

chicago manual of style artwork citation examples

Understanding Chicago Manual of Style Artwork Citation Examples

chicago manual of style artwork citation examples are crucial for academic papers, art historical research, and any work that visually engages with artistic creations. Properly citing artwork ensures you give credit to the original creator, avoid plagiarism, and allow your readers to locate the source material. This article provides a comprehensive guide to citing artwork in Chicago style, covering various scenarios from paintings and sculptures to digital images and performance art. We will delve into the nuances of both the Notes-Bibliography and Author-Date systems, offering clear, actionable examples for each. Mastering these citation practices is fundamental for scholarly integrity and the effective communication of your research.

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The Notes-Bibliography System for Artwork Citations

The Notes-Bibliography system is the most common approach within the Chicago Manual of Style, particularly in humanities disciplines like art history. This system uses footnotes or endnotes to provide source information for specific citations within the text, followed by a comprehensive bibliography at the end of the work. When citing artwork, clarity and precision are paramount.

Footnotes/Endnotes for Artwork

Footnotes and endnotes offer detailed information about the artwork and its location. The initial note for a given source is typically more detailed than subsequent notes, which can be shortened. Key components include the artist's name, the title of the work (italicized), the year of creation, the medium, the dimensions, and the current location (museum, gallery, private collection) with city. If citing an image from a book or exhibition catalog, you'll also include publication details.

For a painting in a museum, a full note might look like this:

1. Leonardo da Vinci, *Mona Lisa*, c. 1503–1506, oil on poplar panel, 77 cm × 53 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

If you are citing a reproduction of the artwork from a book, the note would expand to include the book's details:

2. Vincent van Gogh, *The Starry Night*, 1889, oil on canvas, 73.7 cm × 92.1 cm, Museum of Modern Art, New York, reproduced in Meyer Schapiro, *Vincent van Gogh* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1950), 88.

Subsequent notes for the same artwork can be shortened:

3. Da Vinci, *Mona Lisa*.

Bibliography Entries for Artwork

The bibliography is an alphabetical list of all sources cited in the text. For artwork, the entry typically begins with the artist's last name, followed by their first name. The title of the artwork is italicized, followed by the year of creation, medium, dimensions, and location. If you are citing a reproduction from a publication, the entry will list the publication details after the artwork's information.

For a standalone artwork:

Da Vinci, Leonardo. *Mona Lisa*. c. 1503–1506. Oil on poplar panel, 77 cm × 53 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

For an artwork reproduced in a book:

Van Gogh, Vincent. *The Starry Night*. 1889. Oil on canvas, 73.7 cm × 92.1 cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York. Reproduced in *Vincent van Gogh*, by Meyer Schapiro, 88. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1950.

It's important to maintain consistency in the level of detail provided for each entry in your bibliography.

The Author-Date System for Artwork Citations

The Author-Date system, while less common for art historical essays, is prevalent in other academic fields. It uses parenthetical in-text citations that refer to a reference list at the end of the document. This system prioritizes conciseness in the text itself.

In-Text Citations for Artwork

In the Author-Date system, artwork citations in the text typically include the artist's last name and the year of creation, enclosed in parentheses. If the artist's name is mentioned in the sentence, only the year is needed.

The iconic smile of the Mona Lisa continues to fascinate viewers (Da Vinci 1503–1506).

Van Gogh's swirling brushstrokes in *The Starry Night* (1889) convey a powerful emotional intensity.

If you are referencing a specific image from a secondary source, the citation would include the author of the secondary source, the year of publication, and the page number.

Schapiro notes the emotional resonance of Van Gogh's work (Schapiro 1950, 88).

Reference List Entries for Artwork

The reference list, similar to the bibliography, is an alphabetical list of all sources. For artwork, the entry begins with the artist's last name, followed by their first name, the italicized title, the year of creation, medium, dimensions, and location. If citing a reproduction, the publication details follow.

