

chicago manual of style quote concluding phrases

Mastering Chicago Manual of Style Quote Concluding Phrases for Academic and Professional Writing

chicago manual of style quote concluding phrases are an essential component of clear, accurate, and formally recognized academic and professional writing. Navigating the nuances of integrating direct quotations, especially how to properly signal their end, can significantly impact the credibility and readability of your work. This comprehensive guide delves into the various methods and considerations for employing these concluding phrases according to The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), offering detailed explanations and practical examples. We will explore the fundamental principles of quotation punctuation, the role of attributions, and the specific rules governing the termination of quoted material, ensuring your writing adheres to the highest standards of scholarly presentation. Understanding these elements is crucial for researchers, students, and anyone engaged in formal documentation.

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Understanding the Fundamentals of Quoting

Properly incorporating direct quotations into your text requires more than simply placing words within quotation marks. The Chicago Manual of Style emphasizes precision and clarity, ensuring that readers can easily distinguish between your own prose and the words of another author. This involves not only correct punctuation but also appropriate introductory and concluding elements that clearly signal the beginning and end of the borrowed text. The goal is to integrate these borrowed elements seamlessly while maintaining their integrity and providing proper attribution.

The Importance of Context and Attribution

Attributing quotations accurately is paramount. CMOS mandates that every quotation be accompanied by a source citation, typically in a footnote or endnote, and often includes an in-text attribution. This attribution can take various forms, serving as a crucial part of the concluding phrase. It not only gives credit to the original author but also provides the reader with immediate context regarding who is speaking or writing. The style and placement of this attribution can influence how the concluding phrase is structured.

The Role of Attributions in Concluding Phrases

Attributions, such as "she writes" or "according to Smith," are intrinsically linked to the concluding phrases of quotations. They provide the necessary context and identification for the borrowed words. In many instances, the attribution will appear immediately before or after the quoted material, and its placement dictates the punctuation that follows or precedes the quote. Understanding how to weave these attributions smoothly into your sentences is key to effective quotation integration.

Integrating Attributions Before the Quote

When an attribution precedes a quotation, the structure often involves a comma after the attribution, followed by the opening quotation mark. The quoted material then follows, and its conclusion is marked by the closing quotation mark, which may be followed by a period, semicolon, or other punctuation depending on the sentence structure. For example: "According to the author, "the experiment yielded unexpected results." This demonstrates how the attribution sets up the quote, and the punctuation after the quote completes the grammatical unit.

Integrating Attributions After the Quote

Alternatively, attributions can follow the quoted material. In this case, the closing quotation mark is typically followed by a comma (if the sentence would otherwise continue) or a period, and then the attribution. For instance: "The experiment yielded unexpected results," the author noted. This structure requires careful consideration of whether the sentence is complete before the attribution is added. The CMOS guidelines provide clear direction on these variations to ensure grammatical correctness.

Common Chicago Manual of Style Quote Concluding Phrases

While there isn't a rigid, predefined list of "concluding phrases," CMOS offers guidance on how to end quotations effectively, often in conjunction with attributions. The most common approach involves placing the terminal punctuation of the sentence after the closing quotation mark, unless the quotation itself ends with a question mark or exclamation point. The attribution then follows.

Punctuation Placement with Attributions

CMOS generally prefers that commas and periods follow the closing quotation mark. For example, if a sentence containing a quote ends with a period, the period goes outside the

quotation marks: "This is the end of the quote." she stated. Similarly, a comma following the quote for an attribution also goes outside: "This is the end of the quote," he explained. This differs from some other styles that place these punctuation marks inside the closing quotation mark.

Using Semicolons and Colons

When a quotation is followed by a semicolon or colon, these marks also typically appear outside the closing quotation mark. For example: His argument was that "the data were inconclusive"; however, he proceeded with his research. A colon is less common immediately following a quote, but if used, it would also follow the closing quotation mark. The key is to maintain the grammatical integrity of the main sentence.

Punctuation Within and After Quotes

The placement of punctuation is a critical aspect of correct quotation. CMOS provides specific rules for periods, commas, question marks, and exclamation points. Understanding these rules ensures that your quotations are punctuated according to established academic norms.

Periods and Commas

As previously mentioned, periods and commas generally follow the closing quotation mark in CMOS. This applies whether the quote is short and integrated into a sentence or if it's part of a longer clause. The punctuation marks are considered part of the surrounding sentence's grammar, not the quoted material itself.

