

chicago style quoted material guidelines

The Manual of Style, commonly known as The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), provides comprehensive guidance on a wide range of academic and professional writing practices. When it comes to incorporating and citing quoted material, adhering to Chicago style quoted material guidelines is crucial for maintaining academic integrity, ensuring clarity, and achieving a polished, professional presentation. This article delves into the intricacies of how to properly introduce, punctuate, and attribute direct quotations according to CMOS. We will explore the nuances of integrating short and long quotations, handling changes within quotes, and the fundamental differences between footnote/endnote and author-date citation systems, all essential for anyone aiming for precision in their scholarly work.

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Introduction to Quoting in Chicago Style

Chicago style quoted material guidelines are meticulously designed to ensure that direct quotations are integrated seamlessly and ethically into a text. The Chicago Manual of Style, in its various editions, offers detailed instructions to writers on how to present borrowed words from a source accurately and effectively. Proper quoting not only gives credit to original authors but also strengthens your arguments by grounding them in established research and thought. Understanding these guidelines is paramount for students, scholars, and anyone producing academic or professional writing that requires adherence to a recognized citation style. This section will set the stage for a deeper exploration of these essential rules.

The core principle behind Chicago style's approach to quoted material is clarity and consistency. Whether you are using a short, embedded quotation or a longer, block quotation, the method of presentation must be unambiguous. The manual addresses various aspects, from punctuation and capitalization to the specific formatting required for different types of sources. By mastering these components, writers can avoid common errors and present their research

with a high degree of professionalism.

Integrating Short Quotations

Short quotations, typically defined as fewer than five lines of prose or fewer than three lines of verse, are integrated directly into the text. They are enclosed in quotation marks and do not require special formatting like indenting. The key is to introduce the quotation smoothly with your own prose, ensuring that the quoted material flows logically and grammatically within your sentence.

Introducing Short Quotations

The introduction to a short quotation often involves a signal phrase that attributes the quote to its source. This phrase can take various forms. For instance, you might start with the author's name and a verb like "states," "argues," "explains," or "notes." Alternatively, you can introduce the quote without explicitly naming the author in the introductory phrase, relying on the citation to provide that information. The goal is to create a natural transition that does not disrupt the reader's flow.

Punctuation with Short Quotations

Punctuation rules for short quotations in Chicago style are specific. Periods and commas almost always follow the closing quotation mark, unless the quotation itself contains internal punctuation that dictates otherwise. Exclamation points and question marks, however, are placed inside the quotation marks if they are part of the quoted material; otherwise, they follow the closing quotation mark. This rule helps to visually distinguish what is part of the quote and what is your own commentary or sentence structure.

- Commas and periods typically go inside the closing quotation mark.
- Exclamation points and question marks go inside if they are part of the quote, outside otherwise.
- Semicolons and colons always go outside the closing quotation mark.

Incorporating Long Quotations

Long quotations, generally exceeding four prose lines or three lines of poetry, are treated differently to set them apart from the main text. These are presented as block quotations, which are indented from the left margin. This visual distinction helps readers recognize them as distinct passages and emphasizes their significance.

Formatting Block Quotations

To format a block quotation, you begin a new line and indent the entire quotation one-half inch (or typically ten spaces) from the left margin. The quotation is not enclosed in quotation marks. The first line of the quote is indented an additional half-inch if it begins a new paragraph within the quoted material. Double-spacing is usually maintained within the block quote, mirroring the main text.

Introducing Block Quotations

Block quotations are typically introduced by a complete sentence that ends with a colon. This colon signals that an extended passage is about to follow. For example, "Smith (2020) argues that the implications of this discovery are profound: [begin block quote]". The sentence introducing the block quotation should provide context or lead into the quoted material naturally, preparing the reader for the information that is about to be presented.

Handling Changes and Omissions in Quotations

Occasionally, it is necessary to alter a quotation slightly to fit your sentence structure or to omit extraneous material. Chicago style provides specific guidelines for how to indicate these changes to maintain accuracy and transparency.

Using Ellipses

Ellipses (indicated by three dots, often spaced slightly: . . .) are used to

show omissions within a quotation. If the omission occurs at the beginning or end of a quoted sentence, and the sentence structure requires it, an ellipsis may be used. When omitting material between sentences within a quotation, three dots are used. If the omission spans more than one sentence, four dots are used (the period of the preceding sentence followed by an ellipsis). The manual specifies that ellipses should generally not be used to create awkward or misleading passages.

Indicating Alterations with Brackets

Brackets ([]) are used to enclose any changes or additions made to a quotation, such as clarifying a pronoun, correcting a grammatical error in the original, or adding explanatory words. For example, if a quotation uses the pronoun "he" but it's unclear who "he" refers to, you might insert a clarification in brackets: "He [the doctor] stated his diagnosis." This ensures that the reader understands the original meaning as presented in your text.

Capitalization Changes

If you need to change the capitalization of a word at the beginning of a quotation to make it fit grammatically into your sentence, you should enclose the capitalized letter in brackets. For example, if a quote begins a sentence with a lowercase letter but you are integrating it mid-sentence, you might write: "The study revealed that "[t]he effects were significant."

Punctuation Rules for Quoted Material

The correct placement of punctuation relative to quotation marks is a recurring point of confusion. Chicago style offers clear directives to ensure consistency and readability.

