

chicago style journal submission guidelines

The Chicago Manual of Style is a cornerstone for academic and professional writing, and understanding its journal submission guidelines is paramount for any aspiring author seeking publication. This comprehensive guide delves into the intricacies of adhering to Chicago style for journal submissions, ensuring your work meets the rigorous standards expected by editors and reviewers. We will explore manuscript preparation, citation methods, formatting intricacies, and the crucial elements of a successful submission package. By mastering these Chicago style journal submission guidelines, you can significantly increase your chances of having your research and scholarly work recognized and published.

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Manuscript Formatting Essentials for Chicago Style Journal Submissions

Adhering to precise formatting is the first step in presenting a professional manuscript that aligns with Chicago style journal submission guidelines. Journals often have specific requirements regarding margins, font type, line spacing, and page numbering, which serve to standardize submissions for reviewers and editors. Failure to meet these fundamental formatting requirements can lead to an immediate rejection, regardless of the quality of your research.

Font and Spacing Requirements

Generally, Chicago style for journal submissions favors a standard, readable font such as Times New Roman or Arial, typically in 12-point size. Double-spacing is almost universally required for the main body of the manuscript, including quotations and bibliographies. This spacing allows ample room for reviewers to make annotations and comments. Some journals may specify single-spacing for block quotations or extensive notes, so always consult the specific journal's instructions.

Page Numbering and Layout

Consistent page numbering is crucial. Most journals require Arabic numerals for page numbers, usually placed in the header or footer of each page, often in the upper right-hand corner. The title page should also be formatted according to specific journal requirements, which may include the manuscript title, author's name, affiliation, and contact information. Ensure that the manuscript begins on a new page after the title page, and that each major section (abstract, main body, references) also begins on a fresh page.

Headings and Subheadings

The effective use of headings and subheadings helps to organize your work logically and guides the reader through your argument. Chicago style does not prescribe a rigid hierarchy for headings, but journals often do. Typically, the main title is centered, followed by major section headings (often centered or left-aligned and bolded), and then subheadings. Consistency in formatting these elements is key to a professional presentation, and you must consult the target journal's specific guidelines for their preferred hierarchy and styling of headings.

Citation Styles in Chicago: Notes and Bibliography vs. Author-Date

The Chicago Manual of Style offers two primary citation systems: the Notes and Bibliography system and the Author-Date system. Understanding which system your target journal requires is a critical component of adhering to Chicago style journal submission guidelines. Each system has distinct characteristics that impact how you integrate sources and compile your reference list.

The Notes and Bibliography System

The Notes and Bibliography system uses footnotes or endnotes to cite sources within the text, with a comprehensive bibliography appearing at the end of the manuscript. Footnotes or endnotes provide detailed citation information for each source used, including page numbers where specific information can be found. This system is prevalent in the humanities and is often preferred by journals in fields like literature, history, and art.

The Author-Date System

The Author-Date system uses parenthetical citations within the text, typically consisting of the author's last name and the year of publication,

followed by a page number if applicable. This is supplemented by a reference list at the end of the manuscript that includes all cited works, alphabetized by author's last name. This system is common in the social sciences and natural sciences, offering a more concise in-text citation method.

Compiling the Bibliography or Reference List

Regardless of the chosen system, the final list of sources must be meticulously prepared. The bibliography (for Notes and Bibliography) or reference list (for Author-Date) should include full bibliographic details for every source cited in the text. The formatting for entries in this list follows specific Chicago style rules for different types of sources (books, journal articles, websites, etc.), ensuring accuracy and completeness.

Abstract and Keywords: The Gateway to Your Research

The abstract and keywords are often the first, and sometimes only, parts of your submission that editors and reviewers will read initially. Therefore, presenting them clearly and effectively according to Chicago style journal submission guidelines is crucial for making a strong first impression and accurately representing your work.

Crafting a Compelling Abstract

An abstract is a concise summary of your entire paper, typically ranging from 150 to 250 words, though some journals may specify a different length. It should encapsulate the research problem, your methodology, key findings, and the main conclusions or implications of your study. It needs to be self-contained, informative, and accurately reflect the content of your manuscript. Avoid jargon where possible and ensure it is written in a clear, engaging manner.

Selecting Effective Keywords

Keywords are terms that help readers and search engines identify the main topics of your article. Choose keywords that are specific to your research area and are likely to be used by scholars searching for similar work. A good set of keywords can significantly improve the discoverability of your article. Journals typically require 3-5 keywords, but always check the specific submission instructions.

Submission Process and Etiquette for Chicago Style Journal Submissions

Navigating the submission process with professionalism and adherence to journal-specific protocols is as important as the manuscript itself. Understanding and following the submission process according to Chicago style journal submission guidelines demonstrates respect for the journal's operations and editorial team.

Following Journal Submission Portals

Most journals now utilize online submission management systems. Familiarize yourself with the specific portal of your target journal. This usually involves creating an account, uploading your manuscript and any accompanying documents, and filling out required fields. Pay close attention to the file formats required for your manuscript, figures, and tables.

