

chicago manual of style underlining updates

chicago manual of style underlining updates have become a significant point of discussion for writers, editors, and academics seeking to adhere to the latest stylistic guidelines. Understanding these changes is crucial for ensuring clarity, consistency, and professionalism in all forms of written communication, particularly in academic and scholarly publishing. This article delves into the evolution of underlining within the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), exploring the nuances of its current application and the reasons behind its diminishing role in certain contexts. We will examine the historical significance of underlining, the shift towards italics, and the specific instances where underlining might still be considered, offering a comprehensive guide to mastering this often-misunderstood aspect of CMOS.

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The Evolving Role of Underlining in CMOS

The Chicago Manual of Style, a widely respected authority on manuscript preparation and style, has seen its guidelines regarding underlining evolve significantly over the decades. What was once a ubiquitous mark of distinction for titles and emphasis has seen its usage become more specialized. This evolution reflects broader changes in publishing technology and stylistic preferences, moving away from manual typesetting cues toward more refined typographical conventions.

Understanding these shifts is paramount for anyone working with CMOS, from student papers to professional academic journals. The core principle behind these updates is to achieve maximum clarity and readability for the intended audience. As publishing moved from typewritten manuscripts to digital typesetting, the need for certain underlinings as instructions to printers diminished, paving the way for more sophisticated typographic treatments.

Historical Context of Underlining in CMOS

Historically, underlining served a critical function in pre-digital publishing environments. When manuscripts were typed, authors and editors used underlining to indicate to typesetters that a particular word or phrase should be rendered differently in print. This was primarily to differentiate:

- Titles of books, periodicals, and other major works.
- Words or phrases intended for emphasis.
- Foreign words or phrases not commonly used in English.
- Specific technical terms or coined words.

In those eras, underlining was a direct instruction for typographic treatment. It was a visual cue that bypassed the need for explicit verbal instructions on the manuscript itself, streamlining the editorial and typesetting process. The manual nature of pre-digital production made such visual indicators indispensable.

The Rise of Italics and the Decline of Underlining

The advent and widespread adoption of word processing software and digital typesetting technologies fundamentally changed the way manuscripts were prepared and published. Italics, which are typographically distinct from regular text, became the preferred method for many of the functions previously served by underlining.

Italics offer a more aesthetically pleasing and professional appearance than underlining. They provide a clear visual distinction without the starkness or perceived informality that underlining can sometimes convey. Consequently, CMOS, in its successive editions, gradually shifted its recommendations, favoring italics for titles of works, foreign words, and even for emphasis in many contexts.

This shift was driven by both technological advancements and a general move towards more sophisticated typographical practices. Publishers and editors recognized that italics offered a cleaner, more elegant solution that enhanced readability rather than potentially distracting from it.

Current Guidelines for Underlining in CMOS

In its most recent editions, the Chicago Manual of Style significantly curtails the use of underlining, especially in final published works. The primary functions previously assigned to underlining are now almost universally handled by italics or other typographical devices. However, it is crucial to understand that underlining might still appear in specific, limited circumstances, particularly during the manuscript submission phase.

For published works, the general rule is to avoid underlining unless it is for a very specific stylistic purpose that cannot be achieved through other means. This has led to considerable confusion, as many writers and editors are still accustomed to older conventions or encounter contexts where underlining persists.

Underlining for Emphasis: When is it Appropriate?

The use of underlining for emphasis in final published works is now largely discouraged by CMOS. The manual strongly recommends using italics for emphasis instead. This is because underlining can sometimes appear jarring or informal, detracting from the professional tone of the text.

However, there are rare instances where underlining might be considered for emphasis, particularly if italics are already being used extensively for other purposes (e.g., foreign terms, titles) and the author wishes to create a distinct level of emphasis. Even in such cases, careful consideration and editorial judgment are required. The primary goal should always be clarity and readability.

It's important to consult with the specific publication or instructor's guidelines, as they may have their own preferences regarding emphasis. For academic papers, the instructor's guidelines usually supersede general style manual recommendations.

Underlining in Manuscript Submission vs. Final Publication

A key distinction to grasp regarding the **chicago manual of style underlining updates** pertains to the difference between manuscript submission and the final published product. In the pre-digital era, underlining was a crucial instruction to typesetters. Authors would underline titles of books, for instance, to signal that they should be set in italics in the final printed version.

This practice often persists in editorial workflows even in digital environments. When submitting a manuscript to a publisher or journal, you might still be instructed to underline titles of works, foreign terms, or words for emphasis. This serves as an unambiguous signal to the editorial team and typesetters about the intended formatting of these elements. The understanding is that these underlined elements will be converted to italics or otherwise styled appropriately during the production process.

However, this underlining should typically be removed or converted to italics once the manuscript is accepted for publication and enters the typesetting phase. It is rarely intended to appear in the final published text. Always clarify submission requirements with your publisher or editor.

