

chicago style image citation examples

Chicago Style Image Citation Examples: A Comprehensive Guide

chicago style image citation examples are crucial for academic integrity and proper attribution when incorporating visual elements into your work. Whether you're referencing a photograph from a museum archive, an illustration from a published book, or a digital image found online, understanding how to cite it correctly in Chicago style is paramount. This guide will delve into the nuances of citing various types of images, providing clear examples for both footnote/endnote and author-date systems. We'll cover everything from foundational principles to specific scenarios, ensuring you can confidently attribute any visual media you use. Mastering these citation practices not only prevents plagiarism but also enriches your research by acknowledging the creators and sources of your visual evidence.

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Why Accurate Image Citations Matter

Accurate image citations are the bedrock of academic honesty and scholarly practice. When you use an image created by someone else, you are utilizing their intellectual property. Proper attribution not only respects the rights of the creator but also allows your readers to verify your sources and explore the visual material further. In academic writing, failing to cite images correctly can be considered a form of plagiarism, with serious consequences. Furthermore, well-cited images lend credibility and authority to

your own arguments, demonstrating thorough research and a commitment to ethical scholarship.

Beyond avoiding academic misconduct, correct citation practices enhance the overall quality of your work. They provide context for the images you present, guiding your audience to understand their origin, significance, and potential biases. This meticulous approach is fundamental to building a persuasive and trustworthy research paper, essay, or presentation. By mastering Chicago style image citation examples, you contribute to a scholarly dialogue that values transparency and respect for all contributors.

Understanding the Core Components of an Image Citation

Regardless of the specific Chicago style system you employ, certain core pieces of information are essential for a complete image citation. These components help to uniquely identify the image and provide sufficient detail for your readers to locate it. Gathering these elements upfront will streamline the citation process considerably.

The primary elements generally required include: the creator's name (artist, photographer, illustrator), the title of the work, the date of creation, the medium or type of image, the dimensions (if relevant and available), the repository or collection where the image is housed, and the accession number or identifying number. For digital images, the website or platform where it was found, the URL, and the date of access are also critical.

The Creator's Role in Image Attribution

The creator is the individual or entity responsible for producing the image. This could be a renowned artist, an anonymous photographer, a company, or an organization. Identifying the creator is often the first and most crucial step in constructing your citation. If the creator is unknown, this should be noted as such in the citation.

Title and Date of Creation

The title of the artwork or photograph is essential for its identification. If an image does not have an official title, you can create a descriptive title in brackets. The date of creation indicates when the image was made, providing historical context. For undated works, indicate that the date is unknown or provide an estimated date if possible.

Medium and Physical Characteristics

The medium describes the materials used to create the image, such as oil on canvas, watercolor, digital photograph, or engraving. If the image is a reproduction, such as a print from a photograph, this should also be noted. Physical characteristics like dimensions are usually included if they are significant to the artwork or readily available from the source.

Repository and Accession Information

For physical artworks or historical images, the repository or collection where the original is housed is vital. This could be a museum, library, archive, or private collection. The accession number, a unique identifier assigned by the repository, is crucial for pinpointing the exact item within a large collection.

Digital Source Information

When citing digital images, the website, platform (e.g., Flickr, Wikimedia Commons), or online database where you found the image is necessary. The full URL of the image or the page containing it, along with the date you accessed it, are standard requirements to ensure your readers can retrieve the same image.

Chicago Style: Footnote/Endnote System for Images

The footnote and endnote system in Chicago style involves providing detailed citations in notes that appear at the bottom of the page (footnotes) or at the end of the document (endnotes). The first citation of a source is typically more comprehensive, while subsequent citations can be shortened. This system is common in historical and literary studies.

First Footnote/Endnote Citation for a Published Image

When citing an image that appears in a published book or journal, your first note will include most of the essential information. The structure emphasizes the creator, title, publication details, and page number where the image is found.

- **Example:**

- 1. Henri Cartier-Bresson, "Behind the Gare Saint-Lazare, Paris," 1932, gelatin silver print, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, photograph. In *The Photographs of Henri Cartier-Bresson* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2006), pl. 14.

