Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide

The Chicago Manual of Style presents two basic documentation systems: (1) notes and bibliography and (2) author-date. Choosing between the two often depends on subject matter and the nature of sources cited, as each system is favored by different groups of scholars.

The notes and bibliography style is preferred by many in the humanities, including those in literature, history, and the arts. This style presents bibliographic information in notes and, often, a bibliography. It accommodates a variety of sources, including esoteric ones less appropriate to the author-date system.

The author-date system has long been used by those in the physical, natural, and social sciences. In this system, sources are briefly cited in the text, usually in parentheses, by author’s last name and date of publication. The short citations are amplified in a list of references, where full bibliographic information is provided.

Aside from the use of notes versus parenthetical references in the text, the two systems share a similar style. Click on the tabs below to see some common examples of materials cited in each style, including examples of common electronic sources. For numerous specific examples, see chapters 14 and 15 of the 16th edition of The Chicago Manual of Style.

Notes and Bibliography: Sample Citations

The following examples illustrate citations using the notes and bibliography system. Examples of notes are followed by shortened versions of citations to the same source. For more details and many more examples, see chapter 14 of The Chicago Manual of Style. For examples of the same citations using the author-date system, click on the Author-Date tab above.

**Book**

One author


Two or more authors


For four or more authors, list all of the authors in the bibliography; in the note, list only the first author, followed by *et al.* ("and others"): 

1. Dana Barnes et al., *Plastics: Essays on American Corporate Ascendance in the 1960s* . . . 
2. Barnes et al., *Plastics* . . .

Editor, translator, or compiler instead of author


Editor, translator, or compiler in addition to author


Chapter or other part of a book


Chapter of an edited volume originally published elsewhere (as in primary sources)


Preface, foreword, introduction, or similar part of a book

2. Rieger, introduction, xxxiii.


Book published electronically

If a book is available in more than one format, cite the version you consulted. For books consulted online, list a URL; include an access date only if one is required by your publisher or discipline. If no fixed page numbers are available, you can include a section title or a chapter or other number.

3. Austen, Pride and Prejudice.


Article in a print journal

In a note, list the specific page numbers consulted, if any. In the bibliography, list the page range for the whole article.


Article in an online journal

Include a DOI [Digital Object Identifier] if the journal lists one. A DOI is a permanent ID that, when appended to http://dx.doi.org/ in the address bar of an Internet browser, will lead to the source. If no DOI is available, list a URL. Include an access date only if one is required by your publisher or discipline.


Article in a newspaper or popular magazine

Newspaper and magazine articles may be cited in running text ("As Sheryl Stolberg and Robert Pear noted in a New York Times article on February 27, 2010, . . .") instead of in a note, and they are commonly omitted from a bibliography. The following examples show the more formal versions of the citations. If you
consulted the article online, include a URL; include an access date only if your publisher or discipline requires one. If no author is identified, begin the citation with the article title.


Book review


Thesis or dissertation

2. Choi, “Contesting Imaginaires.”


Paper presented at a meeting or conference


Website

A citation to website content can often be limited to a mention in the text or in a note (“As of July 19, 2008, the McDonald’s Corporation listed on its website . . . ”). If a more formal citation is desired, it may be styled as in the examples below. Because such content is subject to change, include an access date or, if available, a date that the site was last modified.

3. “Google Privacy Policy.”


Blog entry or comment

Blog entries or comments may be cited in running text (“In a comment posted to The Becker-Posner Blog on February 23, 2010, . . . ”) instead of in a note, and they are commonly omitted from a bibliography. The following examples show the more formal versions of the citations. There is no need to add pseud. after an apparently fictitious or informal name. (If an access date is required, add it before the URL; see examples elsewhere in this guide.)

years-posner.html.


**E-mail or text message**

E-mail and text messages may be cited in running text ("In a text message to the author on March 1, 2010, John Doe revealed . . . ") instead of in a note, and they are rarely listed in a bibliography. The following example shows the more formal version of a note.


**Item in a commercial database**

For items retrieved from a commercial database, add the name of the database and an accession number following the facts of publication. In this example, the dissertation cited above is shown as it would be cited if it were retrieved from ProQuest’s database for dissertations and theses.