Cover Letter Best Practices

A well-written cover letter is an essential part of your submission package. It should concisely introduce your manuscript, highlight its significance and originality, and explain why it is a good fit for the journal's readership and scope. Reiterate that the manuscript has not been previously published and is not under consideration elsewhere. You may also suggest potential reviewers if the journal allows, but do so judiciously.

Understanding Peer Review and Revision

Be prepared for the peer review process, which is standard for academic journals. Editors will send your manuscript to experts in your field for evaluation. If revisions are requested, address each reviewer's comments thoroughly and constructively. When resubmitting a revised manuscript, include a detailed response letter outlining how you have addressed each point raised by the reviewers and editors.

Common Pitfalls to Avoid in Chicago Style Journal Submissions

Even with the best intentions, authors can fall prey to common mistakes that hinder their submission's success. Being aware of these pitfalls can help you avoid them and ensure your manuscript aligns perfectly with Chicago style journal submission guidelines.

Inconsistent Formatting

One of the most frequent errors is inconsistent formatting throughout the manuscript. This includes variations in font, spacing, heading styles, and especially citation formatting. Diligently proofread your entire document to ensure uniformity. This demonstrates meticulousness and professionalism.

Ignoring Journal-Specific Instructions

While Chicago style provides a framework, each journal has its own specific guidelines. Overlooking or ignoring these journal-specific instructions is a critical mistake. Always download and thoroughly read the "Guide for Authors" or "Submission Guidelines" page on the journal's website. This is where you'll find the definitive requirements.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Ensuring proper attribution for all sources is non-negotiable. Plagiarism, in any form, is a serious academic offense and will result in rejection. Double-check all citations and quotations to ensure they are correctly attributed according to the chosen Chicago style system.

Revising and Resubmitting: The Final Polish

The process of revision and resubmission is often where a manuscript solidifies its readiness for publication. Approaching this stage with diligence, guided by Chicago style journal submission guidelines, is crucial for refinement.

Addressing Reviewer Feedback

When you receive reviewer comments, approach them as constructive criticism aimed at improving your work. Address each comment systematically. If you disagree with a reviewer's point, provide a clear, polite, and well-reasoned explanation for your decision. A thoughtful response letter is essential.

Final Proofreading and Copyediting

Before resubmitting, conduct a thorough final proofread and copyedit. Check for grammatical errors, typos, awkward phrasing, and any remaining formatting inconsistencies. Some authors find it beneficial to have a colleague or professional editor review the manuscript at this stage to catch errors they may have missed.

Ensuring All Requirements Are Met

As you prepare to resubmit, meticulously go through the journal's submission checklist one last time. Confirm that all required files are uploaded, all formatting guidelines are strictly followed, and the revised manuscript directly addresses all feedback from the previous review. This careful attention to detail will showcase your professionalism and commitment to producing high-quality scholarship.

FAQ

Q: What are the primary differences between the Notes and Bibliography system and the Author-Date system in Chicago style for journal submissions?

A: The Notes and Bibliography system uses footnotes or endnotes within the text for citations, accompanied by a full bibliography at the end. The Author-Date system uses parenthetical citations (author, year) in the text, followed by a reference list. The former is common in the humanities, while the latter is prevalent in social and natural sciences.

Q: How important is it to follow the specific journal's formatting guidelines, even if they differ slightly from the general Chicago Manual of Style?

A: It is critically important to follow the specific journal's formatting guidelines above all else. While the Chicago Manual of Style provides the authoritative framework, each journal customizes these rules for its own needs. Deviating from journal-specific instructions is a common reason for immediate rejection.

Q: What is the typical word count for an abstract in a Chicago style journal submission?

A: The typical word count for an abstract in Chicago style journal submissions is usually between 150 and 250 words. However, this can vary significantly by journal, so it is essential to check the target journal's specific requirements.

Q: Should I include my curriculum vitae (CV) with my

journal submission?

A: Whether to include a CV depends entirely on the journal's submission guidelines. Some journals may request it, especially for certain types of articles or if you are a first-time contributor, while others do not. Always check the author instructions.

Q: What should I do if I disagree with a reviewer's comment during the revision process?

A: If you disagree with a reviewer's comment, you should address it politely and professionally in your response letter. Provide a clear, well-reasoned explanation for why you did not make the suggested change, referencing evidence or scholarly arguments to support your position. Do not simply ignore comments.

Q: Can I submit a manuscript that has been previously published in a conference proceeding or as a preprint?

A: Generally, most academic journals require that submitted manuscripts be original and not have been published elsewhere, including in conference proceedings or as preprints that are freely accessible online. You must disclose any prior or concurrent submissions or publications. Always consult the journal's policy on prior publication.

Q: How should I format block quotations in a manuscript adhering to Chicago style journal submission guidelines?

A: Block quotations (typically longer than four or five lines of text) should be set off from the main text by indenting the entire quote. They are usually single-spaced, and the citation appears after the final punctuation. Ensure you follow the specific journal's guidance on indentation and spacing for these.

Q: What are the essential components of a Chicago style journal submission package?

A: A typical submission package includes a cover letter, the main manuscript (often anonymized for review), any required figures and tables in separate files, and sometimes supplementary materials or a signed conflicts of interest form, all depending on the journal's specific requirements.

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