

chicago style social science citation

The Chicago Manual of Style is a widely respected and comprehensive guide for academic writing and publishing. When it comes to the social sciences, adhering to the correct citation practices is paramount for academic integrity and clear communication. This article delves deep into the intricacies of the Chicago style social science citation system, covering its fundamental principles, the distinctions between its two main approaches, and detailed guidance for citing various source types.

Understanding and applying these guidelines ensures your research is properly attributed and credible, facilitating a smoother scholarly discourse. We will explore how to navigate in-text citations, generate thorough bibliographies, and handle the nuances of different media, from classic books to digital resources, all within the framework of Chicago style social science citation.

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Understanding Chicago Style in the Social Sciences

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) is a comprehensive style guide offering detailed recommendations for manuscript preparation, citation, and formatting. Within the social sciences, Chicago style is favored for its flexibility and clarity, particularly its dual citation systems that cater to different disciplinary needs. This style guide emphasizes providing readers with sufficient information to

locate original sources, thereby upholding academic honesty and allowing for further investigation by the reader.

The overarching goal of any citation system, including Chicago style for social sciences, is to avoid plagiarism and give credit to the original authors whose work informs your own. Proper citation demonstrates a researcher's engagement with existing scholarship and situates their contribution within the broader academic conversation. For social scientists, this often involves citing a wide array of sources, from empirical studies and theoretical texts to qualitative data and online archives, making a robust citation system indispensable.

The Two Systems: Notes–Bibliography vs. Author–Date

Chicago style presents two distinct citation systems: the Notes-Bibliography (NB) system and the Author-Date (AD) system. The choice between these two often depends on the specific discipline or the requirements of a particular journal or publisher within the social sciences.

The Notes–Bibliography (NB) System

The Notes-Bibliography system is widely used in fields like history, art history, and literature. In the social sciences, it is often preferred by researchers whose work tends to be more narrative or archival. This system uses superscript numbers within the text to refer to full bibliographic notes (either footnotes or endnotes) that provide complete source information. A bibliography, listing all cited sources alphabetically by author's last name, appears at the end of the work.

Footnotes or endnotes offer flexibility for including explanatory material or tangential information that might disrupt the flow of the main text. They also allow for multiple citations of the same source within a single paragraph without repetition. The accompanying bibliography serves as a consolidated reference for the reader.

The Author–Date (AD) System

The Author-Date system is more common in the natural sciences, but it is also prevalent in many social science disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, and political science. This system uses brief

parenthetical citations within the text, typically including the author's last name and the year of publication (e.g., (Smith 2020)). A reference list, alphabetized by author's last name, follows the main text and provides complete publication details for all in-text citations.

The AD system is favored for its conciseness and its immediate linkage between the text and the source information. It is particularly useful in fields where empirical data and frequent referencing of specific studies are common, allowing readers to quickly identify the source and year of research discussed.

Crafting Effective In-Text Citations

Regardless of which Chicago style system you employ, accurate in-text citations are crucial. They act as signposts, guiding readers to the full bibliographic information of your sources. The format of these citations differs significantly between the NB and AD systems.

In-Text Citations in the Notes–Bibliography System

In the NB system, in-text citations are indicated by superscript Arabic numerals placed at the end of a sentence or clause, immediately after any punctuation. The first time a source is cited, the corresponding footnote or endnote will contain the full bibliographic information. Subsequent citations of the same source will use a shortened form, typically including the author's last name, a shortened title, and the page number.

For example, the first citation might be:

1. John Doe, *The Sociology of Modern Life* (New York: Academic Press, 2019), 45.

A subsequent citation for the same work would appear as:

5. Doe, *Sociology of Modern Life*, 112.

In-Text Citations in the Author–Date System

In the AD system, in-text citations are embedded directly within the text, usually in parentheses. The standard format includes the author's last name and the year of publication. If a specific page number is being referenced, it is included after a comma.

For instance:

The study indicated a significant correlation (Smith 2020).

Later research confirmed these findings (Jones, Brown, and Lee 2018, 78).

When the author's name is mentioned in the sentence, only the year needs to be included in parentheses, or if the year is part of the narrative, no parenthetical citation is needed for that element:

According to Smith (2020), the correlation was significant.

Building a Comprehensive Bibliography or Reference List

The bibliography or reference list is the backbone of your citation, providing a complete record of all the sources you have consulted and cited. The specific requirements for these lists vary slightly between the NB and AD systems, but both aim for clarity and completeness.