For a standalone artwork:

Da Vinci, Leonardo. 1503–1506. *Mona Lisa*. Oil on poplar panel, 77 cm × 53 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

For an artwork reproduced in a book:

Van Gogh, Vincent. 1889. *The Starry Night*. Oil on canvas, 73.7 cm × 92.1 cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York. Reproduced in *Vincent van Gogh*, by Meyer Schapiro, 88. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

The structure emphasizes the author and date at the beginning of the entry, aligning with the in-text citation format.

Specific Types of Artwork Citations

Chicago style offers guidelines for citing a wide array of artistic media. Understanding how to adapt the general principles to specific forms of artwork is essential for accurate representation.

Paintings and Drawings

As demonstrated in previous examples, citing paintings and drawings involves identifying the artist, the title, the year, the medium, dimensions, and the current location. This is a straightforward application of the Chicago style principles for artwork.

Sculptures

For sculptures, the citation structure remains largely the same. You would include the artist's name, the title of the sculpture (italicized), the year of creation, the medium, the dimensions, and the location. For three-dimensional works, dimensions are particularly important.

Example (Notes-Bibliography):

4. Auguste Rodin, *The Thinker*, modeled 1880, cast c. 1904, bronze, 186 cm (73 in) height, Musée Rodin, Paris.

Example (Author-Date):

Rodin, Auguste. 1904. *The Thinker*. Bronze, 186 cm (73 in) height. Musée Rodin, Paris.

Photographs

When citing photographs as artworks (rather than documentary images), the photographer is treated as the artist. The title of the photograph, year, medium, dimensions, and collection are included. If citing a published photograph, include the publication details.

Example (Notes-Bibliography):

5. Ansel Adams, *Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico*, 1941, gelatin silver print, 39.5 cm × 49.8 cm, The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

Example (Author-Date):

Adams, Ansel. 1941. *Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico*. Gelatin silver print, 39.5 cm × 49.8 cm. The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust.

Digital Art and Online Images

Citing digital art or images found online requires specific attention to the platform and access information. Include the artist, title, year of creation, and then provide the website name, URL, and access date.

Example (Notes-Bibliography):

6. Refik Anadol, *Machine Hallucinations*, 2016, data sculpture, <https://refik.io/works/machine-hallucinations/> (accessed October 26, 2023).

Example (Author-Date):

Anadol, Refik. 2016. *Machine Hallucinations*. Data sculpture. <https://refik.io/works/machine-hallucinations/> (accessed October 26, 2023).

Performance Art

Performance art presents unique challenges due to its ephemeral nature. Citations typically focus on the performer, the title of the performance, the date and location of the specific performance, and any available documentation (video, photographs, written accounts).

Example (Notes-Bibliography):

7. Marina Abramović, *Rhythm 0*, performed March 4–10, 1974, Studio Morra, Naples,

documented in photographs and video recordings.

Example (Author-Date):

Abramović, Marina. 1974. *Rhythm 0*. Performed March 4–10, 1974, Studio Morra, Naples. Documented in photographs and video recordings.

Exhibition Installations

For large-scale installations, the artist and title are key. Details about the exhibition in which the installation was presented, the venue, and the dates are crucial for providing context.

Example (Notes-Bibliography):

8. Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *The Gates*, Central Park, New York City, February 12–27, 2005, installation.

Example (Author-Date):

Christo and Jeanne-Claude. 2005. *The Gates*. Central Park, New York City, February 12–27, 2005. Installation.

Key Elements of Artwork Citations

Regardless of the specific medium or citation system, several core elements are consistently required for accurate artwork citations in Chicago style. These components provide the necessary information for readers to identify and potentially locate the artwork.

- **Artist's Name:** Full name of the creator.
- **Title of the Work:** Italicized.
- **Date of Creation:** The year or range of years the artwork was made. Use "c." for circa if approximate.
- **Medium:** Materials used (e.g., oil on canvas, bronze, digital).
- **Dimensions:** Height, width, and depth (if applicable). Include units (cm, in).
- **Location:** Name of the museum, gallery, or collection, followed by the city.
- **Publication Details (if applicable):** For reproductions, include author of the publication, title of the publication (italicized), publisher, year, and page number.

