

chicago manual block quote citation examples

Article Title: Mastering Chicago Manual Block Quote Citation Examples: A Comprehensive Guide

chicago manual block quote citation examples are fundamental for academic and professional writing, ensuring proper attribution and avoiding plagiarism. This comprehensive guide delves deep into the intricacies of incorporating block quotes according to the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), covering everything from when to use them to the precise formatting for both parenthetical and note-style citations. We will explore the distinction between regular inline quotes and block quotes, and provide clear, actionable examples for various source types, including books, articles, and online materials. Understanding these conventions is crucial for presenting scholarly work with integrity and clarity, making your research accessible and credible to your readers. This article aims to demystify the process, offering detailed explanations and practical illustrations to aid writers of all levels.

Table of Contents

Understanding Block Quotes in Chicago Style

When to Use Block Quotes

Formatting Block Quotes

In-Text Citations for Block Quotes (Author-Date System)

Note Citations for Block Quotes (Notes and Bibliography System)

Block Quotes from Books

Block Quotes from Journal Articles

Block Quotes from Websites and Online Sources

Special Cases and Considerations

Understanding Block Quotes in Chicago Style

Block quotes, also known as displayed quotes, are used in Chicago style when a quotation is longer than approximately 400 characters or more than four or five lines of prose. This formatting distinguishes lengthy quotations from the main body of your text, signaling to the reader that a significant passage from another source is being presented. The purpose of using a block quote is to highlight the borrowed text without disrupting the flow of your own writing. It allows readers to focus on the original wording and context of the passage.

The Chicago Manual of Style provides clear guidelines for the indentation and punctuation of these extended quotations. Unlike shorter quotations that are integrated into your own sentences with quotation marks, block quotes are set

apart typographically. This visual separation is a key characteristic of Chicago style's approach to incorporating external sources. Adhering to these formatting rules is essential for academic integrity and professional presentation, ensuring that your work meets the standards expected in scholarly and technical writing.

When to Use Block Quotes

The decision to use a block quote versus an inline quote depends on the length and the specific purpose of including the passage. Generally, if a quotation is lengthy, complex, or contains important nuances that would be lost if condensed or integrated into your own sentence structure, a block quote is the appropriate choice. Chicago style recommends using block quotes when the borrowed text significantly contributes to your argument or requires close examination by the reader.

Consider the following scenarios where a block quote is advisable:

- When the quotation is crucial for illustrating a specific point or concept that your own words cannot adequately capture.
- When the exact wording of the source is paramount for analysis or critique.
- When the quotation is long enough that embedding it within your text would make your paragraphs cumbersome or difficult to read.
- When the quotation provides historical context, a foundational definition, or a key piece of evidence that warrants special attention.

Formatting Block Quotes

The formatting of block quotes in Chicago style is distinct and follows specific rules to ensure clarity and proper presentation. The primary characteristic is indentation. The entire block quote should be indented from the left margin, typically by half an inch (or about 0.5 ems), with no quotation marks enclosing the passage itself. The first line of the block quote is indented the same as the subsequent lines, unlike a regular paragraph where the first line might have a different indentation.

The prose following the block quote should begin at the normal margin. If the block quote ends with a sentence that would typically be followed by a parenthetical citation or a footnote marker, the punctuation (like a period) should precede the citation or marker. If the block quote itself contains internal paragraph breaks, each new paragraph within the block quote should

be indented an additional half-inch from the left margin, just as you would indent new paragraphs in your own writing.

In-Text Citations for Block Quotes (Author-Date System)

When using the author-date system for citations, the in-text citation for a block quote follows the same principles as for inline quotes, but its placement is crucial. The parenthetical citation typically appears at the end of the quotation, after the final punctuation mark of the borrowed text. This parenthetical information usually includes the author's last name, the year of publication, and the page number(s) from which the quotation was taken.

For example, if you are quoting from a book by John Smith published in 2020 on page 45, the citation would look like this:

(Smith 2020, 45)

If the author and date are already mentioned in the introductory sentence to the block quote, the parenthetical citation might only include the page number, or it might be omitted entirely if it is clear from the context. However, it is generally best practice to include the page number at a minimum. The citation should be placed outside the final punctuation of the quote if it is a period, comma, or question mark. If the quote ends with an exclamation point or a dash, the citation follows immediately after.

Note Citations for Block Quotes (Notes and Bibliography System)

In the notes and bibliography system, block quotes are followed by either a footnote or an endnote. The note number is placed immediately after the final punctuation of the borrowed text, before any other punctuation that might follow. The note itself will contain the full bibliographic information for the source, including author, title, publication details, and the specific page number(s) of the quotation.

For the first citation of a particular source, the footnote or endnote will include all the necessary details. Subsequent citations of the same source can be shortened, often using the author's last name and the page number, or a shortened title if there are multiple works by the same author.

Here's an example of a footnote for a block quote from a book:

1. John Smith, *The History of Citation* (New York: Academic Press, 2021), 112.

And a subsequent shortened note for the same source:

1. Smith, *History of Citation*, 130.

Block Quotes from Books

When incorporating a block quote from a book, the formatting and citation depend on whether you are using the author-date system or the notes and bibliography system. For the author-date system, the block quote is indented, and the parenthetical citation follows at the end of the quotation, including author, year, and page number. Ensure the page number accurately reflects where the quoted material was found.

For the notes and bibliography system, the block quote is indented, and a footnote or endnote marker is placed after the quotation. The corresponding note will provide the author's full name, the book's title (italicized), publication information, and the specific page number.

