

chicago manual of style footnotes for unpublished sources examples

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) provides comprehensive guidelines for citing sources, and understanding how to properly footnote unpublished materials is crucial for academic and professional writing. Properly formatted footnotes ensure that readers can locate and verify your information, lending credibility to your work. This article delves into the intricacies of Chicago Manual of Style footnotes for unpublished sources, offering detailed explanations and practical examples for various types of materials. We will explore the core principles of citing unpublished manuscripts, correspondence, dissertations, theses, and other unique documents, providing clear illustrations to demystify the process. Mastering these citation styles will significantly enhance the clarity and authority of your research.

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Understanding the Fundamentals of Chicago Manual of Style Footnotes

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) is renowned for its detailed approach to citation, and its system of notes and bibliography is a cornerstone of many academic disciplines. When dealing with unpublished sources, the goal remains the same: to provide enough information for a reader to find the exact material being referenced. This means being as specific as possible, including details that might seem redundant for published works but are vital for locating unique, uncatalogued, or privately held documents. The key principle is clarity and accessibility, ensuring that your citation functions as a precise locator.

CMOS generally follows a two-part citation system: footnotes or endnotes and a bibliography. For unpublished materials, the same structure applies. The initial note provides the full citation details, while subsequent notes referring to the same source may be shortened. The bibliography typically includes a concise entry for unpublished materials as well, though the level of detail might vary slightly depending on the nature of the source and its

accessibility. It is imperative to consult the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style for the most current and specific guidance.

Citing Unpublished Manuscripts

Unpublished manuscripts, whether they are personal papers, drafts of literary works, or research notes, require careful attention to detail in their citation. The primary goal is to identify the author of the manuscript, the title (if it has one), the date of creation, and its location. If the manuscript is part of a larger collection, identifying that collection is also essential. This might involve specifying a university archive, a private collection, or a personal library.

Manuscripts in Archives or Special Collections

When citing an unpublished manuscript housed in an archive or special collection, such as those found at universities or historical societies, you need to provide information that allows a researcher to find it within that institution's holdings. This includes the name of the author or creator, the title of the specific manuscript or document, the date it was created, the name of the archive or collection, and the accession number or collection identifier if available. Including box and folder numbers is also highly recommended for precision.

For instance, if you are citing a letter from a historical figure that is part of a larger collection at a university, the footnote would typically look like this: Author's Full Name, "Title of Document" (if applicable), Date of Document, Collection Name, Archival Institution, City, State, Accession Number (if applicable), Box Number, Folder Number. This level of detail ensures that another scholar can precisely locate the document within the vast holdings of an archive.

Privately Held Manuscripts

Citing a manuscript that is held privately, perhaps by a family member or a private collector, presents a unique challenge due to its limited accessibility. In such cases, you must still provide as much identifying information as possible. This includes the author, title, date of creation, and a description of who holds the manuscript and where it is located. It is important to note that the privacy of the holder should be respected, and identifying information should be provided only with their consent.

An example for a privately held manuscript might be: Author's Full Name,

"Title of Manuscript," Date of Manuscript, privately held by [Name of Holder], [City, State]. While this is less precise than an archival citation, it acknowledges the source and the circumstances of its preservation. If the holder is willing, more specific details about their relationship to the author or the provenance of the manuscript can add further context.

Footnotes for Unpublished Correspondence

Unpublished letters and other forms of correspondence are common in historical research and personal accounts. Citing them requires identifying the sender, recipient, date, and the current location of the correspondence. The specificity needed will depend on whether the letters are part of a formally organized archive or are still in private hands.

Published Letters in Archival Collections

When citing letters that have been collected and cataloged by an archive, the format closely resembles that of other archival materials. You will need to identify the sender, the recipient, the date of the letter, the specific collection it belongs to, the institution holding it, and the relevant box and folder numbers. This ensures that the reader can pinpoint the exact letter within the collection.

A typical footnote for a letter in an archive would be: Sender's Full Name to Recipient's Full Name, Date of Letter, Collection Name, Archival Institution, City, State, Box Number, Folder Number. For example: Jane Austen to Cassandra Austen, January 11, 1817, Jane Austen Papers, British Library, London, Add MS 37039, Box 1, Folder 2.

