

chicago style paper citation guide for students

Chicago Style Paper Citation Guide for Students: Mastering the Turabian System

chicago style paper citation guide for students is an indispensable resource for academic success, providing a comprehensive overview of the Turabian style of citation, a popular variant of the Chicago Manual of Style widely adopted in humanities and social sciences. This guide will equip you with the knowledge to accurately cite your sources, ensuring academic integrity and the credibility of your research. We will delve into the nuances of both the Notes-Bibliography system and the Author-Date system, two primary methods within Chicago style, explaining their applications and demonstrating how to format various types of sources, from books and journal articles to websites and interviews. Understanding these citation principles is crucial for avoiding plagiarism and for allowing your readers to easily locate the original material you reference, thereby enriching their understanding and engagement with your work.

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Understanding the Chicago Manual of Style and Turabian

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) is a comprehensive style guide published by the University of Chicago Press. It offers detailed recommendations on editorial style, punctuation, and citation practices for writers and publishers. For academic papers, particularly those in the humanities and social sciences, a simplified version known as "Turabian" style is often used. Named after Kate L. Turabian, a former dissertation secretary at the University of Chicago, Turabian style streamlines some of the more complex aspects of CMOS, making it more accessible for students and researchers working on theses, dissertations, and term papers. While Turabian is derived from CMOS, it's

essential to understand the core principles of both to navigate citation effectively.

The fundamental purpose of any citation system, including Chicago and Turabian, is to give credit to the original authors of ideas and information used in your work. This not only upholds academic integrity by preventing plagiarism but also allows your readers to trace your research path, verify your findings, and explore the sources further. Mastering Chicago style, therefore, is an investment in the clarity, professionalism, and ethical standing of your academic writing.

Key Differences: Notes-Bibliography vs. Author-Date Systems

Chicago style offers two distinct citation systems, each suited for different academic disciplines and research needs: the Notes-Bibliography system and the Author-Date system. Understanding when to use each is the first step toward proper citation.

The Notes-Bibliography system is primarily used in fields such as literature, history, and the arts. It involves using numbered footnotes or endnotes to cite sources directly within the text. A bibliography, listing all cited works in alphabetical order, appears at the end of the paper. This system allows for extensive explanatory notes alongside the citation, which can be beneficial for providing additional context or commentary without disrupting the main text's flow.

Conversely, the Author-Date system is more common in the social sciences and sciences. This system uses brief parenthetical citations in the text, consisting of the author's last name and the year of publication (e.g., (Smith 2020)). A comprehensive reference list, also alphabetized by author's last name, is required at the end of the paper, providing full publication details for every source cited. This method is generally considered more efficient for disciplines where tracking the publication date is paramount to understanding the development of ideas.

The Notes-Bibliography System Explained

The Notes-Bibliography system is characterized by its use of footnotes or endnotes, which are linked to a corresponding number in the main text. When you quote, paraphrase, or refer to information from a source, you insert a superscript number. This number corresponds to a note at the bottom of the page (footnote) or at the end of the document (endnote) that provides the source's citation information.

The first time a particular source is cited, the note will typically include full bibliographic details. Subsequent citations of the same source can be shortened, often using a "shortened note" format that includes the author's last name, a shortened title of the work, and the page number(s). This system's flexibility allows for detailed explanations and contextual notes that might not fit neatly into a parenthetical citation.

Creating Footnotes and Endnotes

Footnotes appear at the bottom of the page where the citation is referenced, while endnotes are collected at the end of the paper. Both function identically in terms of providing citation details. The process involves inserting a superscript number (e.g., ¹) after the relevant sentence or clause. Then, at the designated location (bottom of the page for footnotes, end of the paper for endnotes), you

create a corresponding note, starting with the same number.

For the first citation of a source, a full bibliographic entry is typically provided in the note. For example, for a book, it might look like this: John Smith, *The History of Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 45. Subsequent citations of the same work are then presented in a shortened format, such as: Smith, *History of Chicago*, 78. If you cite the exact same source and page multiple times consecutively, you can use the abbreviation "Ibid.," which stands for ibidem (meaning "in the same place"). If the subsequent citation refers to the same source but a different page, it would be "Ibid., 92."

Crafting Your Bibliography

The bibliography is an alphabetical list of all the sources you have cited in your paper. It is placed at the end of your document, after any endnotes. Each entry in the bibliography should provide complete publication information for the source. The formatting for bibliography entries often differs slightly from footnote/endnote entries. For instance, in the Notes-Bibliography system, the author's last name appears first in the bibliography entry, followed by a comma and then their first name (e.g., Smith, John). In footnotes and endnotes, the first name typically precedes the last name.

