

chicago manual of style personal communication updates

The Chicago Manual of Style Personal Communication Updates: A Comprehensive Guide

chicago manual of style personal communication updates are a crucial aspect of academic and professional writing, ensuring that sources are properly attributed and readers can locate the information they need. Navigating these specific citation requirements, particularly for less conventional sources like personal communications, can sometimes present challenges. This article delves into the nuances of citing personal communications according to the latest editions of The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), offering clear guidance on how to handle them in both footnotes/endnotes and bibliographies. We will explore what constitutes personal communication, the specific formatting rules, and the rationale behind these guidelines, empowering writers to confidently cite emails, interviews, conversations, and other direct interactions. Understanding these **chicago manual of style personal communication updates** ensures adherence to scholarly integrity and enhances the credibility of your work.

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Understanding Personal Communication in CMOS

In the context of The Chicago Manual of Style, personal communication refers to any information exchanged directly between individuals that is not readily available to the general public or retrievable through conventional research channels. This category encompasses a wide range of interactions, including but not limited to, face-to-face conversations, telephone calls, personal emails, text messages, direct messages on social media platforms, and informal interviews. The key characteristic is that the information is shared directly and privately between the researcher and the source, and it cannot be found in published works, archives, or publicly accessible online repositories. Properly identifying and categorizing these sources is the first step in correctly applying the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**.

The rationale behind treating personal communications differently from published works stems from their inherent inaccessibility. Unlike a book or a journal article, which can be found and verified by any reader, personal

communications are unique to the interaction between the sender and receiver. Therefore, CMOS guidelines are designed to provide sufficient information for the reader to understand the context of the communication and, where possible, to locate it if the original communicator agrees to share it or if it becomes part of a public record later. This principle underpins all the formatting requirements and decisions regarding **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**.

Citing Personal Communications in Footnotes and Endnotes

When citing personal communications in footnotes or endnotes, CMOS employs a specific format that prioritizes clarity and provides essential details. Unlike other sources that might appear in a bibliography, personal communications are generally not included in the main bibliography. The primary purpose of the note is to inform the reader that the information was obtained through direct correspondence and to provide enough context for them to understand its origin. This approach aligns with the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates** designed to distinguish these unique sources.

Essential Elements of a Footnote/Endnote Citation

A standard footnote or endnote citation for personal communication includes several key components. First, the name of the communicator is provided, followed by the nature of the communication (e.g., "personal correspondence," "email," "telephone conversation"). Next, the date of the communication is essential, typically in a month-day-year format. Finally, if applicable, the location or medium of the communication can be included for further context. For instance, an email citation might specify the recipient of the email. These details are crucial for accurate referencing and are consistently applied in the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**.

Examples of Footnote/Endnote Citations

Here are some examples illustrating the recommended format:

- Email: John Smith, email to author, May 15, 2023.
- Telephone Conversation: Jane Doe, telephone conversation with author, October 26, 2023.
- Personal Interview: Robert Johnson, personal interview by author, Chicago, IL, April 1, 2023.
- Text Message: Emily Davis, text message to author, July 10, 2023.

It's important to note that if the personal communication is particularly lengthy or contains extensive information, you may need to refer to specific portions. However, for most instances, these basic formats suffice, reflecting the latest **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**.

Citing Personal Communications in the Bibliography

A significant point of distinction in The Chicago Manual of Style regarding personal communications is their general exclusion from the bibliography. This is a common point of confusion for many writers, as most other source types are listed alphabetically in a bibliography. The reasoning behind this exclusion, as detailed in the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**, is that bibliographies are intended to list sources that a reader can independently consult. Since personal communications are by nature inaccessible to others, they do not fit the purpose of a bibliography.

However, there are specific circumstances where personal communications might be included, or where a modified approach is necessary. For instance, if a significant portion of your research relies on interviews that you have conducted, and you wish to acknowledge these systematically, you might create a separate appendix or a specialized list within your work, rather than a traditional bibliography entry. This nuanced approach is part of the comprehensive nature of the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**, aiming for both accuracy and reader utility.

Rationale for Exclusion from the Bibliography

The core principle behind excluding personal communications from the bibliography is the accessibility criterion. A bibliography serves as a roadmap for your readers to follow your research trail. If a reader cannot access a particular source, then listing it in the bibliography offers little practical value for their own research endeavors. Personal communications, by their very nature, are private exchanges. Therefore, to include them in a bibliography would violate the established conventions and purposes of such a list. This principle remains a cornerstone of the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**.

When Personal Communications Might Appear in a Bibliography (Rare Exceptions)

While the rule is to exclude them, there are rare instances where personal communications might be referenced in a manner similar to a bibliography entry. This typically occurs when the communication has become part of a public record or an archive that is accessible. For example, if an email has

been published in a collection of public documents or if a private conversation has been transcribed and made available through an official repository, then it might warrant inclusion. However, even in such cases, the citation in the notes would likely be more specific, and the bibliography entry would reflect its archival or published status. Always consult the latest edition of CMOS for definitive guidance on these nuanced situations covered by the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**.

Exceptions and Special Cases

While the general rules for citing personal communications are straightforward, certain situations present exceptions or require special consideration. These often arise from the evolving nature of communication technologies and the specific context of the research. Understanding these nuances is key to applying the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates** accurately and comprehensively.

