

chicago manual of style formatting for authors submitting work

The Chicago Manual of Style formatting for authors submitting work is a critical element for ensuring your manuscript is professionally presented and adheres to established academic and publishing standards. This comprehensive guide will delve into the essential elements of Chicago style, from manuscript preparation to specific formatting requirements for various elements of your writing. Mastering these guidelines not only enhances the readability and credibility of your work but also demonstrates your professionalism to editors and publishers. We will cover everything from general manuscript guidelines to detailed instructions on citations, notes, bibliographies, and even the intricacies of digital submissions, providing authors with the knowledge needed to navigate this widely respected style guide.

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Manuscript Preparation Guidelines

Proper manuscript preparation is the foundational step for any author aiming for professional publication. Adhering to specific guidelines, particularly those outlined by The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), signals attention to detail and respect for the publishing process. This preparation involves understanding the overarching principles of CMOS and applying them consistently throughout your document.

Understanding Chicago Style Editions

The Chicago Manual of Style has undergone numerous revisions since its first publication. Authors must be aware of which edition is currently in use or preferred by their publisher or institution. While the core principles remain consistent, specific details, particularly concerning digital media and new citation practices, evolve. For the most current and authoritative guidance, always refer to the latest edition of CMOS. Publishers will typically specify which edition they require submissions to follow.

Understanding the nuances between different editions ensures your work is compliant with contemporary standards. For instance, the handling of online resources and digital identifiers like DOIs has been significantly updated in recent editions.

General Manuscript Formatting

When preparing a manuscript for submission using Chicago style, several general formatting rules apply to ensure uniformity and readability. These rules govern the basic layout and appearance of your document, setting a professional tone from the outset.

The manuscript should generally be double-spaced, including block quotations and any quoted material that is set apart from the main text. This generous spacing allows for editorial markup and makes the text easier to read. Margins should be consistent, typically one inch on all sides of the page, providing ample space for notes and corrections.

Font choice is also important. A standard, legible serif font such as Times New Roman or Garamond, in a 12-point size, is generally preferred. Avoid overly decorative or unusual fonts, as they can hinder readability and may not render correctly across different systems. The typeface should be consistent throughout the document, except where specific formatting for headings or emphasis is required.

Title Page and Preliminary Pages

The title page and other preliminary pages of your manuscript are crucial for providing essential information about your work. Their formatting follows specific conventions within Chicago style to clearly identify the document and its author.

Title Page Requirements

A standard title page for a manuscript submission typically includes the full title of the work, the author's name, and contact information. Some publishers may also request the author's affiliation or a brief author's note. The title should be prominently displayed, centered on the page, and usually in a larger font size or bolded for emphasis. The author's name should be placed below the title, also centered. Contact details, including

address, phone number, and email, are usually found at the bottom of the page, often smaller in font size.

It is important to ensure that the title page is clean, uncluttered, and presents all necessary information clearly. Avoid unnecessary graphics or elaborate designs unless specifically requested.

Abstract and Table of Contents Placement

Following the title page, preliminary pages may include an abstract and a table of contents. An abstract is a concise summary of the entire work, typically between 150 and 250 words. It should accurately reflect the content and scope of the manuscript. The table of contents, if required, lists the main sections and subsections of the work with corresponding page numbers, providing a roadmap for the reader. Both should be formatted according to CMOS guidelines for clarity and consistency.

The placement and formatting of these elements are standardized to ensure they are easily located and understood by editors and readers.

Body Text Formatting

The main content of your manuscript, or body text, requires careful formatting to maintain consistency and readability. This section covers the fundamental rules for paragraphing, headings, and the treatment of tables and figures.

Paragraph and Indentation Rules

In Chicago style, paragraphs are typically indicated by indentation of the first line. The first line of each paragraph, except for the first paragraph of a chapter or section, should be indented. A standard indentation is typically 0.5 inches. Alternatively, some styles allow for block paragraphs, where paragraphs are separated by an extra line of space and the first line is not indented. However, for most manuscript submissions, the indented first line is the standard.

It is crucial to maintain a consistent indentation style throughout the entire document. This uniformity is a hallmark of professional manuscript preparation. Ensure that the spacing between paragraphs is also consistent; typically, double-spacing is used for the entire manuscript, including the body text.

Headings and Subheadings

Headings and subheadings are essential for organizing your content and guiding the

reader through your work. Chicago style provides guidelines for the hierarchical formatting of these elements to ensure clarity and visual appeal. Typically, main headings are centered and may be in all caps or bolded. Subheadings, which are subordinate to the main headings, are usually left-aligned and may be bolded or italicized. The formatting should clearly indicate the relationship between different levels of headings.

For example, a primary heading might be centered and in all caps, while a secondary subheading could be left-aligned, bolded, and sentence case. Tertiary headings would be further distinguished, perhaps by being italicized and indented. The key is to create a clear visual hierarchy that allows readers to easily follow the structure of your argument.

Tables and Figures

Tables and figures are visual elements that can enhance understanding but must be formatted correctly according to Chicago style. Each table and figure should be numbered sequentially (e.g., Table 1, Figure 1). A brief, descriptive title should accompany each, placed above for tables and below for figures.

