

chicago style research article example

Research Article Example in Chicago Style: A Comprehensive Guide

chicago style research article example is a crucial reference point for students and academics navigating the complexities of scholarly writing. Understanding how to structure, cite, and present information in this widely adopted format can significantly enhance the clarity and credibility of your work. This article serves as a detailed exploration of what a Chicago style research article looks like, covering everything from its fundamental components to specific formatting nuances and common pitfalls to avoid. We will delve into the essential elements of a Chicago style research paper, including the title page, abstract, main body, bibliography, and the intricacies of its two primary citation systems: notes and bibliography, and author-date. By examining a comprehensive example, we aim to demystify the process and provide a practical roadmap for creating polished, academically sound research articles.

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Understanding the Chicago Manual of Style

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) is a widely respected and comprehensive style guide published by the University of Chicago Press. It provides recommendations for writing, citation, and formatting across a broad spectrum of academic disciplines, particularly in the humanities and social sciences. Its enduring popularity stems from its thoroughness and flexibility, offering two distinct but equally valid citation systems to accommodate different scholarly needs and preferences.

The CMOS is periodically updated to reflect evolving publishing standards and technological advancements. It covers a vast range of topics, from grammar and punctuation to manuscript preparation and indexing. For researchers and writers, it serves as the ultimate authority on how to present scholarly work professionally and consistently. Understanding the underlying principles of the CMOS is foundational to effectively implementing its citation and formatting rules.

Key Components of a Chicago Style Research Article

A typical Chicago style research article, regardless of the specific citation system employed, adheres to a standard structure designed to guide the reader through the research journey. This structure ensures logical flow and easy access to essential information. Familiarity with these components is the first step toward constructing a well-organized and compliant article.

These core elements work in concert to present a complete and coherent research project. Each plays a distinct role in conveying the research question, methodology, findings, and their implications. A thorough understanding of each component's purpose and expected content is vital for any researcher aiming for academic rigor.

Crafting an Effective Title Page

The title page in a Chicago style research article serves as the initial introduction to your work. It is here that the reader first encounters the identity and scope of your research. While not as extensively detailed as in some other styles, it requires precise information.

A typical Chicago style title page includes:

- The full title of the research article.
- The author's name(s).
- The name of the course or project for which the paper is submitted (if applicable).
- The instructor's name (if applicable).
- The institution's name.
- The date of submission.

It is important to note that the title page does not typically include a page number, though the page itself is counted in the sequence of the manuscript. The title should be concise, descriptive, and accurately reflect the content of the article, often using title case for major words.

The Role and Structure of an Abstract

The abstract is a concise summary of the entire research article, designed to provide readers with a quick overview of the study's purpose, methods, key findings, and conclusions. It is a critical component, often determining whether a reader will delve deeper into the full paper.

A well-crafted abstract typically includes:

- A brief statement of the research problem or question.
- An overview of the methodology used.
- A summary of the most significant results.
- A concise statement of the main conclusions or implications.

The abstract should be written in clear, direct language and usually ranges from 150 to 250 words, depending on the specific journal or institutional guidelines. It should stand alone and be understandable without reference to the main body of the paper.

Navigating the Main Body of a Research Article

The main body of a Chicago style research article is where the core of your research and argument resides. It is structured logically to guide the reader from the introduction of the topic through the presentation and analysis of evidence to the final discussion of findings.

The structure of the main body can vary slightly depending on the discipline and the nature of the research, but it commonly includes the following sections:

Introduction

The introduction sets the stage for your research. It should clearly define the research problem, provide necessary background information, establish the significance of the topic, and state the paper's thesis or main argument. A strong introduction hooks the reader and clearly outlines what the article will cover.

Literature Review

This section demonstrates your engagement with existing scholarship on the topic. It synthesizes relevant previous research, identifies gaps in the literature, and positions your own study within the broader academic conversation. A literature review isn't just a summary of sources; it's an analytical integration of them.

Methodology

Here, you detail the methods and approaches used to conduct your research. This section is crucial for ensuring the replicability and credibility of your findings. It should clearly explain your research design, data collection techniques, and analytical procedures.

Results or Findings

This section presents the data or evidence gathered through your research. It should be presented objectively and clearly, often accompanied by tables, figures, or other visual aids to illustrate key points. The focus is on presenting what you found, not interpreting it extensively at this stage.

Discussion

In the discussion section, you interpret your results and discuss their implications. You will relate your findings back to your research question and thesis, compare them with existing literature, acknowledge limitations, and suggest avenues for future research. This is where you articulate the significance of your work.