Question Marks and Exclamation Points

If the quoted material itself ends with a question mark or an exclamation point, that punctuation mark remains inside the closing quotation mark. For example: He asked, "Are you sure about this?" However, if the entire sentence is a question and the quote does not end with a question mark, the question mark goes outside: Did she really say "I am tired"? This distinction is vital for accurate representation.

Integrating Block Quotes and Their Conclusions

Block quotations, also known as long quotations, are typically set off from the main text without quotation marks, indented. They are used for longer passages, usually exceeding four or five lines of text. The concluding punctuation for block quotes follows similar principles to regular quotations.

Punctuation with Block Quotes

For block quotes, the terminal punctuation (period, question mark, exclamation point) is placed immediately after the last word of the quotation, before the citation. For example:

> The significance of this finding cannot be overstated. It has the potential to revolutionize our understanding of cellular biology and open new avenues for therapeutic intervention. (Smith 2023, 45)

In this instance, the period is part of the quoted material and is placed at its end.

Attributions for Block Quotes

Attributions for block quotes are usually placed on a new line, indented, after the quoted material, or integrated into the introductory sentence before the block quote begins. The punctuation following the quoted material before the citation is the final punctuation for the quote itself.

Handling Ellipses and Omissions in Quotes

When you omit words or phrases from a quotation, you must use an ellipsis (three dots, often with spaces around them: . . .) to indicate the omission. The placement and usage of ellipses are governed by specific rules.

Using Ellipses Correctly

CMOS generally prefers ellipses with spaces between the dots. If an omission occurs at the beginning or end of a quotation, an ellipsis is typically used. For omissions within a sentence, the ellipsis indicates the missing text. For example: "The results . . . were inconclusive." The correct usage of ellipses ensures that the reader understands that only a portion of the original text is being presented.

Punctuation with Ellipses

If an ellipsis appears at the end of a sentence, it is typically followed by the sentence's terminal punctuation (e.g., a period). For instance: "The experiment showed a trend" However, if the ellipsis replaces the end of a sentence and is followed by more text from the original source, the ellipsis might be followed by a period.

Avoiding Common Pitfalls in Quote Concluding Phrases

Many writers encounter difficulties with quotation punctuation. Some common errors include misplacing punctuation relative to quotation marks, incorrectly using ellipses, or failing to integrate quotations smoothly with attributions.

Incorrect Punctuation Placement

A frequent mistake is placing periods or commas inside the closing quotation mark when using CMOS guidelines. Remember, for most situations, these punctuation marks belong outside. Another error is confusing the rules for terminal punctuation within the quote versus at the end of the sentence.

Mismanaging Ellipses

Improper use of ellipses, such as using four dots when three are sufficient, or failing to indicate omissions altogether, can lead to misrepresentation of the original source. Always ensure your ellipses clearly signal where text has been removed.

FAQ: Chicago Manual of Style Quote Concluding Phrases

Q: Where does the final punctuation go when a direct quote ends a sentence in CMOS?

A: According to The Chicago Manual of Style, the final punctuation of the sentence (typically a period) goes after the closing quotation mark. For example: "This is the end of the quoted sentence."

Q: What if the quoted material itself ends with a question mark or exclamation point?

A: If the quoted material ends with a question mark or an exclamation point, that punctuation remains inside the closing quotation mark. For instance: She asked, "Are you sure?"

Q: How should an attribution be punctuated if it follows

a short quoted phrase?

A: If an attribution follows a short quoted phrase that ends the sentence, the closing quotation mark is followed by a comma, and then the attribution, and finally the period for the entire sentence. Example: "I agree," he said.

Q: What is the rule for punctuation when using a block quote in CMOS?

A: For block quotations (indented, without quotation marks), the terminal punctuation of the quotation is placed directly after the last word of the quoted material, before the citation. For example:

> This is the concluding sentence of the block quote. (Author 2023, 123)

Q: When should I use an ellipsis in a quotation according to CMOS?

A: You should use an ellipsis (typically three spaced dots: . . .) to indicate that words or phrases have been omitted from the original text. This ensures accuracy and prevents misrepresentation.

Q: Does the placement of punctuation change if the quote is part of a larger clause?

A: Generally, no. If the quote is integrated into a larger sentence structure and the quoted part ends the sentence, the final punctuation of the overall sentence still follows the closing quotation mark, unless the quote itself ends with a question mark or exclamation point. For example: The report concluded that "the results were positive."

Q: What if I want to include a citation directly after a quote that ends a sentence?

A: In CMOS, the citation typically follows the terminal punctuation of the sentence containing the quote. So, it would be: "This is the end of the quoted sentence." (Smith 2023, 50). The punctuation is outside the quote.

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