The content within tables should be clearly organized, with headings for each column and row. Figures should be clear and legible, with all necessary labels and legends included. Notes or sources for tables and figures should be clearly indicated. For manuscript submissions, it is often advisable to place tables and figures on separate pages at the end of the document or to indicate their intended placement within the text with clear placeholders like "[Insert Table 1 Here]".

Notes and Citations (Notes-Bibliography System)

The Notes-Bibliography system, a cornerstone of Chicago style, is widely used in humanities and social sciences. This system uses numbered notes (either footnotes or endnotes) to cite sources and a bibliography to list all works referenced.

In-Text Citations

In the Notes-Bibliography system, in-text citations are not presented in the traditional parenthetical author-date format. Instead, a superscript Arabic numeral is placed at the end of a sentence or clause that contains information drawn from a source. This numeral corresponds to a note at the bottom of the page (footnote) or at the end of the document (endnote).

The placement of the superscript number is crucial. It should appear after the punctuation of the sentence or clause, not before. If a direct quote is used, the number typically follows the closing quotation mark. This system allows the main text to remain uncluttered by citation information.

Notes (Footnotes and Endnotes)

Notes, whether footnotes or endnotes, contain the full bibliographic information for the sources cited. The first time a source is cited, the note provides complete publication details. Subsequent citations of the same source use a shortened form, typically including the author's last name, a shortened title, and the page number.

- The first note for a book might look like: Jane Doe, *The History of Everything* (New York: Publisher Name, 2020), 45.
- Subsequent notes would be: Doe, *History of Everything*, 102.
- For subsequent citations of the same work immediately following each other: Ibid., 123.

Authors must decide whether to use footnotes or endnotes and maintain consistency. Footnotes appear at the bottom of the page, while endnotes are collected at the end of the chapter or document. Publishers will often specify their preference.

Bibliographies

A bibliography is a comprehensive alphabetical list of all sources consulted and cited in the work. It appears at the end of the manuscript. The format of bibliography entries closely mirrors that of the first note for each source, but without specific page numbers unless referring to a specific section or chapter.

Entries are typically arranged in alphabetical order by the author's last name. For books, the format generally includes author's name, title (italicized), publication city, publisher, and year of publication. For journal articles, it would include author, article title (in quotation marks), journal title (italicized), volume, issue number, year, and page range.

Notes and Citations (Author-Date System)

The Author-Date system is another widely accepted citation method within Chicago style, primarily used in the sciences and some social sciences. It utilizes in-text parenthetical citations and a reference list.

In-Text Citations (Author-Date)

In the Author-Date system, citations are included directly in the text within parentheses. These parenthetical citations typically consist of the author's last name and the year of

publication, followed by a page number if a specific passage is being referenced.

For example, a citation might appear as (Smith 2022, 150). If the author's name is mentioned in the text, only the year and page number are needed in parentheses: As Smith (2022) noted, the trend began in the early 2000s (150).

Reference Lists (Author-Date)

Following the main text, a reference list provides full bibliographic details for all sources cited in the text. This list is alphabetized by the author's last name. The format for entries in the reference list is similar to that of the bibliography in the Notes-Bibliography system, but it is specifically limited to the sources that have been cited within the document.

For a book, a reference list entry would typically be: Smith, John. 2022. *The Science of Everything*. New York: Publisher Name.

For a journal article: Doe, Jane. 2023. "A New Discovery." *Journal of Scientific Research* 45 (2): 123-145.

Formatting Quoted Material

Properly formatting quoted material is essential for maintaining academic integrity and clarity. Chicago style provides specific guidelines for handling both short and long quotations.

Short Quotations

Short quotations, generally those of fewer than five lines of prose or three lines of poetry, are incorporated directly into the text and enclosed in double quotation marks. The quotation marks should be placed around the quoted text, and the appropriate citation (either a superscript number or a parenthetical citation, depending on the system used) should follow.

Periods and commas typically go inside the closing quotation mark. Other punctuation marks may go inside or outside, depending on their relationship to the quoted material. For example: "This is a significant finding," she stated.

Long Quotations (Block Quotations)

Long quotations, typically exceeding the line count mentioned above, should be set off from the main text as block quotations. These are formatted by indenting the entire quotation one-half inch from the left margin. They should not be enclosed in quotation

marks, and the citation follows the final punctuation of the quotation.

The entire block quotation should be double-spaced, consistent with the rest of the manuscript. This visual separation clearly distinguishes the quoted material from the author's own words and arguments, making it easier for the reader to follow.

Permissions and Copyright

Authors are responsible for obtaining permissions to use copyrighted material within their work. This includes long quotations, images, tables, and other substantial excerpts from published sources.

Failure to secure necessary permissions can lead to legal issues and delays in publication. Authors should begin the process of seeking permissions early, as it can be time-consuming. This often involves contacting the copyright holder of the material, typically the publisher, and providing details about how the material will be used.

The Chicago Manual of Style also provides guidance on how to acknowledge sources in the text and bibliography, which is distinct from the legal requirement of obtaining permission. Authors should carefully review CMOS chapters related to copyright and permissions to ensure full compliance.

