authors, both names are typically listed in the note and bibliography. For three or more authors, the first author is usually listed, followed by "et al." (and others) in the notes, but all authors' names may be listed in the bibliography if space permits or if they are all considered primary contributors. The same applies to editors.

For musical scores, if the work is a collaboration or an edition with significant editorial input, this should be reflected in the citation. For example, if you are citing an edited collection of Renaissance madrigals, you would credit the editor(s) prominently. The specific phrasing and order of names will depend on whether the source is primarily a creative work or a scholarly compilation.

Handling Digital and Online Music Resources

The digital realm offers unprecedented access to musical scores and

recordings, but it also necessitates careful citation practices. When citing online scores or recordings, the Chicago Manual of Style requires inclusion of the URL and the date of access. This is crucial because online content can be updated or removed, so providing the access date allows readers to track down the specific version you consulted.

For streaming services, if a specific recording is available, cite it as you would a CD or LP, including the service name and URL. If you are citing a digital score that is interactive or has specific viewing features, mention these if they are relevant to your analysis. For databases of musical scores, ensure you cite the database name, the specific work, and the URL.

Referencing Specific Musical Passages and Performances

One of the most challenging aspects of citing music theory is referencing specific musical passages with the precision required for analytical purposes. While page numbers are standard for books, for musical scores, referring to measure numbers, section labels, or musical examples is often more effective. For instance, in a footnote: Bach, Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I, BWV 846-869, Prelude in C Major, BWV 846, mm. 1-4.

For recordings, citing specific time codes can be exceptionally useful, especially when discussing subtle performance nuances, rhythmic alterations, or precise moments of harmonic change. This level of detail ensures that your analytical claims are grounded in verifiable sonic evidence. For example: Mozart, Piano Concerto No. 21 in C Major, K. 467, performed by Mitsuko Uchida, with the English Chamber Orchestra conducted by Jeffrey Tate, Philips, 470 261-2, 1990, mvmt. II, 1:32-2:15.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the primary difference between the Notes-Bibliography and Author-Date systems in Chicago style for music theory?

A: The main difference lies in how citations are presented. The Notes-Bibliography system uses numbered footnotes or endnotes for citations within the text, corresponding to a bibliography at the end. The Author-Date system uses parenthetical citations (Author, Year, Page) in the text, followed by a reference list at the end. For music theory, the Notes-Bibliography system is often preferred for its ability to include detailed annotations.

Q: How do I cite a specific musical edition when using Chicago style?

A: When citing a musical score, it is crucial to include details about the edition. This typically involves mentioning the editor or arranger if applicable, followed by the publisher and the year of publication. For example: Ludwig van Beethoven, *Symphony No. 5 in C minor*, Op. 67, ed. Jonathan Del Mar (London: Bärenreiter, 2007).

Q: What is the best way to cite a specific passage within a musical score in Chicago style?

A: For musical scores, it is often more precise to cite measure numbers rather than page numbers, especially for analytical purposes. For example: Johann Sebastian Bach, *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book I, BWV 846-869, Fugue in C Minor, BWV 847, mm. 1-8.

Q: How should I cite a sound recording in Chicago style if I am referencing a specific excerpt?

A: When citing a specific excerpt from a sound recording, include the composer, work title, performers, album details (if applicable), record label, catalog number, and year of release. For precise referencing, add the track number and, if possible, the time code of the excerpt. For example: Igor Stravinsky, *The Rite of Spring*, performed by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Boulez, Deutsche Grammophon, 453 048-2, 1999, track 12, 0:30-1:45.

Q: Can I use measure numbers for citing music in the Author-Date system?

A: Yes, you can adapt the Author-Date system to include measure numbers when referencing musical scores. The in-text citation might look like (Schenker 1979, mm. 1-8), and the corresponding reference list entry would provide full details of the score, including the edition.

Q: What are the essential components of a Chicago style bibliography entry for a book on music theory?

A: A typical Chicago style bibliography entry for a book includes: Author's last name, first name. Title of Book. Place of publication: Publisher, Year of publication. If it's a translated work, include translator information.

Q: How do I cite a scholarly article from a music theory journal using Chicago style?

A: For a scholarly journal article, the Chicago style entry includes: Author's last name, first name. "Title of Article." Title of Journal Volume, no. Issue (Year of publication): Page range. For online articles, add the URL and access date.

Q: What if a recording has multiple artists or conductors? How should I cite it?

A: In such cases, list the primary artist(s) or conductor first. For the Notes-Bibliography system, you can mention additional contributors in the note or bibliography as relevant. For example, for a concerto, you would list the soloist and conductor.

Q: Is it acceptable to use abbreviated titles in subsequent notes for music theory sources?

A: Yes, for subsequent citations of the same source in the Notes-Bibliography system, Chicago style allows for shortened notes. Typically, this includes the author's last name and a shortened title of the work, along with the page or measure number.

Q: Where can I find the most up-to-date guidelines for Chicago style citation?

A: The definitive source for Chicago style guidelines is The Chicago Manual of Style, currently in its 17th edition. Additionally, many universities and publishers provide online guides and style sheets that can offer specific examples relevant to musicology.

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