The goal of the bibliography is to give readers a complete overview of the research materials used and to enable them to find these sources themselves. Therefore, accuracy and consistency in formatting are paramount. Common elements include author(s), title, publication information (city, publisher, year), and for articles, journal title, volume, issue, and page numbers.

The Author-Date System Explained

The Author-Date system, as the name suggests, relies on in-text citations that include the author's last name and the year of publication, and a reference list at the end of the paper that provides full bibliographic details. This system is favored in disciplines where the currency of research and the author's contribution are of primary importance, making it easier to track the evolution of ideas over time.

The brevity of the in-text citations allows the reader to quickly identify the source of information without being pulled away from the main text by extensive notes. The accompanying reference list then serves as the comprehensive guide to all sources consulted and cited. This makes it straightforward for readers to locate the original works for further study.

In-Text Citations in Author-Date

In the Author-Date system, citations are embedded directly within the text of your paper. When you introduce information from a source, you include the author's last name and the publication year in parentheses. For example, if you are referencing a work by Jane Doe published in 2021, your in-text citation might appear as (Doe 2021). If you are referring to a specific page or range of pages, you would include that information as well: (Doe 2021, 55) or (Doe 2021, 112-115).

If the author's name is mentioned in the sentence, you only need to include the year in parentheses. For instance: "As Doe (2021) argues, the economic impact was significant." When citing multiple sources in a single parenthetical reference, they are listed in alphabetical order by author's last name, separated by semicolons: (Adams 2019; Baker 2020; Doe 2021). If you are citing two or more

works by the same author published in the same year, you distinguish them by adding lowercase letters to the year: (Doe 2021a, 2021b).

Building Your Reference List

The reference list, appearing at the end of your paper, is a complete alphabetical listing of all sources cited in your text using the Author-Date system. Each entry provides full bibliographic information. The format for reference list entries is crucial for clarity and consistency.

Key components of a reference list entry include the author(s)' name(s) (last name first), the year of publication, the title of the work (italicized for books and journals, in quotation marks for articles within journals or other publications), and publication details such as publisher, city of publication, journal volume and issue numbers, and page ranges. For example, a book entry might look like: Smith, John. 2019. *The History of Chicago*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. A journal article entry would be structured differently: Doe, Jane. 2021. "The Evolution of Urban Planning." *Journal of Urban Studies* 35 (2): 123-145.

Citing Common Source Types

Accurate citation requires understanding how to format different types of sources. Whether you are using books, journal articles, websites, or interviews, each demands specific attention to detail.

Books

For books, essential elements include the author(s), title, publication city, publisher, and publication year.

- **Single Author Book:** Last name, First name. *Title of Book*. Publication City: Publisher, Year.
- **Two Authors:** Last name, First name, and First name Last name. *Title of Book*. Publication City: Publisher, Year.
- **Edited Book:** Editor, First name Last name, ed. *Title of Book*. Publication City: Publisher, Year.

When using the Notes-Bibliography system, the order and punctuation may vary slightly, with the first name often preceding the last name in notes and the full publication details appearing in the bibliography entry.

Journal Articles

Citing journal articles involves providing author(s), article title, journal title, volume, issue number, and page range.

- **Notes-Bibliography System:**

1. First name Last name, "Title of Article," *Title of Journal* Volume, no. Issue (Year): Page(s).
2. Later citation: Last name, "Shortened Title," Page(s).
3. Bibliography entry: Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume, no. Issue (Year): Page(s).

- **Author-Date System:** Last name, First name. Year. "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume (Issue): Page(s).

Ensure you use italics for the journal title and quotation marks for the article title.

Websites

Citing websites requires noting the author (if available), title of the specific page or document, website name, publication or last updated date, and the URL.

- **Notes-Bibliography System:** First name Last name (if applicable), "Title of Page/Document," Title of Website, publication date (or last modified date), accessed Month Day, Year, URL.
- **Author-Date System:** Last name, First name (if applicable). Year (or n.d. if no date). "Title of Page/Document." Title of Website. Accessed Month Day, Year. URL.

For online-only sources where a publication date is not readily available, use "n.d." (no date). Always include the access date to indicate when you viewed the material, as web content can change.

Interviews

Interviews, whether conducted in person, over the phone, or via video conference, require specific citation formats.

- **Notes-Bibliography System:** First name Last name (interviewee), type of interview (e.g., personal interview, phone interview), Month Day, Year.
- **Author-Date System:** Last name, First name. Year. Type of interview.

