

# chicago manual of style quoting unpublished works

chicago manual of style quoting unpublished works requires careful attention to detail and a clear understanding of academic citation practices. When dealing with materials that have not yet been formally published—such as manuscripts, personal correspondence, interviews, or drafts—adhering to the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) guidelines is crucial for maintaining scholarly integrity and ensuring your readers can locate the sources you reference. This article provides a comprehensive guide to properly quoting and citing these often-complex materials, covering everything from identifying what constitutes an unpublished work to formatting footnotes and bibliographical entries. We will explore the specific rules for different types of unpublished materials, the importance of providing sufficient identifying information, and best practices for ensuring clarity and accuracy in your citations.

## Table of Contents

Understanding Unpublished Works in Chicago Style

Quoting Manuscripts and Drafts

Citing Personal Correspondence and Emails

Referencing Interviews and Oral Histories

Citing Dissertations and Theses (Unpublished)

General Principles for Citing Unpublished Works

Formatting Citations in Notes and Bibliography

Permissions and Privacy Considerations

## Understanding Unpublished Works in Chicago Style

Unpublished works, in the context of academic writing and the Chicago Manual of Style, encompass any material that has not been made available to the general public through traditional publishing channels like books, journals, or widely distributed online platforms. This category is broad and can include a variety of items that are essential for certain research projects, particularly in fields like history, literature, and sociology. Properly citing these materials is paramount because they are often unique and may not be readily accessible to others, necessitating detailed descriptive information within your citations. The primary goal is to provide enough context and identifying details so that a reader can understand what you are referencing and, ideally, locate it themselves if access is possible.

The Chicago Manual of Style distinguishes between different types of unpublished materials, and the citation format will vary slightly depending on the nature of the source. This includes, but is not limited to,

handwritten or typed manuscripts, personal letters, diaries, unpublished dissertations and theses, and even private interviews or recordings that have not been transcribed and published. The core principle remains consistent: be as specific as possible in your description and identification of the source. This often means including the author's full name, the title of the work (if any), the date of creation, and its current location or custodian.

## Quoting Manuscripts and Drafts

When you encounter a manuscript or a draft of a work that has not yet been published, the Chicago Manual of Style requires you to provide specific details to guide your readers. This typically involves identifying the author, the title of the manuscript (often italicized or put in quotation marks, depending on its nature), the type of document (e.g., "typescript," "manuscript," "draft"), the date of creation or completion, and information about its location. For instance, if you are quoting from an early draft of a novel, you would indicate this clearly in your citation.

The specific formatting in notes will depend on whether the manuscript has a formal title. If it does, it might be italicized or placed in quotation marks. If it is an untitled draft or a personal collection of papers, you would describe its content. Key information to include are the author's name, the specific section or page you are referencing, the date it was written or compiled, and the archival collection or repository where it is housed. This ensures transparency and allows researchers to follow your leads effectively, even with materials not widely available.

## Citing Personal Correspondence and Emails

Personal correspondence, including letters and emails, presents unique challenges for citation because it is private communication. The Chicago Manual of Style generally treats such materials as unpublished. When quoting from personal correspondence, it is essential to identify the sender, the recipient, the date of the communication, and the method of transmission (e.g., "letter," "email"). You must also ensure you have obtained permission from both the sender and the recipient to quote from their private exchange, especially if it contains sensitive information.

In your notes, you would typically cite the author of the letter or email, followed by the recipient, and then the date. For example: "Letter from Jane Doe to John Smith, March 15, 2023." If the correspondence is housed in an archive, you would also include that information. For emails, the format might be similar, specifying the sender, recipient, and date. Privacy and ethical considerations are paramount when citing unpublished personal communications. Always prioritize the consent of the individuals involved.

# Referencing Interviews and Oral Histories

Interviews, whether conducted by you or by someone else and subsequently archived, are considered unpublished works. For interviews you conduct, you will need to note the interviewee's name, the date and location of the interview, and whether it was recorded (audio, video) or transcribed. If you are referencing an interview conducted by another researcher that is housed in an archive, you will cite the interviewer, the interviewee, the date, and the archival location.

Oral histories, often collected for specific projects or archives, require similar detailed citation. The Chicago Manual of Style suggests providing the name of the person interviewed, the title of the oral history project (if applicable), the interviewer's name, the date of the interview, and the repository where the recording or transcript is held. Clarity is key; readers need to know who spoke, who asked the questions, when it happened, and where the material can be accessed. If the interview has been transcribed and is part of a published collection, it would be cited as a published source.

## Citing Dissertations and Theses (Unpublished)

Unpublished dissertations and theses are a common type of academic source. When citing one that has not yet been formally published or made available through a standard academic publisher, the Chicago Manual of Style requires specific details. You must include the author's full name, the title of the dissertation or thesis (*italicized*), the type of work (e.g., "Ph.D. dissertation," "master's thesis"), the university that granted the degree, and the year the degree was awarded. If you accessed a specific copy from a library or an online database like ProQuest, you should also note that, along with the accession or record number if applicable.

In your notes, the format would be similar to a published book but with the specific designation of it being an unpublished dissertation or thesis. For example: John Doe, *"The History of Urban Parks"* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2022). If you consulted a physical copy or a specific digital version available through a particular service, that information should be included to help the reader locate the exact version you used. The crucial distinction is whether the work has been formally published beyond its availability as a university requirement.

## General Principles for Citing Unpublished Works

Regardless of the specific type of unpublished material you are citing, several general principles apply according to the Chicago Manual of Style.

