

# chicago manual of style in-text citation

The Chicago Manual of Style in-text citation is a crucial element for academic and professional writing, ensuring proper attribution and academic integrity. This comprehensive guide will delve into the intricacies of citing sources within your text according to the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), covering both the Notes-Bibliography system and the Author-Date system. Understanding these citation styles is paramount for researchers, students, and writers aiming for clarity, credibility, and adherence to scholarly conventions. We will explore the fundamental principles, common scenarios, and specific examples to equip you with the knowledge to effectively manage your Chicago Manual of Style in-text citations.

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## Understanding the Chicago Manual of Style Citation Systems

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) offers two distinct systems for handling citations: the Notes-Bibliography system and the Author-Date system. While both aim to provide clear and accurate attribution, they differ in their presentation within the text and in the accompanying bibliography or reference list.

The choice between these two systems often depends on the academic discipline or publisher's preference. The Notes-Bibliography system is prevalent in humanities fields such as literature, history, and art history. It uses numbered notes (footnotes or endnotes) to cite sources within the text, with a corresponding bibliography at the end of the work listing all sources cited. Conversely, the Author-Date system is more common in the social sciences and natural sciences. This system places parenthetical citations directly in the text, typically including the author's last name and the publication year, and is supported by a reference list at the end of the document that provides full bibliographic details for each source.

Both systems emphasize the importance of providing readers with sufficient information to locate the original sources. They help avoid plagiarism by acknowledging the work of others and contribute to the credibility of your

own research by demonstrating that it is built upon a foundation of existing scholarship. Mastering the nuances of each system is essential for anyone engaging in serious academic or professional writing.

## **The Notes-Bibliography System: In-Text Citations**

In the Notes-Bibliography system, the primary method for in-text citation involves the use of superscript numbers placed at the end of a sentence or clause, after any punctuation. These numbers correspond to explanatory notes, which can be presented as either footnotes (at the bottom of the page) or endnotes (collected at the end of the document). Each note provides the full bibliographic information for the source being referenced.

### **Footnotes and Endnotes Explained**

Footnotes are generally preferred for their immediacy, allowing readers to consult the source information without leaving the page. Endnotes, on the other hand, can be more practical for lengthy works or when extensive notes are required, as they keep the main text uncluttered. Regardless of whether footnotes or endnotes are used, the first time a source is cited, the note should include complete bibliographic details. Subsequent citations of the same source can then be shortened to an abbreviated form, typically including the author's last name, a shortened title of the work, and the page number(s).

### **When and How to Use Notes**

Notes serve multiple purposes beyond simple citation. They can be used to provide supplementary information, elaborate on a point without disrupting the flow of the main text, or acknowledge tangential but relevant ideas. When citing a direct quotation, the note must include the page number from which the quotation is taken. For paraphrased ideas or summaries of arguments, including the relevant page number is still highly recommended for precise reference, though it may be optional depending on the context and the specific guidelines being followed.

### **Structure of a First Note**

A typical first note in the Notes-Bibliography system will include the author's first and last name, the full title of the work (*italicized for*

books and articles, or in quotation marks for shorter works like essays or chapters), publication information (city of publication, publisher, and year for books; journal title, volume, issue, and year for articles), and the specific page number(s) referenced. For example, a book citation might look like: 1. Jane Doe, *The History of Citation Styles* (New York: Academic Press, 2023), 45.

## Structure of a Subsequent Note

Once a source has been fully cited in a previous note, subsequent references can be significantly abbreviated. The most common format for subsequent notes is to include the author's last name, a shortened version of the title (especially if the full title is long), and the specific page number(s). For example: 2. Doe, *History of Citation Styles*, 78. If the author has multiple works cited, the shortened title becomes even more crucial for clarity.

## The Author-Date System: In-Text Citations

The Author-Date system, often favored in scientific and social science disciplines, integrates citations directly into the text using parenthetical references. This method allows readers to quickly identify the source and year of publication without needing to consult footnotes or endnotes for every citation, streamlining the reading process for technical or data-heavy material.

