

chicago style examples for citing sources

Understanding Chicago Style Citation: A Comprehensive Guide

chicago style examples for citing sources are essential for academic and professional writing, ensuring proper attribution and avoiding plagiarism. This widely adopted citation method, prevalent in history, arts, and humanities, distinguishes itself with two primary systems: the notes-bibliography system and the author-date system. Mastering these systems, from in-text citations to full bibliographical entries, is crucial for presenting credible research. This article will delve into the intricacies of Chicago style, providing clear examples for various source types, including books, journal articles, websites, and more, guiding you through the nuances of both citation formats to enhance the clarity and integrity of your work.

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What is Chicago Style Citation?

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) is a comprehensive guide for manuscript preparation and citation, first published in 1906 and updated periodically. It is widely used across academic disciplines, particularly in

the humanities, offering a robust framework for academic integrity. The system's flexibility allows writers to choose between two distinct citation formats, catering to different scholarly conventions and publication requirements.

Understanding the fundamental principles of Chicago style is the first step toward accurate and effective citation. It emphasizes clarity, consistency, and the complete identification of all sources used in a research project. Whether you are a student, a researcher, or a professional writer, adhering to these guidelines will elevate the credibility and professionalism of your work.

The Notes-Bibliography System

The notes-bibliography system is characterized by the use of numbered footnotes or endnotes within the text, with a comprehensive bibliography at the end of the work. This system is favored in fields like history, literature, and the arts, where detailed engagement with sources is often paramount. The notes provide immediate reference to the source, while the bibliography offers a complete overview of all consulted materials.

In this system, a superscript number is placed after a quotation, paraphrase, or reference to an idea from another source. This number corresponds to a note at the bottom of the page (footnote) or at the end of the chapter or document (endnote). The first citation of a source in the notes is usually more detailed, while subsequent citations of the same source can be shortened. The bibliography then lists all sources alphabetically by author's last name, providing full publication details.

Footnotes and Endnotes in Chicago Style

Footnotes and endnotes serve as the primary mechanism for citing sources within the notes-bibliography system. Each note provides the necessary information to locate the source material, allowing readers to verify the information presented in the text. The format of these notes is crucial and varies slightly depending on whether it's the first mention of the source or a subsequent one.

For example, a first note for a book might include the author's full name, the title of the book in italics, publication details (city, publisher, year), and the specific page number(s) referenced. Subsequent notes for the same source will typically include the author's last name, a shortened version of the title, and the page number.

The Bibliography in Chicago Style

The bibliography is an alphabetical listing of all the sources cited in the document. It provides a complete record of the research undertaken and allows readers to explore the source material further. Entries in the bibliography generally follow a consistent format, providing all necessary publication details for each source type. Unlike the notes, the bibliography does not include page numbers for direct quotes, but rather provides the full publication information for the entire work.

The organization of the bibliography is critical for reader comprehension. Entries are typically alphabetized by the author's last name. If a work has no author, it is alphabetized by the first significant word of the title. This systematic approach ensures that readers can easily locate any source mentioned within the text.

The Author-Date System

The author-date system, also known as parenthetical citation, uses in-text parenthetical citations that include the author's last name and the year of publication. This system is commonly used in the social sciences and natural sciences. It is often preferred for its conciseness and ease of integration into the flow of the text, allowing readers to quickly identify the source and date of information.

In this system, an in-text citation typically appears in parentheses, like (Smith 2020, 150). This refers the reader to a corresponding entry in a reference list at the end of the document, which provides full publication details. The reference list, similar to the bibliography in the notes-bibliography system, is alphabetized by author's last name and contains complete information about each cited source.

In-Text Citations in the Author-Date System

In-text citations in the author-date system are brief and placed directly within the text, usually at the end of a sentence or clause. They provide enough information for the reader to locate the full citation in the reference list without disrupting the reading flow. The essential components are the author's last name and the year of publication, often followed by a page number if a specific passage is being cited.