Digital Submissions and Electronic Formatting

With the increasing prevalence of digital publishing, understanding electronic formatting requirements for submissions is crucial. While publishers may have their own specific digital guidelines, adhering to general principles of electronic manuscript preparation aligned with CMOS is beneficial.

Manuscripts submitted electronically are often expected to be in standard word processing formats, such as Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or rich text format (.rtf). Consistency in formatting, including font, spacing, and margins, remains paramount. Avoid embedding fonts unless absolutely necessary, as this can cause rendering issues.

For elements like tables and figures, publishers may prefer them to be provided as separate files or embedded within the main document at their intended locations. Always clarify these requirements with your publisher. Ensure that your document is clean, free of tracked changes unless specifically requested, and that all metadata (like author name) is correctly set.

Common Formatting Pitfalls to Avoid

Authors often encounter common pitfalls when adhering to Chicago style formatting. Being aware of these can help prevent errors and ensure a polished submission.

- **Inconsistent citation style:** Mixing elements of the Notes-Bibliography system with the Author-Date system, or inconsistent application of rules within a chosen system, is a frequent error.
- **Incorrect punctuation with quotation marks:** Punctuation placement relative to quotation marks can be tricky; always double-check the rules.
- **Non-standard font or layout:** Using unusual fonts, excessive formatting, or inconsistent margins can make a manuscript difficult to edit.
- **Ignoring publisher-specific guidelines:** While CMOS provides a framework, individual publishers may have additional or slightly different requirements.
- **Oversights in bibliography or reference list:** Missing entries, incorrectly formatted entries, or incorrect alphabetization are common.

Thorough proofreading and a final review against the specific guidelines of the publisher or institution are essential steps to avoid these common mistakes.

Final Review and Submission Checklist

Before submitting your work, a comprehensive final review is indispensable. This checklist ensures that all formatting aspects are addressed according to Chicago Manual of Style principles and any publisher-specific requirements.

Verify that your manuscript adheres to the chosen citation system (Notes-Bibliography or Author-Date) without any deviations. Ensure all notes are correctly numbered and formatted, and that the bibliography or reference list is complete, accurate, and alphabetized. Check that headings and subheadings are consistently formatted and clearly delineate the structure of your work. Proofread meticulously for any typographical errors, grammatical mistakes, or inconsistencies in style.

Confirm that tables and figures are clearly labeled, numbered, and appropriately placed or indicated. If using block quotations, ensure they are correctly indented and set apart from the main text. Finally, review any specific submission guidelines provided by your publisher, paying close attention to file formats, naming conventions, and any other technical requirements for digital or physical submissions. A diligent final review demonstrates your commitment to professionalism and significantly increases the likelihood of a smooth publication process.

Q: What is the primary difference between the Notes-Bibliography system and the Author-Date system in Chicago style?

A: The primary difference lies in how sources are cited within the text and presented at the end. The Notes-Bibliography system uses numbered footnotes or endnotes for in-text citations and a comprehensive bibliography at the end. The Author-Date system uses parenthetical citations in the text (author, year, page) and a reference list at the end, containing only the cited works.

Q: Should I use footnotes or endnotes when using the Chicago Manual of Style?

A: The choice between footnotes and endnotes is typically determined by the publisher or institution. Footnotes appear at the bottom of the page where the citation occurs, while endnotes are collected at the end of the document. Both are acceptable within Chicago style, but consistency is key once a choice is made.

Q: How do I format a book in the bibliography using the Chicago Manual of Style?

A: For a book in the Notes-Bibliography system's bibliography, the format is generally: Author's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. For the Author-Date system's reference list, it's similar: Author's Last Name, First Name. Year of Publication. *Title of Book*. Place of Publication: Publisher.

Q: What are the rules for indenting paragraphs in Chicago style?

A: Typically, the first line of each paragraph is indented by 0.5 inches. The exception is the first paragraph of a chapter or a section following a heading, which is usually not indented. Alternatively, some styles allow for block paragraphs, separated by an extra line of space without indentation.

Q: How do I format a block quotation in Chicago style?

A: A block quotation, usually longer than five lines of prose, is set off from the main text by indenting the entire quotation one-half inch from the left margin. It should be double-spaced and not enclosed in quotation marks. The citation follows the final punctuation of the quotation.

Q: Do I need to obtain permission to quote material in

my book?

A: Yes, you generally need to obtain permission to use copyrighted material, especially long quotations, images, or extensive excerpts. The Chicago Manual of Style provides guidance on this, but it's a legal requirement separate from citation practices. You should contact the copyright holder to request permission.

Q: What font and font size are recommended for a Chicago style manuscript?

A: The Chicago Manual of Style generally recommends using a standard, legible serif font such as Times New Roman or Garamond in 12-point size. Consistency in font and size throughout the document is crucial for readability.

Q: How should I cite a website in Chicago style?

A: Citation formats for websites vary depending on whether you are using the Notes-Bibliography or Author-Date system. Generally, it includes author (if known), title of the specific page or article, name of the website, publication date (or last updated date), and the URL. For the Notes-Bibliography system, a retrieval date is often included if the content is likely to change.

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