

chicago style examples for citing microfilm

The Ultimate Guide to Chicago Style Examples for Citing Microfilm

chicago style examples for citing microfilm presents a unique challenge for researchers and writers due to the nature of the source material. Unlike standard published books or articles, microfilm requires specific details to accurately pinpoint a particular item within a larger reel or collection. Understanding these nuances is crucial for maintaining academic integrity and ensuring your citations are both accurate and easily retrievable for your readers. This comprehensive guide will break down the essential components of Chicago style citations for microfilm, covering various scenarios from newspaper articles to archival documents. We will explore the formatting requirements, the information needed for each element of the citation, and provide clear, actionable examples to demystify this often-overlooked aspect of scholarly research.

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Understanding Microfilm Citations

Citing microfilm in Chicago style requires careful attention to detail. The goal is to provide enough information so that another researcher can locate the exact same source material. This often involves specifying not only the original publication information but also the microfilm edition itself, including details like the producer of the microfilm and the location of the original item within the reel.

The complexity arises from the fact that a single reel of microfilm might contain multiple distinct works, or a single work might be spread across several reels. Therefore, accurately identifying the specific item and its location on the microfilm is paramount. This guide will provide a step-by-step breakdown to ensure accuracy in your Chicago style citations for microfilm.

Core Components of a Microfilm Citation

Regardless of the type of material being cited, several key pieces of information are generally required for a Chicago style citation of microfilm. These components work together to create a complete and precise reference.

Original Publication Information

This is the foundational information about the item as it was originally published or created. It includes the author's name (if applicable), title, and publication details such as publisher and date of the original work. If the original item is an article, you'll need the journal title, volume, issue, and date, along with page numbers. For newspapers, it's the newspaper title, date, and page number. For archival documents, it might be the document title, creator, and date of creation.

Microfilm Edition Information

This section details the microfilm copy itself. It typically includes the name of the company or institution that produced the microfilm edition. You'll also need to identify the specific microfilm reel number or identifier. The location of the item on the reel is often crucial, which might be indicated by frame numbers, item numbers, or specific starting and ending page numbers as they appear on the microfilm.

Repository Information

Finally, you need to specify where this microfilm is housed. This is the library, archive, or special collection that holds the microfilm reel. Including the city and state of the repository is standard practice.

Citing Microfilmed Books

When citing a book that has been reproduced on microfilm, the Chicago Manual of Style requires a citation that acknowledges both the original book and its microfilm reproduction. The structure aims to lead the reader from the familiar book details to the specific microfilm location.

Book Authorship and Title

Begin with the author's name (Last Name, First Name) and the full title of the book, italicized. Include the original publication place, publisher, and year if readily available, though this is sometimes less critical if the microfilm edition is a direct facsimile.

Microfilm Publication Details

Next, indicate that the work is available on microfilm. You'll need the name of the microfilm publisher or producer, the title of the specific microfilm series (if applicable), and the reel number. For example, the Library of Congress often produces microfilm editions of historical documents and books.

Location within the Reel

Crucially, you must specify the exact location of the cited material on the reel. This could be a frame number, a page number as it appears on the microfilm, or a specific item number if the reel contains multiple works. This step is vital for precise referencing.

A typical footnote citation for a microfilmed book might look like this:

- Author Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Original publication details (if known). Microfilm publisher, year of microfilm publication. Reel number, frame number or page number on microfilm. Repository location.

For example:

- Smith, John. *The History of Local Inventions*. Chicago: University Press, 1950. Microfilmed by University Archives, 1985. Reel 17, frame 452. University of Illinois Archives.

Citing Microfilmed Newspapers

Newspapers are frequently preserved on microfilm, and citing them requires a clear indication of the newspaper title, date, and specific reel and page number where the article or item can be found.

Newspaper Title and Date

Start with the full title of the newspaper, italicized. Then, provide the specific date of the issue you are referencing, including the day, month, and year.

Page and Reel Information

Follow this with the page number on which the article appears in the original newspaper. Then, specify the microfilm edition details, including the name of the microfilm producer and the reel number. It is also helpful to include the specific location on the reel if a frame number is provided.

Repository

Conclude the citation with the name of the library or archive that holds the microfilm collection.

A standard footnote example for a microfilmed newspaper article:

- Newspaper Title, Month Day, Year, Section (if applicable), Page Number. Microfilmed by Microfilm Services Inc., Reel number, Frame number (if applicable). Repository Name.

For instance:

- *The Chicago Tribune*, May 15, 1920, Section 2, Page 3. Microfilmed by ProQuest Historical Newspapers, Reel 5892. Newberry Library.

Citing Microfilmed Archival Materials

Archival documents, manuscripts, and collections often exist in microfilmed formats. Citing these materials requires precision, often including the creator of the collection, the name of the collection, and the specific item or folder within the microfilm reel.

Creator and Collection Name

Begin with the name of the creator of the archival material (individual or organization). Follow this with the title of the collection, italicized. Then, provide the date of the material.

Microfilm Reel and Item Identification

Specify the microfilm reel number or identifier. If the item is within a larger collection on the reel, you will need to identify the specific folder, document, or item number. This might be a physical description of the item (e.g., "letter from X to Y") if a formal title is absent.