Alternatives to Underlining for Clarity

When the goal is to draw attention to specific words or phrases, CMOS offers several alternatives to underlining, ensuring that the text remains polished and professional. These alternatives are generally preferred for their aesthetic qualities and clarity.

- **Italics:** This is the most common and recommended method for indicating titles of major works, foreign words and phrases, and for providing emphasis.
- **Boldface:** Boldface type is typically reserved for headings, subheadings, or sometimes for very strong emphasis in specific contexts, though italics are generally preferred for emphasis within the body of the text.
- **Quotations:** For shorter works, such as articles, essays, or chapters within a larger work, quotation marks are used instead of italics.
- **Strategic Word Choice:** Often, the most effective way to emphasize a point is through strong, clear language rather than typographical devices.

By utilizing these alternatives, writers can ensure their text adheres to modern stylistic conventions while effectively conveying their intended meaning and emphasis.

Specific Cases: Titles, Foreign Words, and

Technical Terms

While the use of underlining has diminished, understanding its historical role helps clarify current practices. For titles of major works (books, journals, films, etc.), CMOS unequivocally recommends italics in final publications. Underlining might still be used in manuscripts as a signal to the typesetter to italicize.

Foreign words and phrases that have not been fully assimilated into English are also typically rendered in italics. Again, underlining in a manuscript might serve as an instruction for this italicization. However, if a foreign term is very common (e.g., "résumé" or "déjà vu"), it may not require italics and should be treated as part of the regular text.

Technical terms and coined words are generally not underlined or italicized unless they are being introduced for the first time and the author wishes to draw specific attention to them, in which case italics are preferred. The key is consistency and clarity for the reader.

Navigating the Digital Age: Underlining and Online Content

The digital landscape presents unique considerations for the use of underlining. In online environments, underlining is strongly associated with hyperlinks. Therefore, using underlining for emphasis or titles in web content can create confusion, as readers may instinctively expect the underlined text to be clickable.

To avoid this confusion, it is generally advised to use italics or boldface for emphasis and titles in online articles, blog posts, and websites. If you are using a content management system that automatically underlines links, you will need to be mindful of this and ensure that any intended emphasis is conveyed through other means.

For authors submitting to online journals or publications, it is crucial to check their specific style guides. Many online academic journals have adopted CMOS or similar guidelines, but the practical implementation, especially regarding how to denote italics or emphasis, might differ based on the platform's capabilities.

Common Pitfalls and Best Practices

One of the most common pitfalls concerning the **chicago manual of style underlining updates** is the conflation of manuscript submission conventions with final publication standards. Authors might continue to underline in a

submitted manuscript when italics are clearly preferred in the final text, or vice versa.

Another pitfall is inconsistent application. If you choose to use italics for emphasis, maintain that choice throughout the document. Mixing underlining and italics for similar purposes will only serve to confuse the reader and undermine the professionalism of your work.

Best practices include:

- Always consulting the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style.
- Clarifying specific submission requirements with editors, publishers, or instructors.
- Prioritizing clarity and readability above all else.
- Favoring italics over underlining for titles, foreign words, and emphasis in final publications.
- Being aware of the implications of underlining in online content.

By adhering to these practices, writers can navigate the complexities of stylistic conventions with confidence and produce polished, professional documents.

FAQ

Q: Why has the Chicago Manual of Style reduced the use of underlining?

A: The Chicago Manual of Style has reduced the use of underlining primarily because of advancements in digital typesetting and word processing. Italics offer a more refined and aesthetically pleasing method for distinguishing titles, foreign words, and for providing emphasis, which were historical uses of underlining.

Q: When is underlining still acceptable according to the Chicago Manual of Style?

A: Underlining is rarely acceptable in final published works according to the Chicago Manual of Style. Its primary remaining relevant use is as an instruction to typesetters during manuscript submission, signaling that text should be italicized in the final publication.

Q: Should I use underlining for emphasis in my academic paper?

A: No, you should generally not use underlining for emphasis in your academic paper. The Chicago Manual of Style recommends using italics for emphasis. Always check your instructor's specific guidelines, as they may have their own preferences.

Q: How do I differentiate between underlining for manuscript submission and underlining in final text?

A: Underlining for manuscript submission acts as a directive for the publisher to format the text (usually with italics) in the final version. Underlining in final text, if used at all, is a stylistic choice for emphasis, which CMOS generally discourages in favor of italics.

Q: Are there any exceptions to the rule of using italics for titles?

A: Yes, for shorter works like articles, essays, or chapters within a larger publication, quotation marks are used instead of italics for their titles. Major works like books, journals, and films are typically italicized.

Q: What is the best alternative to underlining for emphasis?

A: The best alternative to underlining for emphasis, according to the Chicago Manual of Style, is italics.

Q: How does underlining affect online content readability?

A: In online content, underlining is strongly associated with hyperlinks. Using it for emphasis or titles can confuse readers, making them believe the text is clickable when it is not. Therefore, italics or boldface are preferred for online content.

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