

chicago style manual for article manuscript submission

The Chicago Manual of Style for article manuscript submission is an indispensable guide for authors aiming to publish in academic journals, magazines, and other scholarly venues. Adhering to its stringent guidelines ensures clarity, consistency, and professionalism in your written work, significantly increasing its chances of acceptance. This comprehensive manual covers everything from general formatting and manuscript preparation to specific citation styles, referencing, and the intricacies of presenting various types of information. Understanding these rules is crucial for any writer who values precision and seeks to present their research or ideas in the most impactful way possible.

Table of Contents

- Understanding the Chicago Manual of Style
- General Manuscript Formatting for Submission
- Author-Date Citation System
- Notes and Bibliography Citation System
- Figures, Tables, and Illustrations
- Grammar, Punctuation, and Style
- The Submission Process and Chicago Style

Understanding the Chicago Manual of Style

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) is a widely respected style guide that provides comprehensive recommendations for manuscript preparation and publication. It is particularly prevalent in the humanities and social sciences, but its principles are applicable across many disciplines. Its origins trace back to the University of Chicago Press, and it has undergone numerous revisions to adapt to evolving publishing standards and linguistic practices.

When preparing an article manuscript for submission, the CMOS acts as the ultimate arbiter of style, ensuring that the final published work is consistent, accurate, and aesthetically pleasing. It addresses not only how to write but also how to present your work to editors and publishers in a manner that facilitates their review process. Familiarity with its core tenets is therefore essential for academic writers, researchers, and anyone contributing to a publication that mandates its use.

General Manuscript Formatting for Submission

Proper manuscript formatting is the first step in presenting a professional submission that adheres to the Chicago Manual of Style. Editors often receive a high volume of submissions, and a clearly formatted manuscript makes their job easier, conveying a sense of professionalism and attention to detail on the part of the author. This involves specific guidelines for spacing, margins, font, and the presentation of essential identifying information.

Essential Identifying Information

The first page of your manuscript, often referred to as the title page, must contain key information. This typically includes the proposed title of the article, your full name, your institutional affiliation, and your contact information (email address and phone number). Some journals may also request a brief abstract or keywords on this page, but always check the specific submission guidelines of the target publication.

Page Layout and Typography

The Chicago Manual of Style recommends specific formatting for the manuscript's layout. This generally involves double-spacing throughout the entire document, including block quotations and the reference list. Margins should be set at one inch on all sides, providing ample space for editorial marks. The recommended font is typically a readable, standard typeface such as Times New Roman or Arial, in a 12-point size. Each page should be numbered consecutively, usually in the upper right-hand corner, starting with the title page as page 1 or the page following the title page.

Handling of Headings and Subheadings

Clear hierarchical organization is crucial for readability, and the CMOS provides guidance on structuring your article with headings and subheadings. While the manual itself uses a complex system of numbering and lettering for academic works, for article submissions, a simpler, consistent approach is usually sufficient. Use bolding or italics to differentiate levels of headings, ensuring a clear visual hierarchy that guides the reader through the content.

Author-Date Citation System

The Chicago Manual of Style offers two primary citation systems: the Notes and Bibliography system and the Author-Date system. The Author-Date system is frequently preferred in the sciences and some social sciences due to its conciseness. It places parenthetical citations directly within the text, referencing the author's last name and the publication year.

When using the Author-Date system, the in-text citation typically appears as (Author Year, page number). For example, a direct quote might be presented as: "The impact of industrialization was profound" (Smith 2019, 45). If the author's name is mentioned in the sentence, only the year and page number are needed: As Smith (2019) noted, "The impact of industrialization was profound" (45).

The Reference List

A cornerstone of the Author-Date system is the comprehensive reference list that appears at the end of the manuscript. This list, titled "References," includes all sources cited in the text, providing full bibliographic details. The entries are alphabetized by the author's last name. The CMOS specifies precise formatting for various source types, including books, journal articles, websites, and other media, ensuring consistency and accuracy.