For direct quotations, the page number is mandatory. For paraphrased ideas or general references to an author's work, the page number is often optional but recommended for clarity. If the author's name is mentioned in the sentence, only the year and page number (if applicable) need to be included in the parentheses.

The Reference List in Chicago Style

The reference list in the author-date system is a comprehensive compilation of all sources cited in the paper. It is placed at the end of the document and is alphabetized by the author's last name. Each entry provides full publication details, enabling readers to retrieve the original source material. The format of each entry is standardized according to the type of source.

Unlike the bibliography in the notes-bibliography system, the author-date reference list does not typically include the publisher's location. The focus is on providing the author, date, title, and publication information essential for identification and retrieval. Consistency in formatting within the reference list is paramount.

Citing Books in Chicago Style

Citing books is fundamental to academic research, and Chicago style provides specific guidelines for various book formats. Whether it's a single-author book, an edited volume, or a book with multiple authors, understanding the correct format is key to accurate citation.

Single-Author Books

For the notes-bibliography system, a footnote/endnote for a single-author book typically includes the author's full name, the title of the book in italics, followed by the publication information (city: publisher, year), and the page number. The bibliography entry omits the page number.

Footnote/Endnote Example:

1. Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), 98.

Bibliography Example:

Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin Press, 2006.

For the author-date system, the in-text citation includes the author's last name and the year. The reference list entry mirrors the bibliography format but may omit the publisher's location.

In-Text Citation Example:

(Pollan 2006, 98)

Reference List Example:

Pollan, Michael. 2006. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin Press.

Edited Books

When citing an edited book, the editor's name is used instead of or in addition to the author's name, depending on the context. For the notes-bibliography system, the editor is usually introduced with "ed." for a single editor or "eds." for multiple editors.

Footnote/Endnote Example:

2. Martha Cavell, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 45.

Bibliography Example:

Cavell, Martha, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

For the author-date system, the in-text citation remains similar, and the reference list entry follows the same structure as the bibliography but without the publisher's location.

In-Text Citation Example:

(Cavell 1997, 45)

Reference List Example:

Cavell, Martha, ed. 1997. *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Books with Multiple Authors

For books with two authors, list both names in the citation. For three or more authors, Chicago style typically lists the first author followed by "et al." in subsequent references, but the full bibliography/reference list entry should include all authors.

Footnote/Endnote Example (First Citation):

3. John Smith and Jane Doe, *Advanced Research Methods* (London: Routledge, 2018), 112.

Footnote/Endnote Example (Subsequent Citation):

4. Smith and Doe, *Advanced Research Methods*, 112.

Bibliography Example:

Smith, John, and Jane Doe. *Advanced Research Methods*. London: Routledge, 2018.

For the author-date system:

In-Text Citation Example:

(Smith and Doe 2018, 112)

Reference List Example:

Smith, John, and Jane Doe. 2018. *Advanced Research Methods*. London: Routledge.

Citing Journal Articles in Chicago Style

Journal articles are a cornerstone of academic research, and accurate citation ensures that readers can access the original research. Chicago style provides specific formats for both print and online journal articles.

Print Journal Articles

When citing a print journal article, the notes-bibliography system requires the author's name, article title, journal title, volume and issue numbers, publication year, and page numbers. The bibliography entry omits the page range of the article and uses a different punctuation for the journal title.

Footnote/Endnote Example:

5. Emily Carter, "The Impact of Social Media on Political Discourse," *Journal of Communication Studies* 45, no. 3 (2019): 321.

Bibliography Example:

Carter, Emily. "The Impact of Social Media on Political Discourse." *Journal of Communication Studies* 45, no. 3 (2019): 315-330.

For the author-date system, the in-text citation includes the author and year. The reference list entry will include the author, year, article title, journal title, volume, issue, and page range.

In-Text Citation Example:

(Carter 2019, 321)

Reference List Example:

Carter, Emily. 2019. "The Impact of Social Media on Political Discourse." *Journal of Communication Studies* 45, no. 3: 315-330.