Subsequent Footnote/Endnote Citation for a Published Image

Once an image from a particular source has been fully cited, subsequent references to it can be significantly abbreviated. This saves space and reduces redundancy throughout your notes.

- **Example:**
- 2. Cartier-Bresson, "Behind the Gare Saint-Lazare, Paris."

Footnote/Endnote Citation for an Online Image (Publicly Accessible)

Citing images found online requires details about the digital source, including the website, URL, and access date. The creator and title remain paramount, followed by the digital location.

- **Example:**
- 3. "The Starry Night," Vincent van Gogh, 1889, oil on canvas, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/79802>, accessed October 26, 2023.

Footnote/Endnote Citation for an Image in a Museum Collection Database

When referencing an image directly from a museum's online collection database, the citation should reflect this specific source, including the museum's name and any accession numbers.

- **Example:**
- 4. Georgia O'Keeffe, *Ram's Head White Hollyhock and Little Hills*, 1935, oil on canvas, Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Santa Fe, NM, <https://www.okeeffemuseum.org/collections/item/674/>, accessed October 26, 2023.

Chicago Style: Author-Date System for Images

The author-date system, prevalent in the sciences and some social sciences, uses parenthetical in-text citations keyed to a reference list at the end of the work. This system is generally more concise for in-text referencing but requires a comprehensive list of all sources consulted.

In-Text Citation for an Image (Author-Date)

In the author-date system, images are typically cited parenthetically within the text, often accompanied by a page or plate number if applicable. The citation directs the reader to the corresponding entry in the reference list.

- **Example:**
- (Cartier-Bresson 1932, pl. 14)

Reference List Entry for a Published Image

The reference list provides full bibliographic details for every source cited in the text. For images in published works, this entry will closely resemble the first footnote, but with author-date formatting.

- **Example:**
- Cartier-Bresson, Henri. "Behind the Gare Saint-Lazare, Paris." 1932. Gelatin silver print. In *The Photographs of Henri Cartier-Bresson*, pl. 14. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2006.

Reference List Entry for an Online Image (Publicly Accessible)

Online images are cited in the reference list with all the necessary details to locate them digitally. The structure ensures that even without direct access to the original source, a reader can find the image.

- **Example:**
- Van Gogh, Vincent. "The Starry Night." 1889. Oil on canvas. The Museum of Modern Art. <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/79802>. Accessed October 26, 2023.

Reference List Entry for an Image in a Museum Collection Database

When citing an image from a museum's online database, the reference list entry should clearly indicate the museum as the publisher or source, along with the specific URL and access information.

- **Example:**
- O'Keeffe, Georgia. Ram's Head White Hollyhock and Little Hills. 1935. Oil on canvas. Georgia O'Keeffe Museum. <https://www.okeeffemuseum.org/collections/item/674/>. Accessed October 26, 2023.

Common Scenarios and Chicago Style Image Citation Examples

Beyond the basic examples, you will encounter various situations when citing images. Understanding how to adapt Chicago style to these common scenarios is crucial for comprehensive and accurate citation practices. This includes images from artworks, historical documents, and digital platforms.

Citing a Photograph from a Physical Album or Collection

If you are citing a photograph that you viewed in a physical archive or an album, you will need to describe its location and any identifying information.

- **Footnote/Endnote Example:**
- 5. "Family Portrait at the Farm," ca. 1920, black and white photograph, private collection of Jane Doe, Smithville, Illinois, accessed October 26, 2023.
- **Reference List Example (Author-Date):**

- Doe, Jane. "Family Portrait at the Farm." Ca. 1920. Black and white photograph. Private collection of Jane Doe, Smithville, Illinois.

Citing a Painting or Sculpture from a Museum Exhibition

When referencing a work of art seen in person at a museum exhibition, the citation should reflect the artwork itself, its creator, and the museum where it was displayed.

- **Footnote/Endnote Example:**

- 6. Winslow Homer, *The Gulf Stream*, 1899, oil on canvas, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, exhibition loan from the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

- **Reference List Example (Author-Date):**

- Homer, Winslow. *The Gulf Stream*. 1899. Oil on canvas. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Citing an Illustration from a Non-Fiction Book

Illustrations within books require citation of the book itself, the illustrator (if known and distinct from the author), and the page number where the illustration appears.

