

chicago style footnotes examples

Understanding Chicago Style Footnotes: Examples and Best Practices

chicago style footnotes examples are crucial for academic writers, researchers, and anyone adhering to the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS). This comprehensive guide delves into the intricacies of creating accurate and properly formatted footnotes, offering clear examples for various source types. Understanding Chicago style footnotes ensures academic integrity, proper attribution of sources, and enhances the credibility of your written work. We will explore the fundamental components of a Chicago style footnote, including common variations for books, articles, websites, and other frequently cited materials. Furthermore, we will discuss the relationship between the first full note and subsequent shortened notes, a key aspect of Chicago's system. Mastering these elements will equip you with the confidence to cite your sources flawlessly, making your research accessible and verifiable for your readers.

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What are Chicago Style Footnotes?

Chicago style footnotes are a system of citation used primarily in the humanities and history, as outlined in *The Chicago Manual of Style*. This system involves placing a numbered reference at the end of a sentence or clause that introduces source material, with corresponding detailed citations appearing at the bottom of the page (footnotes) or at the end of the document (endnotes). The primary purpose of footnotes is to provide immediate attribution to the original source of information, whether it's a direct quote, a paraphrase, or a summary of ideas. This allows readers to easily locate and verify the information presented in your text, fostering transparency and academic rigor.

Unlike some other citation styles that rely solely on in-text parenthetical citations, the Chicago footnote system offers a more elegant presentation for the main body of text. The numbers in the text act as signposts, directing the reader to the specific source information without disrupting the flow of your prose. This makes the reader's experience smoother and more enjoyable, especially in longer or more complex academic works. Furthermore, footnotes can also be used to include supplementary information or tangential discussions that might otherwise clutter the main text, adding an extra layer of depth and detail to your writing.

The Anatomy of a Chicago Style Footnote

A typical Chicago style footnote comprises several essential elements, presented in a specific order and with particular punctuation. Understanding these components is fundamental to constructing accurate citations. The general structure aims to provide all necessary information for a reader to identify and locate the source, even if they don't have access to the same library or databases.

The core elements usually include:

- Author's first name and last name.
- Title of the work (italicized for books and standalone works, in quotation marks for articles and chapters).
- Publication information, which varies depending on the source type but often includes the place of publication, publisher, and year of publication for books. For articles, it includes the journal title, volume number, issue number, and date.
- Page number(s) referenced in your text.

Punctuation is also critical. Commas typically separate elements, and a period usually ends the entire

citation. The first note for a source is generally a "full note," providing complete bibliographic details, while subsequent notes referring to the same source are "shortened notes," which are more concise.

Common Chicago Style Footnote Examples

Navigating the nuances of citing different types of sources can be challenging. The Chicago Manual of Style provides specific formats for each, ensuring consistency and clarity across academic disciplines. Below are detailed examples of common citation formats for various source materials, demonstrating the correct application of Chicago style footnote rules.

Books

Citing a book requires providing the author's name, the full title (italicized), publication details (city, publisher, year), and the specific page number. This format is fundamental for most academic research.

- **Full Note:** 1. John Smith, *The History of Everything* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 45.
- **Shortened Note:** 2. Smith, *History of Everything*, 78.

For multiple authors, list them in the order they appear on the title page. If there are more than two authors, you can list the first author followed by "et al." in subsequent notes, but the full bibliography should list all authors.

Journal Articles

When citing a journal article, include the author's name, the article title (in quotation marks), the journal title (italicized), volume and issue numbers, the date of publication, and the page range of the article, followed by the specific page cited. This provides readers with precise information to locate the article within a periodical.

- **Full Note:** 3. Jane Doe, "The Impact of Technology on Education," *Journal of Educational Studies* 15, no. 2 (Spring 2021): 112-130, 115.
- **Shortened Note:** 4. Doe, "Impact of Technology," 120.

Ensure you accurately capture the journal's volume, issue, and date. The abbreviation "no." for number is standard.

Magazine and Newspaper Articles

Citing articles from popular periodicals like magazines and newspapers requires slightly different information. You'll need the author (if available), article title, periodical title (italicized), date of publication, and page number. For online articles, a URL might be included.