## Parenthetical Citations

A typical parenthetical citation in the Author-Date system includes the author's last name and the year of publication, enclosed in parentheses. For example: (Smith 2022). If the author's name is mentioned in the text, only the year needs to be included in the parentheses. For instance: As Smith (2022) argues, the findings are conclusive. This system relies on a corresponding reference list at the end of the document, which provides the full bibliographic details for every source cited in the text, alphabetized by author's last name.

## Citing Specific Pages

When referencing a specific quotation or a particular idea that can be pinpointed to a specific page, the page number should be included in the parenthetical citation. This is done by adding a comma after the year and then the page number, preceded by "p." for a single page or "pp." for

multiple pages. For example: (Jones 2023, 112) or (Miller 2021, 55–57). This ensures that readers can easily locate the exact passage being referred to.

## Multiple Authors and Editors

The Author-Date system has specific rules for handling works with multiple authors. For works with two authors, both last names are cited, connected by an ampersand: (Garcia & Lee 2020). For works with three or more authors, only the first author's last name is listed, followed by "et al.": (Chen et al. 2019). When citing an editor as the author, the designation "ed." or "eds." is used after the name(s) in the reference list, but not typically in the in-text citation itself unless there's ambiguity.

## When to Use Author-Date

The Author-Date system is particularly effective for research papers, dissertations, and journal articles where a concise in-text citation is preferred to maintain readability. It is also useful when the focus is on the chronological development of ideas or when comparing findings from different studies within a specific year. The ease with which readers can track the origin of information makes it a strong choice for disciplines that prioritize the rapid exchange of research findings.

## Special Cases and Advanced Citation Practices

Beyond the standard formats, the Chicago Manual of Style addresses numerous special cases to ensure comprehensive and accurate citation. These include citing works with no author, corporate authors, electronic resources, and secondary sources.

## Works with No Author or Corporate Authors

When a work lacks an individual author, the citation in the Author-Date system begins with the title of the work (*italicized* if it's a standalone work like a book, or in quotation marks if it's an article or chapter). The year follows, and then any page numbers. For example: (The New York Times Style Guide, 2021, 15). In the Notes-Bibliography system, the title of the work is used in place of the author's name in the first note, followed by the publication details and page number.

For works authored by an organization, institution, or government agency, the

name of the corporate author is used in place of an individual author's name in both citation systems. For example, in the Author-Date system: (World Health Organization 2023, 3). In the Notes-Bibliography system: 1. World Health Organization, *Global Health Report* (Geneva: WHO Press, 2023), 3.

## **Citing Electronic Resources**

Citing online articles, websites, and other digital content requires attention to specific details. For online articles in the Author-Date system, include the author (or corporate author), year, and, if available, the specific page number or section. For webpages, the author (or corporate author), date of publication or last update, and the URL are crucial. In the Notes-Bibliography system, the note should include the author, title, website name, publication or last updated date, and the URL.

## **Secondary Sources**

Citing a source that you found quoted or discussed in another source (a secondary source) requires careful attribution. In the Author-Date system, you would cite the original author and work but indicate that you accessed it through the secondary source. The format is typically: (Original Author, year, as cited in Secondary Author, year, page number). For example: (Smith 1999, as cited in Johnson 2023, 75). In the Notes-Bibliography system, the note would cite the secondary source, and then indicate the original source using the phrase "quoted in" or "cited in." For example: 5. John Smith, *Early Discoveries* (1999), quoted in Emily Johnson, *Modern Interpretations* (2023), 75.

## **Works with No Date**

When a publication lacks a specific date, both citation systems provide alternatives. In the Author-Date system, "n.d." (no date) is used in place of the year: (Williams, n.d.). In the Notes-Bibliography system, "n.d." is also used in the appropriate place within the bibliographic information in the note.

## **Common Pitfalls and Best Practices for Chicago Manual of Style In-Text Citations**

Navigating the complexities of the Chicago Manual of Style in-text citation can present challenges, and avoiding common errors is key to maintaining

scholarly rigor. One frequent pitfall is inconsistency in applying the chosen citation style, whether it's the Notes-Bibliography or Author-Date system. Another is failing to cite all sources accurately, leading to missing or incomplete bibliographic information.