Periods and Commas

As mentioned earlier, periods and commas generally precede the closing quotation mark. This is a convention that helps visually connect the quoted text with its enclosure. So, a sentence ending with a quote would look like: "This is the final statement."

Colons and Semicolons

In contrast to periods and commas, colons and semicolons are placed outside the closing quotation mark. This is because these punctuation marks often connect independent clauses or introduce lists, and their function extends beyond the quoted material itself. An example would be: He mentioned the key issue; "the funding was insufficient."

Exclamation Points and Question Marks

The placement of exclamation points and question marks depends on whether they are part of the original quotation. If the quoted material itself is an exclamation or a question, the punctuation mark belongs inside the quotation marks. If the exclamation or question is part of your own sentence structure, and the quote itself does not end with one, the punctuation mark follows the closing quotation mark.

Footnote and Endnote Citation for Quoted Material

Chicago style offers two primary systems for citation: the notes and bibliography system (footnotes or endnotes) and the author-date system. The notes system is widely used in the humanities.

Structure of Notes

When using footnotes or endnotes, a superscript number is placed in the text immediately after the quoted material or the sentence containing it. This number corresponds to a note at the bottom of the page (footnote) or at the end of the document (endnote). The note itself provides full bibliographic details for the source, including author, title, publication information, and page number(s) where the quote can be found.

First vs. Subsequent References

The first note for a given source typically includes full bibliographic

information. Subsequent notes for the same source use a shortened form, usually consisting of the author's last name, a shortened title, and the page number. This streamlines the referencing process while still allowing readers to locate the original source.

Author-Date Citation for Quoted Material

The author-date system, more common in the social sciences and sciences, uses parenthetical citations within the text.

Parenthetical Citations

In this system, a brief citation is placed in parentheses within the text, usually at the end of the sentence containing the quote. This citation typically includes the author's last name and the year of publication, followed by the page number(s) where the quoted material appears. For example: (Smith 2020, 45). This allows readers to quickly identify the source and year of publication, and then consult the reference list at the end of the document for full details.

Reference List

A reference list, titled "References" or "Works Cited," is provided at the end of the document. This list contains full bibliographic entries for all sources cited in the text, alphabetized by author's last name. The author-date system relies on this list to provide comprehensive information about each source.

Specific Scenarios in Quoting

Beyond the general rules, Chicago style addresses numerous specific situations that arise when quoting material, ensuring precision in all cases.

Quoting Poetry

When quoting poetry, line breaks and stanza breaks should be preserved as closely as possible. Short quotations of poetry (one or two lines) are enclosed in quotation marks and run into the text, with a slash (/) used to indicate line breaks, preceded and followed by a space. Longer quotations of poetry are formatted as block quotations.

Quoting Dialogue

Dialogue in novels or plays is typically quoted using standard prose conventions. If quoting a play script, however, it may be presented in a block format, clearly indicating the speaker. For standard dialogue within prose, it's integrated into the text with quotation marks.

Quoting Titles

Titles of shorter works, such as articles, essays, book chapters, and poems, are enclosed in quotation marks. Titles of longer works, such as books, journals, magazines, and newspapers, are italicized. This distinction is crucial for clarity in academic writing.

FAQ

Q: What is the primary difference between Chicago style and other citation styles regarding quoted material?

A: Chicago style offers two distinct systems: notes and bibliography (footnotes/endnotes) and author-date. The notes system, common in the humanities, uses superscript numbers linked to detailed notes, while the author-date system, prevalent in social sciences, uses in-text parenthetical citations linked to a reference list. Other styles might exclusively use one system or have different formatting nuances for punctuation and block quotes.

Q: How do I properly format a block quotation in Chicago style?

A: A block quotation, typically for passages of four or more prose lines, is presented as a separate, indented paragraph. It is indented one-half inch from the left margin, does not use quotation marks, and begins on a new line. The first line of the quoted text is indented an additional half-inch if it begins a new paragraph within the quote.

Q: When should I use ellipses to indicate omissions in a quotation?

A: Ellipses (. . .) are used to show that words, phrases, or sentences have been omitted from the original text. They are generally used sparingly and only when the omission does not distort the meaning of the original quotation. The placement and number of dots can vary depending on whether the omission is within a sentence or spans multiple sentences.

Q: What is the purpose of using brackets when quoting material in Chicago style?

A: Brackets ([]) are used to enclose any additions or alterations made to the original quotation. This includes clarifying pronoun references, correcting minor errors in the original text for readability, or adding explanatory words to ensure the quote is understandable within your own text.

Q: Where do periods and commas go in relation to quotation marks in Chicago style?

A: In Chicago style, periods and commas almost always go inside the closing quotation mark, regardless of whether they are part of the original quoted material. This is a standard convention designed for clarity and visual cohesion.

Q: How do I cite a quotation from a source for the first time using the Chicago notes and bibliography system?

A: For the first reference to a source in the notes and bibliography system, the corresponding footnote or endnote should include complete bibliographic information: author's full name, title of the work, publication details (city, publisher, year), and the specific page number(s) of the quotation.

Q: What is the difference between quoting a poem and quoting prose in Chicago style?

A: When quoting poetry, line breaks and stanza divisions are crucial and should be preserved. Short poetry quotes (one to two lines) are run into the text with slashes indicating line breaks, while longer quotes are formatted as block quotations. Prose quotes are integrated into the text with quotation marks or presented as block quotations based on length.

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