The Bibliography in the Notes–Bibliography System

The bibliography in the NB system is an alphabetized list of all works cited in the notes. It typically includes the author's last name first, followed by their first name, the full title of the work (italicized for books, in quotation marks for articles), publication information, and sometimes the specific page numbers consulted if space is a concern, though usually, the notes handle page-specific references.

The bibliography allows readers to quickly scan and locate any source mentioned in the text, providing a broader overview of the literature consulted by the author.

The Reference List in the Author–Date System

The reference list in the AD system is also an alphabetized list of all works cited. It contains the same essential bibliographic information as the NB bibliography. The primary difference is that it corresponds directly to the parenthetical citations in the text, ensuring that every in-text citation has a corresponding entry in the reference list.

Entries in the reference list are typically formatted with the author's last name first, followed by the year of publication in parentheses. The title of the work follows, and then the publication details. This format makes it exceptionally easy for readers to find the specific source mentioned within the

narrative.

Citing Books in Chicago Style

Books are fundamental sources in social science research, and Chicago style offers precise guidelines for their citation in both systems.

Books in the Notes–Bibliography System

A typical book citation in a footnote or endnote (first mention) would look like this:

- Author's First Name Last Name, Title of Book (Place of Publication: Publisher, Year), Page Number.

For a bibliography entry:

- Author's Last Name, First Name. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year.

Example:

- Foucault, Michel. Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Books in the Author–Date System

A book citation in the Author-Date system, used in-text and in the reference list, would be:

- In-text: (Author's Last Name Year, Page Number)

- Reference List Entry: Author's Last Name, First Name. Year. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher.

Example:

- Reference List: Foucault, Michel. 1995. Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. New York: Vintage Books.

When citing specific parts of a book or multiple works by the same author, Chicago style provides further detailed rules, emphasizing clarity and precision in all instances.

Citing Journal Articles for Social Science Research

Journal articles are a staple of social science scholarship, providing access to the latest research findings and theoretical debates. Chicago style offers specific formatting for these.

Journal Articles in the Notes–Bibliography System

In a footnote or endnote (first mention):

- Author's First Name Last Name, "Title of Article," Title of Journal Volume, no. Issue (Year): Page Numbers.

For a bibliography entry:

- Author's Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." Title of Journal Volume, no. Issue (Year): Page Numbers.

Example:

- Kuhn, Thomas S. "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions." The University of Chicago Press 12, no. 3 (1962): 171-191.

Journal Articles in the Author-Date System

In-text citation:

- (Author's Last Name Year, Page Number)

Reference List Entry:

- Author's Last Name, First Name. Year. "Title of Article." Title of Journal Volume (Issue): Page Numbers.

Example:

- Reference List: Kuhn, Thomas S. 1962. "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions." The University of Chicago Press 12 (3): 171-191.

Pay close attention to the use of italics for journal titles and quotation marks for article titles in both systems.

Referencing Websites and Online Resources

In the digital age, social scientists frequently cite websites, online articles, and other digital content. Chicago style provides clear guidelines for these as well.

Websites in the Notes-Bibliography System

When citing a webpage:

- Author's First Name Last Name (if available), "Title of Webpage," Title of Website, Publication Date (if available), accessed Date of Access, URL.

If no author is listed, begin with the title of the webpage. If no publication date is available, use "n.d." for "no date." The access date is important because online content can change.

Websites in the Author-Date System

In-text citation:

- (Author's Last Name Year) or (Title of Website Year) if no author.

Reference List Entry:

- Author's Last Name, First Name. Year. "Title of Webpage." Title of Website. Publication Date (if available). Accessed Date of Access. URL.

Example:

- Reference List: Pew Research Center. 2023. "Social Media Use in 2023." Accessed October 26, 2023. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2023/social-media-use/>.

It's crucial to provide as much information as possible to help readers locate the specific online content referenced.

Other Common Source Types in Social Science

Social science research often draws upon a diverse range of materials beyond books and journal articles. Chicago style offers specific guidance for many of these.

- **Dissertations and Theses:** These are typically cited with author, title, degree type, university, and year.
- **Conference Papers:** Similar to journal articles, but often include information about the conference name and location.
- **Government Documents:** These require careful citation, often including the issuing agency, title, and publication details.
- **Interviews:** Personal interviews are usually cited in footnotes or endnotes, with details like the interviewee's name, the date, and the location or method of interview. They are generally not included in the bibliography unless they have been formally published.
- **Reports:** Whether from NGOs, research institutions, or government bodies, reports are cited with authoring entity, title, and publication information.