- Book: Author Last Name, First Name. Year. Title of Book. City of Publication: Publisher.
- Journal Article: Author Last Name, First Name. Year. "Title of Article." Title of Journal Volume, no. Issue: Pages.
- Website: Author Last Name, First Name (if available). Year. "Title of Page." Title of Website. Accessed Month Day, Year. URL.

Notes and Bibliography Citation System

The Notes and Bibliography system, often favored in the humanities, uses footnotes or endnotes to cite sources and a bibliography to list them. This system is more verbose than Author-Date but allows for extensive commentary and additional information within the notes themselves, which can be particularly useful for complex scholarly arguments or historical research.

In this system, a superscript number is placed in the text immediately after the relevant phrase, sentence, or clause. This number corresponds to a note (either a footnote at the bottom of the page or an endnote at the conclusion of the manuscript) that contains the source information. The first citation of a source in the notes is typically a full bibliographic entry, while subsequent citations of the same source are shortened.

Footnotes and Endnotes

Footnotes provide immediate context for the citation without interrupting the flow of the main text. Endnotes offer a similar function but are collected at the end of the chapter or article, which some find cleaner for extensive notes. The Chicago Manual of Style provides detailed examples for both footnotes and endnotes, covering a wide array of source materials. It's crucial to maintain consistency in whether you choose footnotes or endnotes and to ensure all notes are correctly numbered and formatted.

The Bibliography

Complementing the notes is the bibliography, which is an alphabetized list of all sources consulted and cited in the manuscript. Unlike the reference list in the Author-Date system, the bibliography entries in the Notes and Bibliography system often use full names for authors and can include

publication details that might be shortened in the notes. The CMOS provides specific formatting for author names, titles, publication information, and page ranges for each entry, ensuring a professional and standardized presentation.

Figures, Tables, and Illustrations

The effective presentation of data through figures, tables, and illustrations can significantly enhance an article's impact and clarity. The Chicago Manual of Style offers guidelines to ensure these elements are properly integrated, labeled, and referenced within the manuscript, making them easily understandable to the reader and editor.

Numbering and Labeling

All figures (charts, graphs, images, etc.) and tables should be numbered consecutively and independently. For example, you would have Figure 1, Figure 2, and Table 1, Table 2. Each figure and table should also have a clear, descriptive title or caption. The caption should provide sufficient information for the element to be understood without referring back to the main text, though a brief reference in the text to the figure or table is essential.

Placement and Referencing within the Text

Ideally, figures and tables should be placed as close as possible to where they are first mentioned in the text. However, for manuscript submission, it is often sufficient to indicate their intended placement, for example, by inserting a placeholder like "[Insert Figure 1 here]" within the manuscript. In the main text, you must explicitly refer to each figure and table by its number, such as "As shown in Figure 1..." or "Table 3 summarizes the key findings."

Source Information for Visual Elements

If figures, tables, or illustrations are not original creations, proper attribution is paramount. The source of any borrowed visual material must be cited clearly, usually in a note below the element or within its caption. This citation should follow the appropriate CMOS format for the type of source material, whether it's a book, a journal article, or a website. Failure to properly attribute borrowed materials can lead to plagiarism concerns.

Grammar, Punctuation, and Style

Beyond structure and citation, the Chicago Manual of Style provides extensive guidance on grammar, punctuation, and general writing style. Adhering to these rules promotes clarity,

precision, and a professional tone that is essential for academic and professional publications.

Punctuation and Spelling

CMOS offers definitive advice on a wide range of punctuation marks, including commas, semicolons, colons, apostrophes, and quotation marks. For instance, it advocates for the Oxford comma (a comma before the final item in a list of three or more) for clarity. The manual also addresses complex issues like the use of hyphens, en dashes, and em dashes, and provides guidelines for handling possessives and plurals. Regarding spelling, CMOS generally follows American English conventions but acknowledges that British English may be preferred in certain contexts.

Grammar and Sentence Structure

The manual emphasizes clear, concise prose. It offers recommendations on verb tense, subject-verb agreement, pronoun reference, and the avoidance of jargon or overly complex sentence structures. Active voice is generally preferred over passive voice for its directness, and parallel structure is crucial for readability, especially in lists and comparisons. Attention to these grammatical nuances ensures that the author's message is communicated effectively and without ambiguity.