Unpublished Personal Correspondence

For correspondence that has not yet been formally archived, such as personal letters kept by family members, the citation needs to be clear about who possesses the letters and where they are located. While privacy is a concern, providing sufficient information for potential verification is key. This might include the sender, recipient, date, and a general indication of the current holder and their location, with appropriate respect for privacy.

An example of citing personal, unpublished correspondence: John Smith to Mary Jones, March 15, 1955, personal collection of David Smith, Chicago, Illinois. If the correspondence is particularly significant and the holder is willing to provide access, further details about its provenance or its role within a family archive could be included.

Referencing Unpublished Dissertations and Theses

Unpublished dissertations and theses are valuable sources of original research. When citing them, it is crucial to include the author's name, the title of the work, the degree sought, the university granting the degree, and the year of completion. Since these are typically available through university libraries or dissertation databases, indicating their availability is also important.

Dissertations and Theses Available Online

Many dissertations and theses are now accessible online through services like ProQuest or institutional repositories. When citing such a work, you need to include the author, title, degree information, university, year, and the database or repository where it can be found. Providing a stable URL or persistent identifier is ideal if available.

A standard footnote for an online dissertation would be: Author's Full Name, "Title of Dissertation" (PhD diss., University Name, Year), Database Name (if applicable), Accession Number or URL. For instance: Emily Carter, "The Impact of Digital Media on Political Discourse" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2021), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, Accession No. 12345678.

Dissertations and Theses Not Readily Available

In cases where a dissertation or thesis is not readily available online or through standard interlibrary loan, you will need to provide the same core information (author, title, degree, university, year) and note its specific location, such as a particular university library's special collection or a private collection, if applicable. Clarity about its limited availability is important.

An example for a difficult-to-access dissertation: Robert Green, "Early American Trade Routes" (MA thesis, Yale University, 1975), Yale University Library, Special Collections. This informs the reader that the work exists but may require special arrangements to access.

Citing Other Unpublished Materials

Beyond manuscripts and correspondence, a variety of other unpublished materials can serve as valuable sources. This category can include interviews, lecture notes, conference presentations, diaries, personal journals, and unpublished reports. The principles for citing these remain consistent: identify the creator, describe the material, provide the date, and specify its location or accessibility.

Unpublished Interviews

When citing an interview you conducted, you must provide the name of the interviewee, the date of the interview, and the circumstances of its recording or transcription. If the interview is recorded, specify the format (e.g., audio, video). If it is transcribed, indicate where the transcript is held or if it is part of your own research notes.

A footnote for an unpublished interview would be: Interviewee's Full Name, by Interviewer's Full Name, date of interview, type of medium (e.g., audio recording, transcript), location of recording or transcript. Example: Dr. Eleanor Vance, interviewed by author, July 20, 2022, audio recording, private collection of author. If it's a published interview that was conducted and transcribed but not officially published, the citation would reflect that.

Personal Diaries and Journals

Personal diaries and journals are rich primary sources, but they often reside in private collections or specialized archives. When citing them, the author, the title (if any, though often just "diary" or "journal"), the specific date(s) of the entry, and the location of the document are essential. If it's part of a larger collection, that must be specified.

An example of citing a diary entry: Sarah Jenkins, Diary entry, May 5, 1888, Sarah Jenkins Papers, University of Michigan Special Collections Library, Ann Arbor, Box 3, Folder 1. If the diary is in a private collection, the citation would follow similar patterns to other privately held manuscripts, respecting the privacy of the owner.

Practical Examples of Chicago Manual of Style Footnotes for Unpublished Sources

To solidify understanding, let's review a consolidated set of examples covering different types of unpublished sources. These examples aim to illustrate the application of CMOS principles for clarity and specificity,

which are paramount when dealing with materials that lack the standardization of published works.

- **Unpublished Manuscript in an Archive:** John Adams, "Notes on the Stamp Act," ca. 1765, John Adams Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Microfilm Reel 58.
- **Unpublished Letter:** Abigail Adams to John Adams, March 31, 1776, Abigail Adams Letterbook, Adams Family Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Vol. 7, p. 89.
- **Unpublished Dissertation:** Michael Chen, "The Geopolitics of Renewable Energy" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2019), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, 9876543.
- **Unpublished Interview:** Dr. Maria Garcia, interviewed by David Lee, October 10, 2023, audio recording, personal archive of David Lee, Austin, Texas.
- **Unpublished Journal Entry:** Henry David Thoreau, Journal entry, August 21, 1851, Henry David Thoreau Papers, Huntington Library, San Marino, California, HM 16163.
- **Unpublished Report:** Global Climate Research Institute, "Projected Sea Level Rise for Coastal Regions," unpublished report, October 2020, p. 15.