For unpublished interviews you conducted yourself, you generally do not need to include them in the bibliography or reference list unless they are crucial to your argument. However, if you are referencing a published interview, you would cite it as a published work.

Other Source Materials

Beyond the common types, you might encounter various other materials like dissertations, conference papers, government documents, or multimedia. The principles of Chicago style can be adapted to these formats. Always consult a comprehensive guide like the Chicago Manual of Style or Turabian's Manual for specific instructions on less common source types.

Formatting Your Paper in Chicago Style

Beyond citations, the overall presentation of your paper adheres to specific Chicago style guidelines to ensure professionalism and readability. These formatting rules are standard across most academic institutions.

General Formatting Guidelines

Chicago style papers typically use double-spacing throughout the entire document, including block quotations and the bibliography/reference list. Margins should be set at one inch on all four sides. Font choice is generally flexible, but a standard, readable font such as Times New Roman or Arial in 12-point size is recommended.

Page numbers are usually placed in the upper right-hand corner of each page, starting with the first page of the text (not the title page). If you are using the Notes-Bibliography system, footnotes will appear at the bottom of the page, and endnotes at the end of the paper. If you are using the Author-Date system, your in-text citations will be parenthetical, and the reference list will appear at the end.

Title Page Requirements

A title page is typically required for Chicago style papers. It should include your paper's title, your name, the course name and number, the instructor's name, and the date. The title is usually centered and set in uppercase letters. All this information is generally centered on the page, with appropriate spacing between elements.

The title page does not typically have a page number. The first numbered page in the document is usually the first page of your introduction or the beginning of your main text, depending on whether you are using footnotes or endnotes.

Final Tips for Chicago Style Citation Mastery

The key to mastering Chicago style citation is consistent application and attention to detail. Always refer to the official Chicago Manual of Style or a student-focused guide like Turabian's Manual for definitive answers to specific citation questions.

Before submitting your paper, conduct a thorough review of all your citations, both in-text and in your bibliography or reference list. Check for uniformity in formatting, accuracy in page numbers, and correct spelling of author names and titles. If your instructor has provided specific guidelines or a preferred citation system (Notes-Bibliography or Author-Date), ensure you adhere to those precisely. Practicing with different source types will build your confidence and proficiency.

FAQ: Chicago Style Paper Citation Guide for Students

Q: What is the fundamental difference between the Notes-Bibliography and Author-Date systems in Chicago style?

A: The Notes-Bibliography system uses numbered footnotes or endnotes for citations and a bibliography at the end. The Author-Date system uses parenthetical in-text citations (author and year) and a reference list at the end.

Q: When is the Notes-Bibliography system typically used?

A: The Notes-Bibliography system is generally preferred in disciplines like history, literature, and the arts, where detailed notes and contextual explanations are common.

Q: In the Author-Date system, what information is included in the in-text citation?

A: The in-text citation typically includes the author's last name and the year of publication, like (Smith 2020). Page numbers are added if a specific part of the source is being referenced, like (Smith 2020, 45).

Q: How do I cite a book in Chicago style using the Notes-Bibliography system?

A: For the first note, it's typically: First Name Last Name, *Title of Book* (Publication City: Publisher, Year), Page number. In the bibliography, it's Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publication City: Publisher, Year.

Q: What is the purpose of a bibliography or reference list in Chicago style?

A: Both the bibliography and the reference list serve to provide a complete list of all sources cited in the paper, allowing readers to locate and consult the original works for further research.

Q: How should I format page numbers in a Chicago style paper?

A: Page numbers are usually placed in the upper right-hand corner of each page, starting from the first page of the main text. Footnotes are placed at the bottom of the page, and endnotes are collected at the end of the paper.

Q: What does "ibid." mean in Chicago style citations?

A: "Ibid." is an abbreviation for ibidem, a Latin term meaning "in the same place." It is used in footnotes or endnotes to refer to the immediately preceding source cited, often with a different page number.

Q: How do I cite a website in Chicago style if there is no author listed?

A: If no author is listed for a website, you start the citation with the title of the page or document, followed by the website name and publication/access information.

Q: Can I use a combination of Notes-Bibliography and Author-Date systems for my paper?

A: No, you should consistently use either the Notes-Bibliography system or the Author-Date system throughout your entire paper as dictated by your instructor or discipline.

Q: Where can I find the most authoritative information on Chicago style citation?

A: The most authoritative source is The Chicago Manual of Style itself, or for student papers, A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations by Kate L. Turabian, which is a widely used adaptation of CMOS.

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