Capitalization and Numbers

CMOS provides specific rules for capitalization, particularly for titles, headings, and proper nouns. It also details how to present numbers, including when to spell them out and when to use numerals. Generally, numbers one through ten are spelled out, while larger numbers are rendered as numerals, with exceptions for specific contexts like percentages or when comparing quantities. Consistency in applying these rules is key to maintaining a polished manuscript.

The Submission Process and Chicago Style

Successfully navigating the article manuscript submission process requires not only a well-researched and well-written piece but also meticulous adherence to the chosen style guide. The Chicago Manual of Style, when applied correctly to your manuscript, signals to editors that you are a serious and professional contributor.

Before submitting, always consult the specific submission guidelines of the journal or publication you are targeting. While they will likely reference CMOS, they may have minor variations or additional requirements regarding formatting, word count, or the submission of supplementary materials. Double-checking these guidelines against your manuscript, which has been prepared according to CMOS, is a critical final step. Ensure all citations are accurate, all notes are correctly formatted, and the overall presentation aligns with the expected standards. This diligence can significantly improve your chances of positive reception and publication.

A submission prepared in accordance with the Chicago Manual of Style demonstrates respect for the editorial process and the publication's standards. It allows editors to focus on the content and scholarly merit of your work, rather than being distracted by inconsistencies in formatting or citation. Mastering the principles of CMOS for manuscript submission is an investment that pays dividends in the professional presentation of your academic or professional writing.

FAQ

Q: What is the primary difference between the Notes and Bibliography system and the Author-Date system in the Chicago Manual of Style?

A: The primary difference lies in how sources are cited within the text and at the end of the document. The Notes and Bibliography system uses superscript numbers in the text that correspond to footnotes or endnotes for citations, followed by a bibliography at the end. The Author-Date system uses in-text parenthetical citations with the author's last name and publication year, followed by a reference list at the end.

Q: When should I use the Author-Date system versus the Notes and Bibliography system for my article manuscript submission?

A: The choice often depends on the discipline and the specific requirements of the journal or publisher. The Author-Date system is generally preferred in the sciences and some social sciences, while the Notes and Bibliography system is more common in the humanities. Always check the submission guidelines of your target publication.

Q: How should I format my manuscript's title page according to the Chicago Manual of Style for article submission?

A: Typically, the title page should include the full title of the article, your name, your institutional affiliation, and your contact information (email and phone number). Some journals may also request an abstract and keywords on this page, so refer to their specific guidelines.

Q: What are the general spacing and font recommendations for a Chicago style manuscript submission?

A: The Chicago Manual of Style generally recommends double-spacing throughout the entire manuscript, including block quotations and the reference list or bibliography. A 12-point readable font, such as Times New Roman or Arial, is also standard. Margins should be set at a minimum of one inch on all sides.

Q: How does the Chicago Manual of Style handle block quotations in an article manuscript submission?

A: Block quotations, which are typically longer than a certain word count (often five lines or more), should be set off from the main text. They are usually indented from the left margin, single-spaced (even if the rest of the manuscript is double-spaced), and without quotation marks. The citation follows the quotation.

Q: What is the purpose of a bibliography or reference list when submitting an article manuscript in Chicago style?

A: Both the bibliography (for the Notes and Bibliography system) and the reference list (for the Author-Date system) serve to provide full bibliographic details for all sources cited in the manuscript. This allows readers to locate and consult the original works, and it demonstrates the author's scholarly research and engagement with existing literature.

Q: Are there specific rules for figures and tables in a Chicago style article manuscript submission?

A: Yes, figures and tables should be numbered consecutively and independently, each with a clear and descriptive title or caption. They should be placed as close as possible to their first mention in the text, and the text must explicitly refer to each figure and table by its number. Proper attribution for any borrowed visual material is also essential.

Q: What is the "Oxford comma" and does the Chicago Manual of Style recommend its use?

A: The Oxford comma, also known as the serial comma, is a comma placed immediately before the coordinating conjunction in a series of three or more items. Yes, the Chicago Manual of Style generally recommends its use to enhance clarity and prevent ambiguity in lists.

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