- **Footnote/Endnote Example:**

- 7. Illustration of a Roman aqueduct, in *Engineering Marvels of the Ancient World* by John Smith, 112. London: Penguin Books, 2021.

- **Reference List Example (Author-Date):**

- Smith, John. Illustration of a Roman aqueduct. In *Engineering Marvels of the Ancient World*, 112. London: Penguin Books, 2021.

Citing an Image from a Digital Archive or Repository

Digital archives often provide detailed metadata that should be incorporated into your citation. This includes the archive name, accession numbers, and URLs.

- **Footnote/Endnote Example:**

- 8. "View of the Brooklyn Bridge," ca. 1905, stereograph, The Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., LC-USZ62-86899, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004664899/>, accessed October 26, 2023.

- **Reference List Example (Author-Date):**

- The Library of Congress. "View of the Brooklyn Bridge." Ca. 1905. Stereograph. Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C. LC-USZ62-86899. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004664899/>. Accessed October 26, 2023.

Citing a Screenshot from a Video or Film

When you capture a still image from a video or film, you must cite the original media, providing details about the source and the specific timestamp if possible.

- **Footnote/Endnote Example:**

- 9. Screenshot of the opening scene, *Casablanca*, directed by Michael Curtiz, Warner Bros., 1942, timestamp 00:01:15.

- **Reference List Example (Author-Date):**

- *Casablanca*. Directed by Michael Curtiz. Warner Bros., 1942. Screenshot timestamp 00:01:15.

Citing a Social Media Image

Images shared on social media platforms require careful citation, including the platform, username of the poster, and the date of posting, along with a URL to the specific post.

- **Footnote/Endnote Example:**

- 10. @NationalGeographic, "Stunning shot of the Aurora Borealis over Iceland," Instagram, January 15, 2023, <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cnhi...>

- **Reference List Example (Author-Date):**

- @NationalGeographic. "Stunning shot of the Aurora Borealis over Iceland." Instagram, January 15, 2023. <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cnhi...>

FAQ

Q: What is the difference between footnote/endnote and author-date systems in Chicago style for image citations?

A: The footnote/endnote system provides detailed citations in notes at the bottom of the page or end of the document, with the first citation being the most comprehensive. The author-date system uses parenthetical in-text citations that refer to a reference list at the end of the work, which contains full bibliographic details for all sources.

Q: Do I need to cite an image if I only use a small portion of it or modify it slightly?

A: Yes, even if you use a small portion of an image or modify it, you are still required to cite the original source to acknowledge the creator's work and avoid plagiarism.

Q: How do I cite an image where the creator's name is unknown?

A: If the creator of an image is unknown, you should start the citation with the title of the work. In Chicago style, you can indicate "Unknown artist" or a similar phrase if the creator's identity is truly unrecoverable.

Q: What is the role of the accession number in Chicago style image citations?

A: The accession number is a unique identifier assigned by a museum, library, or archive to a specific item

in its collection. Including it in your citation, especially for physical artworks or archival materials, helps readers precisely locate the image within a large collection.

Q: Should I include dimensions when citing an image in Chicago style?

A: Dimensions are typically included in Chicago style image citations if they are considered significant to the artwork or are readily available from the source. For example, the dimensions of a painting might be crucial for understanding its scale and impact.

Q: How do I cite an image that I found on a personal blog?

A: When citing an image from a personal blog, treat the blog as a website. Include the author of the blog post (if known), the title of the post, the blog's name, the publication date, the full URL, and the date of access.

Q: What if an image has multiple creators or contributors?

A: If an image has multiple creators, you should list them according to the Chicago Manual of Style guidelines, typically listing the first creator followed by "and" and the second creator, or using "et al." if there are more than two, depending on the specific circumstances and the number of creators.

Q: Is it necessary to cite an image that is in the public domain?

A: While public domain images are free to use without permission, it is still considered good academic practice to cite their source. This acknowledges where you found the image and allows others to locate it, contributing to a transparent and traceable research process.

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