- **Full Note (Magazine):** 5. Emily White, "Urban Gardening Trends," *Modern Living Magazine*, July 2022, 34.
- **Full Note (Newspaper):** 6. Robert Green, "City Council Debates New Zoning Laws," *The Daily Chronicle*, October 26, 2023, A3.
- **Shortened Note:** 7. White, "Urban Gardening," 36.
- **Shortened Note:** 8. Green, "City Council," A4.

When citing newspapers, always include the date. For pages, use the section letter (like A) and page number.

Websites and Online Resources

Citing online content requires careful attention to detail to ensure it's retrievable. Include the author (if known), title of the specific page or article, name of the website (italicized), publication or last updated date, and a URL. A retrieval date is also recommended, especially if the content is likely to change.

- **Full Note:** 9. National Aeronautics and Space Administration, "Mars Exploration Rover," last modified October 15, 2023, <https://mars.nasa.gov/rovers/>.
- **Shortened Note:** 10. NASA, "Mars Exploration Rover."

For websites without a clear author, start with the organization or title. If no publication date is available, use "n.d." for "no date."

Chapters in Edited Books

When citing a chapter or essay within a larger work edited by someone else, you must credit both the chapter author and the editor. Include the chapter author's name, the chapter title, the editor's name (preceded by "ed." or "eds."), the book title (italicized), publication details, and the page range of the chapter.

- **Full Note:** 11. David Lee, "The Evolution of Cinema," in *Perspectives on Film*, ed. Sarah Brown (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 88-110, 95.
- **Shortened Note:** 12. Lee, "Evolution of Cinema," 102.

Remember to use "ed." for a single editor and "eds." for multiple editors.

Interviews

Interviews, whether published or personal, need to be cited. For unpublished interviews, include the interviewee's name, the type of interview, the date it was conducted, and its location (e.g., personal collection, archive). If published, treat it similarly to a book or article chapter.

- **Full Note (Unpublished):** 13. Maria Garcia, personal interview by author, April 10, 2023, Chicago, IL.
- **Full Note (Published):** 14. John Adams, interview by Emily Davis, *The Innovators Quarterly*, June 2022, 45-50.
- **Shortened Note:** 15. Garcia, personal interview.
- **Shortened Note:** 16. Adams, interview.

Specify if the interview was personal, by phone, or conducted via other means.

Images

Citing images requires providing information about the creator, the title of the work, the medium, dimensions (if relevant), and its location or source. For online images, include the URL and access date.

- **Full Note:** 17. Vincent van Gogh, *Starry Night*, 1889, oil on canvas, 73.7 cm × 92.1 cm, Museum of Modern Art, New York.
- **Full Note (Online):** 18. "View of the Grand Canyon," photograph by Ansel Adams, National Park Service, accessed October 26, 2023, <https://www.nps.gov/grca/learn/photos.htm>.
- **Shortened Note:** 19. Van Gogh, *Starry Night*.
- **Shortened Note:** 20. Adams, "View of the Grand Canyon."

Always aim to provide the most detailed information possible for the image's origin.

First Full Note vs. Subsequent Shortened Notes

A cornerstone of the Chicago footnote system is the distinction between the first full note and subsequent shortened notes for any given source. The first time you reference a particular source in your footnotes, you must provide all the necessary bibliographic information. This includes the author's full name, the complete title of the work, publication details, and the specific page number

you are referencing. This comprehensive note serves as the primary entry for that source within your footnotes, providing a complete reference point for the reader.

Following this initial full note, any subsequent references to the same source should use a shortened note. The purpose of the shortened note is to be concise while still providing enough information to uniquely identify the source. Typically, a shortened note includes the author's last name, a shortened version of the title (often the main part of the title), and the new page number being cited. If you cite the same page again, you can simply repeat the shortened note, or in some cases, use "Ibid." (if it's the immediately preceding note). This system streamlines the citation process and makes the footnotes less cumbersome without sacrificing clarity.

Key Differences: Notes vs. Bibliography

While both footnotes (or endnotes) and the bibliography serve to document sources, they have distinct purposes and formats in Chicago style. Footnotes are integrated within the body of your text, appearing at the bottom of the page to provide immediate attribution for specific pieces of information. They often include page numbers and can also be used for supplementary commentary. The first mention of a source in the notes is a full citation, while subsequent mentions are shortened.