Interviews as Personal Communications

Formal interviews, whether conducted in person, over the phone, or via video conference, are typically treated as personal communications. The citation in the notes will include the interviewee's name, the nature of the interview (e.g., "personal interview"), the date, and the location or medium. If the interview has been recorded and is accessible (e.g., deposited in an archive), the note can include information about the recording's availability. This aligns with the principle of providing readers with the best possible access to your sources, a critical aspect of the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**.

Social Media and Online Messaging

Citing communications from social media platforms or online messaging services can be particularly tricky. If a message is private (e.g., a direct message on Instagram or a private Facebook message), it is treated as personal communication and cited accordingly in the notes, usually without inclusion in the bibliography. However, if the communication is public (e.g., a public tweet or a post on a public forum), it may be treated more like a published source, potentially requiring a different citation format and possibly inclusion in the bibliography, depending on its accessibility and permanence. The **chicago manual of style personal communication updates** continue to adapt to these digital forms of interaction.

Archived Communications

When personal communications, such as letters or emails, have been archived and made accessible to the public (e.g., in a university library or a

historical society), they are no longer considered strictly private. In such cases, the citation in the notes should include information about the archive, the collection, and the specific item or file. The source might then also be listed in the bibliography under the name of the archive or the author of the correspondence. This distinction is crucial for ensuring that readers can locate and verify the information, a core tenet of the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**.

Best Practices for Citing Personal Communications

Adhering to the guidelines for citing personal communications not only ensures academic integrity but also enhances the credibility and usability of your research. By following a consistent and accurate approach, you empower your readers to understand the context of your information and, where possible, to follow your research path. The **chicago manual of style personal communication updates** are designed to facilitate this clarity and accessibility.

Obtain Consent When Necessary

Before citing personal communications, especially in published works, it is often advisable to obtain consent from the individuals who provided the information. This is particularly true for sensitive or proprietary information, or if the individual has expressed a desire for privacy. While CMOS does not mandate consent in all cases, ethical research practices often require it. This consideration is an important extension of the principles behind the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**.

Be Precise and Informative

When creating your citations, strive for precision and clarity. Include all necessary details such as names, dates, and the medium of communication. If the communication is lengthy, consider quoting only the most relevant parts and referencing them accurately. Avoid vague citations that leave the reader guessing about the origin or nature of the information. Consistency in your citation style, in line with the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates**, is paramount.

Review and Consult the Manual

The landscape of communication is constantly evolving, and so too are the recommendations for citing various sources. It is always best practice to consult the latest edition of The Chicago Manual of Style for the most current guidance. Pay close attention to sections pertaining to personal

communications, as the **chicago manual of style personal communication updates** are regularly incorporated to reflect new technologies and research methodologies.

FAQ

Q: How do I cite a personal email in The Chicago Manual of Style?

A: In footnotes or endnotes, you would cite a personal email by providing the sender's name, stating it was an "email to author" (or to a specific recipient if relevant), and including the date. For example: Jane Doe, email to author, March 10, 2023. Personal emails are generally not included in the bibliography.

Q: Should I include personal communications in my bibliography according to Chicago style?

A: Generally, no. The Chicago Manual of Style typically excludes personal communications from the bibliography because they are not accessible to the reader. Bibliographies are meant to list sources that can be consulted independently.

Q: What if I interviewed someone for my research? How do I cite that in Chicago style?

A: Interviews are considered personal communications. In footnotes or endnotes, you would cite them by including the interviewee's name, the type of interview (e.g., "personal interview," "telephone interview," "video interview"), the date, and the location or medium. For example: John Smith, personal interview by author, New York, NY, November 5, 2023.

Q: How does Chicago style handle citations for text messages or direct messages on social media?

A: Text messages and private direct messages on social media platforms are treated as personal communications. They are cited in notes with the sender's name, the medium (e.g., "text message," "direct message"), and the date. For instance: Emily Davis, text message to author, July 10, 2023. Like emails, these are generally not included in the bibliography.

Q: What if a personal communication, like a letter, has been archived and is publicly available?

A: If a personal communication has been archived and made accessible to the public, it may be cited differently. Your note should include information about the archive, collection, and the specific item. It may also be appropriate to include it in your bibliography, listed under the archive or the author, indicating its archival status.

Q: Is there a difference in citing personal communications between Chicago's Notes-Bibliography system and Author-Date system?

A: Yes, there is a difference. In the Notes-Bibliography system, personal communications are cited in notes and generally not in the bibliography. In the Author-Date system, personal communications are typically only mentioned in the text and not included in the reference list, as they are considered inaccessible to the reader.

Q: What are the essential pieces of information needed for a personal communication citation in Chicago style?

A: The essential pieces of information typically include the name of the communicator, the nature of the communication (e.g., email, phone call, interview), the date of the communication, and, if applicable, the location or medium.

Q: When citing a public social media post that is not a direct message, should I treat it as personal communication?

A: It depends on its permanence and accessibility. A public social media post that is easily retrievable might be cited more like a web source. However, if it's a transient or interactive element, it might still be treated as personal communication, with the note providing sufficient detail for the reader to understand its context. Always refer to the latest edition of CMOS for specific guidance on evolving digital sources.

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