Repository

End with the name and location of the repository holding the microfilm, along with the collection's accession number if available.

An example footnote for a microfilmed archival document:

- Creator Last Name, First Name (or Organization Name). Title of Collection. Date of Material. Microfilm reel number, item/folder number. Repository Name, Accession number (if applicable).

Consider this example:

- Roosevelt, Franklin D. Papers, 1933-1945. Reel 67, folder 345. Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, NY.

Variations and Special Cases

While the core principles remain the same, certain situations might require slight modifications to Chicago style microfilm citations. These often relate to the availability of information or the nature of the microfilm itself.

Microfilm Reels Containing Multiple Works

When a single microfilm reel contains several distinct works (e.g., multiple pamphlets or short publications), each item needs to be cited individually, clearly indicating the reel and the specific starting point (page or frame number) for that particular item. This prevents ambiguity and ensures readers can find the exact piece of information.

No Original Publication Information

In some cases, the original publication details might be lost or unavailable. In such instances, focus on providing the most complete description of the item as it appears on the microfilm. This might include the title of the document, its date, its creator, and its location on the reel, along with the microfilm producer and repository.

Library of Congress Microfilming Projects

The Library of Congress (LC) has undertaken extensive microfilming projects. When citing materials microfilmed by the LC, it's standard to mention "Library of Congress" as the producer and include the specific LC microfilm catalog number if available, as this is a widely recognized identifier for these collections.

Online Microfilm Databases

While not strictly traditional microfilm, citing materials accessed through online databases that mimic microfilm (like ProQuest Historical Newspapers or Ancestry.com's collections) often follows similar principles but includes database information. However, Chicago style generally prefers citing the physical microfilm reel if it is available and has been consulted. If only the online version is available, treat it as a digital resource with appropriate database and URL information, though this deviates from pure "microfilm" citation.

Footnotes vs. Bibliographies: Chicago Style Microfilm Citation

The Chicago Manual of Style allows for two primary citation systems: notes and bibliography, and author-date. For citing microfilm, the principles are consistent across both, but the presentation differs.

Footnotes and Endnotes

In the notes system, the full citation appears in the first footnote or endnote for a given source. Subsequent citations of the same source can be shortened. The detailed information provided earlier is essential for these comprehensive initial notes.

Bibliography Entries

In the bibliography, all cited sources are listed alphabetically by author's last name. The entry for a microfilmed source in the bibliography will generally mirror the structure of the footnote but omit page numbers unless they refer to a specific section. The goal in the bibliography is to give the reader enough information to locate the source in a library or archive.

Both systems aim for clarity and accuracy, ensuring that the reader can retrieve the exact information you consulted, no matter the format of the original material or its reproduction. Mastering the specifics of citing microfilm, while potentially intricate, is a valuable skill for any researcher working with historical documents and publications.

FAQ

Q: What is the most crucial piece of information when citing microfilm in Chicago style?

A: The most crucial piece of information when citing microfilm in Chicago style is the specific location of the cited material on the reel. This includes reel numbers, and often frame numbers or page numbers as they appear on the microfilm, along with the repository where the microfilm is housed.

Q: How do I cite a newspaper article found on microfilm using Chicago style?

A: To cite a newspaper article found on microfilm in Chicago style, you typically include the newspaper title (italicized), the full date of the issue, the page number of the article, the microfilm producer, the reel number, and the repository.

Q: What if the original publication details of a book on microfilm are unknown?

A: If original publication details of a book on microfilm are unknown, you should still provide as much information as possible about the microfilm edition itself, including the microfilm publisher, the reel number, the frame number, and the repository. Focus on making the microfilm version as retrievable as possible.

Q: How does a bibliography entry for microfilm differ from a footnote in Chicago style?

A: A footnote will often include specific page or frame numbers for direct quotations or references. A bibliography entry for microfilm provides the general information needed to locate the source, usually without specific page numbers unless referring to a distinct section or chapter on the reel.

Q: What information should I include if a microfilm reel contains multiple distinct documents?

A: If a microfilm reel contains multiple distinct documents, you must cite each document individually. For each document, specify the reel number and the exact starting point on the reel (e.g., frame number or page number) where that particular document begins.

Q: Are there specific requirements for citing materials microfilmed by the Library of Congress?

A: Yes, when citing materials microfilmed by the Library of Congress, it is standard to mention "Library of Congress" as the producer and to include the specific LC microfilm catalog number if it is known and available, as this is a key identifier for their microfilmed collections.

Q: How do I handle archival documents on microfilm in Chicago style?

A: For archival documents on microfilm, your citation should include the creator's name, the collection title (*italicized*), the date of the material, the microfilm reel number, the specific item or folder number on the reel, and the repository name and location.

Q: Can I cite microfilm accessed through an online database using Chicago style?

A: While online databases provide access to microfilmed content, Chicago style generally prefers citing the physical microfilm if you consulted it. If only the online version is accessible, you would cite it as a digital resource, including database information and a URL, but this deviates from a direct "microfilm" citation.

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