Online Journal Articles

Citing online journal articles requires including the DOI (Digital Object Identifier) or URL if a DOI is not available. The DOI is the preferred method as it provides a persistent link to the article.

Footnote/Endnote Example (with DOI):

6. David Lee, "Renewable Energy Trends and Policy," *Environmental Science Journal* 12, no. 1 (2021): 55, doi:10.1080/12345678.2021.1987654.

Bibliography Example (with DOI):

Lee, David. "Renewable Energy Trends and Policy." *Environmental Science Journal* 12, no. 1 (2021): 50-65. doi:10.1080/12345678.2021.1987654.

For the author-date system:

In-Text Citation Example:

(Lee 2021, 55)

Reference List Example:

Lee, David. 2021. "Renewable Energy Trends and Policy." *Environmental Science Journal* 12, no. 1: 50-65. doi:10.1080/12345678.2021.1987654.

Citing Websites and Online Resources

The internet has become a vast repository of information, and Chicago style offers guidelines for citing

various online resources, including websites, blog posts, and online articles that may not be from traditional academic journals.

Websites

When citing a website, include the author or organization responsible for the content, the title of the specific page or document, the name of the website, the publication date (if available), and the URL. For notes-bibliography, include the date accessed if the content is likely to change.

Footnote/Endnote Example:

7. National Aeronautics and Space Administration, "Mars Exploration Program," accessed November 15, 2023, <https://mars.nasa.gov/program/>.

Bibliography Example:

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. "Mars Exploration Program." Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://mars.nasa.gov/program/>.

For the author-date system:

In-Text Citation Example:

(National Aeronautics and Space Administration, n.d.)

Reference List Example:

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. n.d. "Mars Exploration Program." Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://mars.nasa.gov/program/>.

Note: "n.d." stands for "no date" when a publication date is not ascertainable.

Online Articles and Blog Posts

Similar to website citations, online articles and blog posts require author, title, website name, date, and URL. For notes-bibliography, include the date of access.

Footnote/Endnote Example:

8. Jane Smith, "The Future of AI in Education," *Tech Insights Blog*, October 26, 2023, accessed November 15, 2023, <https://www.techinsights.com/blog/ai-education>.

Bibliography Example:

Smith, Jane. "The Future of AI in Education." *Tech Insights Blog*, October 26, 2023. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://www.techinsights.com/blog/ai-education>.

For the author-date system:

In-Text Citation Example:

(Smith 2023)

Reference List Example:

Smith, Jane. 2023. "The Future of AI in Education." *Tech Insights Blog*, October 26. Accessed November 15, 2023. <https://www.techinsights.com/blog/ai-education>.

Citing Other Common Source Types

Beyond books and journals, researchers often encounter a variety of other source materials. Chicago style provides specific guidance for these as well, ensuring consistency across all cited resources.

Newspaper Articles

When citing newspaper articles, include the author (if known), the article title, the newspaper title, the date of publication, and the page number(s). For online articles, include the URL.

Footnote/Endnote Example:

9. John Adams, "City Council Approves New Zoning Laws," *Chicago Tribune*, November 10, 2023, sec. A, p. 3.

Bibliography Example:

Adams, John. "City Council Approves New Zoning Laws." *Chicago Tribune*, November 10, 2023, sec. A, p. 3.

For the author-date system:

In-Text Citation Example:

(Adams 2023)

Reference List Example:

Adams, John. 2023. "City Council Approves New Zoning Laws." *Chicago Tribune*, November 10. sec. A, p. 3.

Theses and Dissertations

Citing theses and dissertations involves specifying the author, title, type of work (e.g., PhD dissertation), university, and year. For online dissertations, include the database or repository name and URL or DOI.

Footnote/Endnote Example:

10. Sarah Miller, "Postcolonial Literature in the Digital Age" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2022), 78.

Bibliography Example:

Miller, Sarah. "Postcolonial Literature in the Digital Age." PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2022.