## **Maintaining Consistency**

The most critical best practice is to consistently apply the chosen citation system throughout your entire document. If you opt for footnotes, use them exclusively for citations and avoid mixing them with parenthetical references. Similarly, if you choose the Author-Date system, ensure all your in-text citations follow its specific format, including correct punctuation and the inclusion of page numbers where necessary. Regular review and proofreading of your citations are essential to catch any inconsistencies.

## **Accuracy in Page Numbers and Details**

Inaccurate page numbers are a significant issue, especially when quoting directly. Always double-check that the page number cited in your in-text citation or note precisely matches the location of the information in the original source. For indirect citations (paraphrases and summaries), while page numbers might sometimes be optional, including them enhances precision and is generally recommended by CMOS. Ensure all bibliographic details in your notes or reference list are complete and correct, including author names, titles, publication dates, and publisher information.

## **When in Doubt, Over-Cite**

A good rule of thumb when unsure about whether to cite something is to err on the side of caution and include the citation. It is always better to provide too much attribution than too little. This not only helps you avoid accidental plagiarism but also demonstrates thoroughness and respect for intellectual property. If you are paraphrasing a unique idea or a specific argument, it warrants a citation.

## **Utilizing Style Guides and Resources**

The Chicago Manual of Style itself is the definitive resource. However, many institutions and publishers provide their own condensed style guides or examples based on CMOS, which can be helpful for quick reference. Online citation generators can be a useful tool for formatting, but it is crucial to verify their output against the official CMOS guidelines, as they are not

always perfectly accurate, especially for complex or unusual sources.

## **Proofreading is Paramount**

Ultimately, meticulous proofreading is your best defense against citation errors. After completing your writing and formatting, dedicate a specific pass to checking every single in-text citation and its corresponding entry in the bibliography or reference list. Compare them against your source materials and the rules of the Chicago Manual of Style. This final check can save you from errors that might undermine the credibility of your work.

## **FAQ**

### **Q: What is the primary difference between the Notes-Bibliography and Author-Date systems in the Chicago Manual of Style?**

A: The primary difference lies in how sources are cited within the text. The Notes-Bibliography system uses numbered footnotes or endnotes, while the Author-Date system uses parenthetical citations in the text, typically containing the author's last name and the publication year.

### **Q: When should I use the Notes-Bibliography system versus the Author-Date system?**

A: The Notes-Bibliography system is commonly used in the humanities (e.g., literature, history, art history), while the Author-Date system is more prevalent in the social sciences and natural sciences. Publisher or instructor preference often dictates which system to use.

### **Q: How do I cite a direct quotation in the Chicago Manual of Style using the Notes-Bibliography system?**

A: You would place a superscript number at the end of the quotation (before the closing punctuation) which corresponds to a footnote or endnote. The note would then include the author's name, title of the work, publication details, and the specific page number from which the quotation was taken.

### **Q: What information is included in a parenthetical**

## **citation in the Author-Date system?**

A: A standard parenthetical citation includes the author's last name and the year of publication, for example, (Smith 2023). If citing a specific page, it would be (Smith 2023, 45).

## **Q: How do I cite a work with no author using the Chicago Manual of Style?**

A: In the Notes-Bibliography system, the title of the work is used in place of the author's name in the note. In the Author-Date system, the title of the work (*italicized* if it's a book) is used in place of the author's name in the parenthetical citation, followed by the year.

## **Q: What is the correct way to cite a source that you found referenced in another source (a secondary source) in Chicago style?**

A: In the Author-Date system, you cite the original author and year, and then indicate that it was "as cited in" the secondary author and year, followed by the page number (e.g., Smith 1999, as cited in Johnson 2023, 75). In the Notes-Bibliography system, the note cites the secondary source and then indicates the original source using "quoted in" or "cited in."

## **Q: Can I use abbreviations like "ibid." or "op. cit." in Chicago style citations?**

A: The Chicago Manual of Style generally discourages the use of abbreviations like "ibid.," "op. cit.," and "loc. cit." in favor of shortened notes that clearly identify the source (author's last name, shortened title, and page number).

## **Q: What should I do if the source I am citing has no publication date?**

A: When a publication lacks a specific date, you should use "n.d." (no date) in place of the year in both the parenthetical citation (Author-Date system) and the bibliographic information (Notes-Bibliography system).

## **Chicago Manual Of Style In Text Citation**



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