Conclusion

While not always a distinct section and sometimes integrated into the discussion, a conclusion typically summarizes the main points of the article and offers final thoughts on the research. It should reiterate the thesis in light of the evidence presented and provide a sense of closure.

In-Text Citation: Notes and Bibliography System

The notes and bibliography system is one of two primary citation methods supported by The Chicago Manual of Style. It is frequently favored in the humanities, such as literature, history, and art history.

In this system, sources are cited within the text using superscript numbers that correspond to endnotes or footnotes. These notes provide detailed citation information without disrupting the flow of the main text. Footnotes appear at the bottom of the page where the reference is made, while endnotes are collected at the end of the document.

A first note for a particular source typically includes the full bibliographic details. Subsequent notes for the same source can be shortened, often including the author's last name, a shortened title, and the page number(s). This system allows for extensive commentary or supplementary information within the notes themselves, which is a unique advantage.

Example of a Footnote (First Mention)

The example below illustrates a typical first footnote entry for a book:

- ¹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), 3.

Example of a Subsequent Footnote

This shows how the same source would be cited in a later note:

- ² Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 56.

The accompanying bibliography at the end of the paper will list all sources cited, alphabetized by the author's last name, and formatted in a specific, consistent manner. This dual approach of notes for immediate reference and a comprehensive bibliography for a full list provides a robust citation framework.

In-Text Citation: Author-Date System

The author-date system is the second major citation method offered by The Chicago Manual of Style, commonly used in the social sciences and natural sciences. This system prioritizes brevity and ease of locating sources within the text.

Instead of numbered notes, the author-date system uses parenthetical citations within the text. Each citation includes the author's last name and the year of publication. If a direct quotation is used, the page number(s) must also be included.

The advantage of this system is its direct linkage between the in-text citation and the corresponding entry in the reference list, which is located at the end of the article. This makes it very convenient for readers to quickly find the full source details.

Example of an Author-Date In-Text Citation (Quotation)

When quoting directly, the format is typically (Author Last Name Year, Page Number):

- This concept has been described as "a fundamental shift in understanding societal control." (Foucault 1977, 3)

Example of an Author-Date In-Text Citation (Paraphrase)

For paraphrased information, the page number is often optional but recommended:

- Foucault's analysis highlights a pivotal change in how society exerts its influence (Foucault 1977, 3).

Similar to the notes and bibliography system, a comprehensive reference list, alphabetized by author's last name, must be provided at the end of the article, detailing all sources cited in the text. This method ensures that readers can easily trace information back to its original source with minimal disruption to the narrative flow.

Developing a Comprehensive Bibliography or References List

Whether using the notes and bibliography system or the author-date system, a meticulously compiled bibliography or reference list is a non-negotiable component of any Chicago style research article. This list serves as a complete inventory of all the sources that have been consulted and cited within the paper.

The primary goal of this list is to provide readers with sufficient information to locate and verify the sources you have used. It is typically organized alphabetically by the author's last name. The specific formatting for each entry (books, journal articles, websites, etc.) is detailed and consistent within the Chicago Manual of Style, requiring careful attention to detail.

Key elements of a bibliography entry often include:

- Author's full name.
- Full title of the work.
- Publication information (city, publisher, year for books; journal title, volume, issue, year for articles).
- Page numbers (for specific sections or articles).
- URLs or DOIs (for online sources).

Adhering strictly to the CMOS guidelines for formatting each type of source ensures uniformity and professional presentation. Even minor deviations can detract from the overall credibility of the research article.

Formatting Specifics: Tables, Figures, and Equations

Effective presentation of data through tables, figures, and equations is crucial in many research articles. The Chicago Manual of Style provides specific guidelines to ensure these elements are integrated seamlessly and professionally into the scholarly work.

Tables are used to present complex data in a structured, organized format. Each table should have a clear, descriptive title, usually placed above the table. Column and row headings should be concise

and informative. Internal spacing and alignment are important for readability. Numbers within tables should be aligned consistently, typically by decimal point if applicable.

Figures, which include graphs, charts, illustrations, and photographs, should also be clearly labeled. Each figure needs a number and a descriptive caption, usually placed below the figure. If a figure is taken from another source, proper attribution and citation are required within the caption or in a note associated with the figure. Authors must ensure that figures are legible and contribute meaningfully to the understanding of the research.