For the author-date system:

In-Text Citation Example:

(Miller 2022, 78)

Reference List Example:

Miller, Sarah. 2022. "Postcolonial Literature in the Digital Age." PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley.

Audiovisual Materials (Films, Podcasts)

Citing films or podcasts requires information such as the title, director/host, producer, distributor, release year, and relevant timestamps. For podcasts, episode titles and numbers are also important.

Footnote/Endnote Example:

11. *The Social Dilemma*, directed by Jeff Orlowski, Netflix, 2020, 0:15:30.

Bibliography Example:

The Social Dilemma. Directed by Jeff Orlowski. Netflix, 2020.

For the author-date system:

In-Text Citation Example:

(*The Social Dilemma* 2020)

Reference List Example:

The Social Dilemma. Directed by Jeff Orlowski. Netflix, 2020.

Common Citation Errors to Avoid

Accuracy and consistency are paramount in Chicago style citation. Awareness of common pitfalls can help writers produce polished and credible academic work.

- Inconsistent formatting of punctuation and capitalization.
- Omitting necessary publication details such as year, publisher, or page numbers.
- Using the wrong citation system (notes-bibliography vs. author-date) for the intended publication or course.
- Incorrectly abbreviating or capitalizing journal titles or other publication names.
- Failure to distinguish between footnotes/endnotes and bibliography/reference list entries.
- Forgetting to include DOIs or URLs for online sources, or using incorrect ones.
- Not updating citations to reflect new editions of books or revised online content.

By meticulously reviewing and cross-referencing examples, writers can ensure their Chicago style citations are accurate, complete, and conform to the highest academic standards. Paying close attention to these details not only avoids plagiarism but also significantly enhances the authority and trustworthiness of your research.

Q: What is the main difference between the notes-bibliography and author-date systems in Chicago 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 in-text parenthetical citations with the author's last name and the year of publication. Both systems culminate in a comprehensive list of sources at the end of the document (bibliography or reference list, respectively).

Q: When should I use the notes-bibliography system versus the author-date system?

A: The choice often depends on the specific discipline or publication. The notes-bibliography system is commonly used in the humanities (history, literature, arts), where detailed source engagement and commentary might be necessary. The author-date system is more prevalent in the social sciences and natural sciences, where quick identification of sources and their publication dates is prioritized. Always check your professor's or publisher's guidelines.

Q: How do I cite a book with an editor in Chicago style?

A: For the notes-bibliography system, a footnote/endnote would include the editor's name followed by "ed." or "eds." before the book title. The bibliography entry follows a similar format. For the author-date system, the in-text citation remains the same, and the reference list entry includes the editor's name in a similar fashion.

Q: What is a DOI, and why is it important for citing online sources in Chicago style?

A: A DOI (Digital Object Identifier) is a unique alphanumeric string assigned to identify content and provide a persistent link to its location on the internet. It's crucial because web pages and online articles can move or change URLs. A DOI ensures that readers can reliably access the source material, even if the original URL becomes defunct. When available, it is preferred over a URL.

Q: How do I cite a website where there is no author listed?

A: If no individual author is listed, use the name of the organization or company responsible for the website as the author. For example, if a government agency published information, you would use the agency's name. If no organization is apparent, you might use the website title as the author, but this should be a last resort.

Q: What are the rules for citing multiple authors in Chicago style?

A: For two authors, list both in all citations. For three or more authors, in the notes-bibliography system, list all authors in the first footnote/endnote and bibliography entry. In subsequent notes, you can use the first author's last name followed by "et al." In the author-date system, list all authors in the initial in-text citation if there are two, and use the first author followed by "et al." for three or more. The full reference list entry should always include all authors.

Q: Do I need to include the publisher's location in Chicago style citations?

A: Yes, the publisher's location (city) is typically included in both footnotes/endnotes and bibliography entries for books in the notes-bibliography system. In the author-date system, the publisher's location is also generally included in the reference list entry.

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