In contrast, the bibliography appears at the end of the document and provides a comprehensive, alphabetical list of all sources consulted and cited in the work. The bibliography entries are typically arranged alphabetically by the author's last name. Unlike the first full note, bibliography entries for books do not include page numbers unless it's a specific chapter or essay being cited. Furthermore, the order of author's names is reversed in the bibliography (Last Name, First Name), whereas it's First Name Last Name in the footnotes. The bibliography serves as a complete reference list for the entire work, allowing readers to see the full scope of your research.

When to Use Footnotes in Chicago Style

The decision to use footnotes (or endnotes) in Chicago style is often dictated by the specific requirements of your assignment or publication. However, the general principle is to use them whenever you introduce borrowed material into your text. This includes direct quotations, paraphrased ideas, summaries of arguments, statistical data, and any other information that is not common knowledge and originates from another source.

Beyond direct attribution, Chicago style also permits the use of footnotes for other purposes. You can use them to provide supplementary information that would otherwise disrupt the flow of your main text, such as a brief biographical detail about a person, a historical aside, or a definition of a technical term. They can also be used for bibliographic citations, meaning you can list multiple sources for a single point in a footnote if necessary. Essentially, footnotes are a flexible tool for enhancing clarity, providing evidence, and offering additional context for your readers.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid

When crafting Chicago style footnotes, several common errors can detract from the professionalism and accuracy of your work. One of the most frequent mistakes is inconsistent formatting, such as mixing up commas and periods, or incorrectly italicizing titles. Another pitfall is failing to distinguish between the first full note and subsequent shortened notes, leading to overly long or too brief citations.

Other common issues include:

- Incorrectly citing online resources, especially when publication dates or authors are unclear.
- Omitting necessary publication information for books and articles.
- Confusing the format for books with that of articles.
- Not checking the specific requirements of the style guide or instructor, as minor variations can exist.
- Using "Ibid." incorrectly or overuse.
- Forgetting to include the specific page number cited.

Careful proofreading and a thorough understanding of the Chicago Manual of Style are essential to avoid these pitfalls and ensure your citations are accurate and compliant.

FAQ

Q: What is the primary difference between a footnote and an endnote in Chicago style?

A: In Chicago style, both footnotes and endnotes function similarly in terms of content and format for citation. The only practical difference is their placement: footnotes appear at the bottom of the page where the reference is made, while endnotes are collected at the end of the document, chapter, or entire work.

Q: When should I use "Ibid." in Chicago style footnotes?

A: "Ibid." (Latin for "in the same place") is used when you are citing the immediately preceding source and the page number is the same. If the page number differs, you would write "Ibid." followed by the new page number. For example, if note 5 is about page 45 of a book, and note 6 is also about page 45 of the same book, note 6 would be "Ibid." If note 7 is about page 50 of that same book, note 7 would be "Ibid., 50."

Q: Do I need to include the URL for print books in Chicago style footnotes?

A: No, URLs are generally not included for print books in Chicago style footnotes. URLs are typically reserved for citing online sources where the print equivalent might not exist or to help readers locate the exact online version of a source.

Q: How do I cite a source that has no author in Chicago style footnotes?

A: If a source has no author, you typically begin the footnote with the title of the work. For books, the title will be italicized. For articles or chapters, the title will be in quotation marks. The subsequent information will follow according to the standard format for that source type.

Q: Should I cite a source in my footnotes if I only consulted it but didn't directly quote or paraphrase from it?

A: Chicago style generally dictates that you should only cite sources that you have directly used and referenced in your text, whether through direct quotation, paraphrasing, or summarizing. A bibliography, however, may include sources consulted but not directly cited to show the breadth of research.

Q: What is the difference between the first footnote and subsequent notes for the same source?

A: The first footnote for any given source must be a "full note," containing all bibliographic details: author's full name, title of the work, publication information, and the specific page number. Subsequent notes for the same source should be "shortened notes," which are more concise, typically including the author's last name, a shortened version of the title, and the new page number.

Q: How do I cite a source with two authors in Chicago style footnotes?

A: For a source with two authors, you list both authors' full names in the first footnote, in the order they appear on the title page. For subsequent shortened notes, you would use the last name of the first author followed by "et al." or the second author's name depending on the specific Chicago style variant and the number of authors. However, for a bibliography, both authors would be listed.

Q: Can I use footnotes to add extra commentary that isn't directly related to a citation?

A: Yes, Chicago style explicitly allows for the use of footnotes for supplementary commentary or tangential information that might otherwise interrupt the flow of the main text. This is one of the advantages of the footnote system over parenthetical citations.

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