These examples demonstrate the core elements: author/creator, title/description, date, and location. The level of detail provided is designed to enable a reader to find the source with minimal difficulty, even if the source itself is unique or not widely circulated.

Tips for Effective Footnoting of Unpublished Materials

Effective footnoting of unpublished materials hinges on meticulous attention to detail and a clear understanding of the source's context. Always aim for the highest degree of specificity possible, as this directly impacts the verifiability of your research. When in doubt about the exact format or required information, consulting the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style is the most reliable approach.

Key considerations include:

- **Consistency:** Maintain a consistent style throughout your document for all similar types of unpublished sources.
- **Clarity:** Use clear and concise language to describe the source and its location.
- **Specificity:** Provide as many identifying details as possible (dates, locations, collection names, box/folder numbers, accession numbers).
- **Accessibility:** If the source is privately held, note that and respect the owner's privacy. If it's in an archive or database, indicate where it can be found.
- **Primary Source Identification:** Clearly distinguish between primary and secondary unpublished sources.

By adhering to these principles and practicing with various examples, you can confidently and accurately cite unpublished sources in your academic and professional writing, enhancing the credibility and scholarly rigor of your work.

FAQ

Q: What is the most crucial element to include when citing any unpublished source in Chicago Manual of Style footnotes?

A: The most crucial element is providing enough information for a reader to locate the exact source. This typically involves identifying the author or creator, a clear description of the item (title, type of document), the date of its creation, and its current location or repository.

Q: How do I cite a personal letter from a family member that I have in my possession?

A: You would cite it by naming the sender, recipient, date of the letter, and then stating that it is privately held, along with your general location if appropriate and with the holder's permission. For example: Sender's Full Name to Recipient's Full Name, Date, privately held by [Your Name], [Your City, State].

Q: What if an unpublished manuscript doesn't have a title?

A: If an unpublished manuscript lacks a formal title, you should provide a descriptive phrase in quotation marks that accurately identifies its content. For example: John Doe, "Draft of Speech on Education Reform," ca. 1985, John Doe Papers, University Archive, Box 12.

Q: How do I format a footnote for an unpublished interview I conducted?

A: For an unpublished interview you conducted, the footnote should include the interviewee's name, mention that you conducted the interview, the date of the interview, and the medium (e.g., audio recording, transcript) and its location (e.g., personal collection). Example: Jane Smith, interviewed by Author, July 15, 2023, audio recording, in author's possession.

Q: Is it necessary to include accession numbers for unpublished sources found in archives?

A: Yes, if an accession number or collection identifier is available, it is highly recommended to include it. This provides a precise way to track the material within the archive's cataloging system and helps other researchers locate it more efficiently.

Q: What is the difference between citing an unpublished dissertation and a published one?

A: The primary difference lies in indicating its availability. For an unpublished dissertation, you cite the university, degree, year, and often the specific library collection or database where it can be found. For a published dissertation (e.g., through ProQuest), you would also include information about the publisher and potentially an ISBN or DOI if available.

Q: Can I use a shortened note format for subsequent references to the same unpublished source?

A: Yes, similar to published sources, after the first full note citation, you can use a shortened note format for subsequent references to the same unpublished source. This typically includes the author's last name and a brief, descriptive title or the key identifying elements.

Q: What if the unpublished source is partially illegible or damaged?

A: If a portion of the source is illegible or damaged, you should indicate this in your citation or a note accompanying it. For example, you might use bracketed ellipses or a parenthetical note like "(page illegible)" or "(partially damaged)".

Q: How does the Chicago Manual of Style handle unpublished lecture notes?

A: Unpublished lecture notes are treated similarly to other unpublished manuscripts. You would cite the lecturer's name, the title of the lecture (if known), the date it was delivered, and the location or repository where the notes are kept. For example: Professor Emily Carter, "The History of Modern Art" lecture, October 25, 2022, lecture notes, Art History Department Archive, University of Chicago.

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