The underlying principle for all Chicago style citations is to provide the reader with sufficient information to retrieve the source. Consistency in applying the rules for each source type is key to maintaining scholarly rigor.

Best Practices for Chicago Style Social Science Citation

Adhering to Chicago style social science citation requires diligence and attention to detail.

Implementing a few best practices can significantly improve the accuracy and professionalism of your work.

- **Consult the Manual:** The Chicago Manual of Style is the definitive authority. When in doubt, refer to the latest edition of the manual.
- **Be Consistent:** Once you choose between the NB and AD systems, stick with it throughout your document. Similarly, maintain consistency in how you format similar types of sources.
- **Double-Check Everything:** Names, dates, titles, page numbers, and URLs are all critical. A single error can hinder a reader's ability to find your source.
- **Use Citation Management Software Wisely:** Tools like Zotero, Mendeley, or EndNote can help manage your sources, but always review their output to ensure it conforms to Chicago style requirements. They are aids, not replacements for understanding the style.
- **Understand Your Audience and Requirements:** Always check the specific guidelines provided by your professor, journal, or publisher, as they may have specific preferences or modifications to standard Chicago style.

Mastering Chicago style social science citation is an investment in the credibility and impact of your research, ensuring your contributions are recognized and accessible within the academic community.

FAQ: Chicago Style Social Science Citation

Q: What is the primary difference between the Notes-Bibliography and Author-Date systems in Chicago style for social sciences?

A: The primary difference lies in how citations are presented within the text and in the final list of sources. The Notes-Bibliography (NB) system uses superscript numbers for footnotes or endnotes and concludes with a bibliography, while the Author-Date (AD) system uses parenthetical in-text citations (Author Year) and concludes with a reference list.

Q: Which social science disciplines typically prefer the Notes-Bibliography system?

A: Historically, disciplines like history, art history, and some humanities-focused social sciences tend to prefer the Notes-Bibliography system. However, its use can vary, and some social science fields may adopt it for specific types of research.

Q: Which social science disciplines commonly use the Author-Date system?

A: The Author-Date system is prevalent in disciplines like sociology, psychology, political science, economics, and other fields that often rely on empirical data and cite numerous studies, making it efficient for readers to quickly link text to source.

Q: How should I cite a book chapter by a different author than the editor in the Notes-Bibliography system?

A: For a footnote or endnote, you would cite the chapter author, "Chapter Title," in Book Title, ed. Editor's First Name Last Name (Place of Publication: Publisher, Year), page numbers. The bibliography entry would follow a similar structure, focusing on the chapter details first.

Q: What is the correct way to cite a website with no clear author or publication date in Chicago style, using the Author-Date system?

A: In the reference list, you would start with the title of the webpage, followed by the title of the website (if distinct), then the year (or "n.d." if no date is available), followed by the access date and the URL. The in-text citation would use the title of the webpage and the year (e.g., (Social Media Use n.d.)).

Q: If I am citing the same source multiple times in a paragraph using the Notes–Bibliography system, do I need to repeat the full footnote/endnote?

A: No, you do not. After the first full citation of a source, subsequent citations within the same document, especially if they are close together, can use a shortened note format (Author's Last Name, Shortened Title, Page Number). If you cite the exact same source and page number twice in a row, you can use "Ibid."

Q: What are the key elements required for citing a journal article in Chicago style, regardless of the system used?

A: Key elements include the author(s)' name(s), the article title, the journal title, the volume and issue number, the year of publication, and the page range of the article. For specific references, the page number being cited is also crucial.

Q: How do I handle citing multiple authors in Chicago style, particularly in the Author–Date system?

A: For two authors, list both separated by "and" (e.g., (Smith and Jones 2021)). For three or more authors, list only the first author followed by "et al." (e.g., (Williams et al. 2019)). This applies to both in-text citations and reference list entries.

Q: Is it acceptable to use online citation generators for Chicago style social science citations?

A: Online citation generators can be helpful starting points, but they are not always perfect. It is crucial to always review and manually verify the generated citations against the official Chicago Manual of Style to ensure accuracy and adherence to the specific system and source type requirements.

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