Here is an example of a block quote from a book using the notes and bibliography system:

Smith argues that the evolution of scholarly communication has fundamentally reshaped how knowledge is disseminated and consumed. He writes:

The transition from manuscript culture to print capitalism, and subsequently to the digital age, represents not merely a technological shift but a profound reordering of intellectual authority and access. Each epoch presented its own set of challenges and opportunities for scholars, influencing the very structure of academic discourse and the nature of scholarly argumentation.

1. John Smith, *The Dissemination of Ideas: A Scholarly Journey* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 78.

Block Quotes from Journal Articles

Citing block quotes from journal articles follows the same formatting principles as those from books. The quotation is presented as a block, indented from the left margin, and is not enclosed in quotation marks. The citation method, whether author-date or notes and bibliography, dictates the format of the in-text or end-of-text attribution.

In the author-date system, the parenthetical citation will include the

author's last name, the year of publication, and the page number. For the notes and bibliography system, a footnote or endnote will contain the author's full name, the article title (in quotation marks), the journal title (italicized), volume and issue numbers, publication year, and the specific page number(s).

Consider this example for a block quote from a journal article using the notes and bibliography system:

In her analysis of early 20th-century urban development, Davis highlights the interconnectedness of social and spatial transformations:

The sprawling metropolises of the period were not simply physical constructs but vibrant ecosystems of social interaction, economic exchange, and political contestation. Understanding these urban landscapes requires an appreciation for the complex interplay of forces that shaped their growth and the lived experiences of their inhabitants.

2. Emily Davis, "Urban Landscapes and Social Fabric," *Journal of Urban History* 45, no. 3 (2017): 312.

Block Quotes from Websites and Online Sources

When quoting from websites and other online sources, Chicago style requires careful attention to detail. The block quote formatting (indentation, no quotation marks) remains consistent. The citation, however, must be adapted to include information available for online materials, such as author (if present), title of the specific page or article, title of the website, and a URL. For the author-date system, the year of publication or last update is crucial, along with page numbers if provided or a paragraph number.

For the notes and bibliography system, the footnote or endnote will include similar information. If a publication date is not readily available, you may use the abbreviation "n.d." for no date. It is also good practice to include a date when you accessed the material, especially for content that might change.

Here is an example of a block quote from a website using the author-date system:

The National Archives provides a compelling overview of the era:
(National Archives 2022, para. 4)

The post-war economic boom was characterized by unprecedented industrial expansion and a significant increase in consumer spending. This period laid the groundwork for many of the social and economic structures that continue to influence American society today.

Special Cases and Considerations

While the general rules for block quotes are clear, certain special cases require nuanced application of Chicago style. These can include quotations that are themselves quotations, quotations with unusual punctuation, or passages that span multiple pages. It is important to consult the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* for the most precise guidance on these less common scenarios.

For quotations within quotations, you generally retain the original punctuation and quotation marks of the inner quote. If a block quote requires an abbreviation or an ellipsis to indicate omitted material, these should be used judiciously and correctly. Ellipses are typically enclosed in brackets or parentheses. When a quotation spans multiple pages, you may cite a range of page numbers in your citation.

Another consideration is the integration of the block quote into your own prose. The introductory sentence or phrase should lead smoothly into the displayed quotation. The language used before the block quote should frame it effectively for the reader, explaining its relevance and significance to your argument. The prose that follows the block quote should then analyze, discuss, or reflect upon the borrowed text, connecting it back to your own ideas.

FAQ

Q: What is the primary difference between an inline quote and a block quote in Chicago style?

A: The primary difference lies in length and formatting. Inline quotes are shorter (typically four or five lines or fewer) and integrated into your text with quotation marks. Block quotes are longer, set apart by indentation, and do not use quotation marks.

Q: How do I format a block quote when it has its own paragraph breaks?

A: If the original source material within your block quote contains paragraph breaks, you should replicate those breaks in your own block quote by indenting the first line of each new paragraph within the block quote an additional half-inch from the left margin.

Q: When should I use a block quote instead of an inline quote?

A: You should use a block quote when the quotation is lengthy, complex, contains important nuances, or is crucial for detailed analysis. Generally, if a quote exceeds approximately 400 characters or about four to five lines of text, it warrants block quote formatting.

Q: What punctuation goes before a block quote in Chicago style?

A: A block quote is typically introduced by a colon, especially if the introductory phrase is a complete sentence. However, a comma can be used if the introductory phrase is not a complete sentence, or no punctuation may be needed if the quote flows grammatically into your own sentence.

Q: Where does the parenthetical citation go for a block quote in the author-date system?

A: In the author-date system, the parenthetical citation for a block quote is placed after the final punctuation mark of the quoted material, enclosed in parentheses, and typically includes the author's last name, year of publication, and page number(s).

Q: How do I cite a block quote from a website if there is no author listed?

A: If no author is listed for a website, you generally use the name of the organization or the website itself as the author in your citation. For the author-date system, this would be followed by the year and page or paragraph number. For notes and bibliography, the organization name would appear as the author.

Q: Can I use quotation marks around a block quote?

A: No, a defining characteristic of Chicago manual block quotes is that they are not enclosed in quotation marks. They are set apart typographically by indentation.

Q: What is the correct indentation for a block quote in Chicago style?

A: A block quote should be indented from the left margin by half an inch (or approximately 0.5 ems). All lines of the block quote, including the first, receive this indentation.

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