Firstly, always aim for maximum clarity and specificity. The goal is to allow another researcher to find the exact source you used. This means providing author, title, date, and location information. Secondly, be consistent in your formatting throughout your work. Choose a citation style and stick to it.

Consider the audience and the nature of the work. For very obscure or personal materials, you might need to provide more descriptive context in your prose than in the formal citation itself. Always check if permission is required, especially for personal correspondence or interviews containing sensitive information. If the unpublished work is part of a larger collection or archive, citing that collection and its specific contents is vital. The Chicago Manual of Style emphasizes that accuracy and completeness are the cornerstones of responsible academic citation, particularly with materials that are not widely disseminated.

## Formatting Citations in Notes and Bibliography

The Chicago Manual of Style employs two primary citation systems: the Notes-Bibliography system and the Author-Date system. For unpublished works, the Notes-Bibliography system is often more detailed and descriptive, which is beneficial for these types of sources. In the notes, you will provide a full citation the first time you reference a source, and subsequent references can be shortened. For the bibliography, you will list all sources consulted, including unpublished works, in a consistent format.

For notes, the structure generally follows: Author's Full Name, "Title of Work" (if applicable, often in quotation marks or italicized), description of the work (e.g., "typescript," "letter," "interview"), date of creation, and location (e.g., "Jane Doe Papers, Special Collections, University Library"). In the bibliography, the format is similar, but often the author's last name comes first, and the order of elements might be slightly adjusted for alphabetical listing. The key is to provide enough detail for retrieval, including any accession numbers or specific folder designations within an archive.

Here's a general template for a note citation:

- First entry: Author First Name Last Name, "Title of Unpublished Work" (or description if untitled), [type of work, e.g., manuscript, letter, interview], Date, [location of work, e.g., Archive Name, University Name, City, State, accession number if applicable].
- Subsequent entries: Author Last Name, Shortened Title, Date, Location.

And for the bibliography:

- Author Last Name, First Name. "Title of Unpublished Work" (or description if untitled). [type of work]. Date. [location].

## Permissions and Privacy Considerations

When quoting from unpublished works, especially personal correspondence, diaries, interviews, or manuscripts containing sensitive information, obtaining permission is often a legal and ethical requirement. The Chicago Manual of Style strongly advises researchers to be mindful of copyright and privacy concerns. Even if a work is not formally published, it may still be protected by copyright. If you are unsure, it is best practice to seek permission from the copyright holder, which might be the author, their estate, or the institution housing the materials.

Failure to obtain necessary permissions can lead to legal issues and damage your scholarly reputation. For personal communications, consent from all parties involved in the exchange is crucial. When dealing with archival materials, consult the archive's policies regarding access and quotation. Transparency about your citation practices and your efforts to respect privacy and intellectual property will strengthen the credibility of your research. Always err on the side of caution and consult with your institution's ethics board or legal counsel if you have significant concerns.

## FAQ

### **Q: What qualifies as an "unpublished work" according to the Chicago Manual of Style?**

A: An unpublished work under the Chicago Manual of Style refers to any material that has not been made available to the public through formal publication channels such as books, peer-reviewed journals, or widely distributed online content. This includes manuscripts, drafts, personal correspondence, diaries, unpublished dissertations, private recordings, and interview transcripts that have not been officially released or published.

### **Q: How do I cite a personal letter in my bibliography using Chicago style?**

A: To cite a personal letter in your bibliography using Chicago style, you would typically list the author's last name first, followed by their first name, the title of the letter (if any, often put in quotation marks), the

description "Letter," the date it was written, and the repository where it is held. For example: Smith, John. "Regarding the New Project." Letter to Jane Doe, March 15, 2023. John Smith Papers, University Archives, City.

### **Q: Do I need to get permission to quote from an unpublished manuscript?**

A: Yes, it is highly recommended and often legally required to obtain permission to quote from an unpublished manuscript. Even though it is unpublished, it is still protected by copyright. You should seek permission from the copyright holder, which might be the author, their estate, or the institution where the manuscript is housed.

### **Q: What information should I include when quoting from an interview that has not been transcribed or published?**

A: When quoting from an unpublished and untranscribed interview, you should include the interviewee's name, the date and location of the interview, and a description of its format (e.g., "personal interview," "audio recording"). If you conducted the interview, you can state that. If it's an archived interview, provide details about the collection and repository. For example: Jane Doe, personal interview by author, October 20, 2023, Chicago, IL.

### **Q: How is an unpublished dissertation cited differently from a published one?**

A: An unpublished dissertation is cited with the addition of its type and the university that granted the degree, along with the year. For example: John Doe, "The History of Urban Parks" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2022). A published dissertation would be treated like any other published book, including its publisher and publication date.

### **Q: Can I quote from emails in my academic work, and how should I cite them?**

A: You can quote from emails, but you must ensure you have obtained permission from both the sender and the recipient. In your citations, you would typically identify the sender, the recipient, and the date of the email. For example, in a note: "Email from Jane Doe to John Smith, March 15, 2023." In the bibliography, it might appear similarly, though less commonly cited unless the email is critically important.

## **Q: What is the rule for citing unpublished creative works like drafts of poems or stories?**

A: For unpublished creative works like drafts of poems or stories, you should treat them as manuscripts. Include the author's name, the title of the work (if it has one, in quotation marks or italics), its designation as a draft or manuscript, the date of creation, and its location (e.g., in an archive or private collection). For example: Emily Dickinson, "Because I could not stop for Death" (draft manuscript, ca. 1863), Emily Dickinson Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

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