- **URL and Access Date (for online sources):** Essential for digital art and online images.

Ensuring all these elements are present and correctly formatted significantly enhances the credibility of your research.

Common Challenges and Solutions

Citing artwork can sometimes present unique challenges, especially when dealing with older works, private collections, or less conventional art forms. Anticipating these issues and knowing how to address them is part of mastering Chicago style.

One common challenge is dealing with works where the artist is unknown or the date of creation is uncertain. In such cases, you would use "Unknown" for the artist and provide the best available date information, often using "n.d." for "no date" if absolutely no information is available, though this should be a last resort. For the date, you might use a range or an estimated period.

Another issue arises with artwork found in private collections. While you cannot typically visit private collections, if you have reliable information about the work's existence and ownership, you can cite it. The location would state "Private collection" and the city if known.

When citing artwork in exhibition catalogs, the catalog's author, title, and publication details are often the primary focus, with the artwork itself described within that context. Always prioritize the most direct source of information available. If a specific work is reproduced on multiple pages, cite the first page of the reproduction.

Frequently Asked Questions about Chicago Manual of Style Artwork Citation Examples

Q: What is the difference between citing a painting in a museum and a painting reproduced in a book using Chicago style?

A: When citing a painting in a museum, the focus is on the artwork itself and its physical location. When citing a reproduction in a book, you must also include the bibliographic details of the book, including its author, title, publisher, and page number where the artwork appears.

Q: How do I cite artwork where the artist is unknown?

A: If the artist is unknown, you would use the word "Unknown" in place of the artist's name. The rest of the citation elements, such as the title of the artwork, date, medium, and location, would follow as usual.

Q: Should I include dimensions for all types of artwork in my Chicago style citations?

A: Including dimensions is highly recommended for most visual artworks like paintings, sculptures, and photographs, as it provides important contextual information. For artworks where dimensions are not applicable or easily ascertainable (e.g., certain digital installations or performance art documentation), you may omit them, but be consistent in your approach.

Q: How do I cite a work of art that is part of a larger collection or exhibition?

A: If the artwork is part of a larger collection, you would typically list the specific artwork first, followed by the collection name and the institution or city where it is housed. For exhibitions, the exhibition title and dates are crucial pieces of information to include alongside the artwork details.

Q: What is the correct way to format the title of an artwork in Chicago style?

A: Titles of artworks, whether in footnotes/endnotes or bibliography/reference lists, should always be italicized. This distinction helps readers differentiate between the artwork's title and other descriptive text.

Q: How do I cite a piece of art that I only saw online?

A: When citing digital art or an image of artwork viewed online, you must provide the artist's name, title of the work, year of creation, and then the name of the website, the full URL, and the date you accessed the content. This ensures readers can find the specific online source.

Q: Is there a specific format for citing performance art in Chicago style?

A: Citing performance art can be complex due to its transient nature. You should include the performer's name, the title of the performance, the date and location of the specific performance, and any available documentation like video recordings, photographs, or written accounts of the event.

Q: What if the artwork has multiple creators?

A: If an artwork has multiple creators, list them in the order they are credited. For two creators, you might list both. For three or more, you can list the first creator followed by "and others" or use an em dash and list all creators, depending on the emphasis you wish to give.

Q: How do I handle artwork that is not dated?

A: If an artwork is not dated, you should use "n.d." (no date) in place of the date of creation. However, try to provide the most accurate estimation possible. If there's an estimated period, use that (e.g., "late 19th century").

Q: Does the Chicago Manual of Style have different rules for citing visual art versus other types of media?

A: Yes, while the core principles of citation remain consistent, the specific details required for visual art (like medium, dimensions, and location) differ from those for citing books, articles, or websites. The Chicago Manual of Style provides tailored guidance for various media types to ensure clarity and accuracy.

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