Equations, particularly in scientific or mathematical research, should be numbered sequentially and centered on the page. The CMOS offers guidance on the notation, spacing, and alignment of mathematical elements to maintain clarity and consistency. Variables should be clearly defined, either in the text or in a glossary if extensive.

Common Errors in Chicago Style Research Articles

Despite the detailed guidance provided by The Chicago Manual of Style, researchers often make common mistakes that can compromise the quality and professionalism of their work. Awareness of these pitfalls is the first step toward avoiding them.

Some of the most frequent errors include:

- **Inconsistent citation formatting:** This can manifest as variations in punctuation, capitalization, or the order of elements within citations, both in-text and in the bibliography/reference list.
- **Incorrect footnote/endnote numbering:** Missing superscripts, duplicate numbers, or incorrect sequencing disrupt the connection between the text and the notes.
- **Varying citation systems:** Mixing elements of the notes and bibliography system with the author-date system within a single article creates confusion.
- **Missing crucial bibliographic information:** Omitting essential details like publication dates, page numbers, or publisher information makes sources difficult to locate.
- **Poorly formatted tables and figures:** Illegible labels, lack of clear titles, or improper placement can hinder understanding and appear unprofessional.
- **Plagiarism:** While not strictly a formatting error, failing to properly attribute sources, even unintentionally, is a serious academic offense.

Careful proofreading and meticulous attention to detail, particularly when constructing citations and ensuring consistency, are essential to producing a polished Chicago style research article.

Conclusion

Mastering the intricacies of a Chicago style research article example involves a commitment to precision in both content and presentation. From the initial structuring of your ideas and the careful articulation of your research question to the meticulous application of Chicago's distinct citation systems—notes and bibliography or author-date—every element contributes to the overall credibility and impact of your work. By understanding the fundamental components, adhering to formatting guidelines for text, tables, and figures, and diligently avoiding common errors, researchers can produce scholarly articles that are not only compliant with academic standards but also effectively communicate their findings to a wider audience. The Chicago Manual of Style, with its comprehensive approach, offers a robust framework for achieving academic excellence in research writing.

FAQ

Q: What is the primary difference between the notes and bibliography system and the author-date system in Chicago style?

A: The primary difference lies in how sources are cited within the text. The notes and bibliography system uses superscript numbers that correspond to footnotes or endnotes, allowing for detailed commentary. The author-date system uses parenthetical citations (Author Year, Page) directly in the text, which is often preferred for its brevity and direct linkage to the reference list.

Q: Can I use both notes and bibliography and author-date within the same Chicago style research article?

A: No, you must choose one system and use it consistently throughout your research article. Mixing the two can lead to confusion and is not compliant with Chicago style guidelines.

Q: How do I cite a website in Chicago style using the notes and bibliography system?

A: For the first note, you would typically include the author (if known), the title of the specific page or document, the name of the website, the publication date (if available), and the URL. Subsequent notes would be shortened. The bibliography entry would follow a similar structure.

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

A: While not strictly defined by Chicago style itself, most academic journals and institutions recommend an abstract length of 150 to 250 words. It should be concise yet comprehensive,

summarizing the entire paper.

Q: How should I format the title page for a Chicago style research article?

A: A Chicago style title page typically includes the full title of the article, the author's name, the course or project name (if applicable), the instructor's name (if applicable), the institution's name, and the date of submission. It does not usually include a running head.

Q: Are there any exceptions to the rule about page numbering on the title page in Chicago style?

A: Yes, the title page itself is generally not numbered. However, it is counted as page 'i' in the preliminary pages of a longer work, and the numbering typically begins with the introduction or the first page of the main body.

Q: What is the purpose of a literature review in a Chicago style research article?

A: The literature review situates your research within the existing body of scholarly work. It demonstrates your understanding of the topic, identifies gaps in current knowledge, and explains how your research contributes to or builds upon previous studies.

Q: How do I cite multiple authors in an in-text citation using the author-date system?

A: For two authors, you would list both last names connected by 'and' (e.g., Smith and Jones 2020). For three or more authors, you list the first author's last name followed by "et al." and the year (e.g., Smith et al. 2020).

Q: What is the recommended way to present figures and tables in a Chicago style research article?

A: Tables typically have their titles above them and are numbered sequentially. Figures, such as graphs or images, have their captions and numbers below them. Ensure all are clearly labeled, legible, and properly cited if taken from another source.

Q: How should I handle online sources in my bibliography or reference list in Chicago style?

A: For online sources, include the author (if available), title of the specific page or document, website name, publication date (if available), and the URL. If a DOI is available, it is generally preferred over a URL.

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