

## Chicago Documentation Style

Chicago documentation style is used for citing sources primarily in the humanities and some social sciences. Unlike MLA and APA, Chicago style provides two different methods for citation: the author-date system and the notes-bibliography system. Clarify with your instructor which of these systems you will be expected to use.

The **author-date system** uses in-text citations (also called parenthetical citations) for quoted and paraphrased material from sources, and it also uses a References page at the end of the paper that features a full bibliographic entry for each source. The author-date system is very similar to APA style (which we have a separate resource for), so this resource focuses on the notes-bibliography system.

The **notes-bibliography system** places footnotes after quoted and paraphrased material; those footnotes direct readers to a citation for the source at the bottom of the page. This system also includes a Bibliography page at the end of the paper that features a full citation for each source.

### Footnotes

Chicago style requires that you place a footnote after a quotation or paraphrased material. In Microsoft Word, place a footnote by clicking on References → Insert Footnote. Place the footnote AFTER quotation marks and any punctuation.

**Example: Hernandez writes that there are “several breeds of chicken that lay eggs more frequently than others.”<sup>1</sup>**

1. **Emilia Hernandez, “All About Chickens,” in *Farmers R Us* (Cambridge, MA: Fake University Press, 2016), 36.**

Since this is the first time we’ve made reference to this source, our footnote includes a full bibliographic entry for the source. However, from now on when we refer to this source, our footnote only needs to include the author’s last name, the title, and the page number.

**Example: Hernandez further explains that when deciding what chicken breeds to buy, “Farmers need to choose carefully.”<sup>2</sup>**

2. **Hernandez, “All About Chickens,” 37.**

You can save even more room by omitting the title if your previous footnote already includes the source’s title. This is especially useful if you find yourself quoting or paraphrasing the same source frequently.

**Example: Hernandez also suggests that some breeds require more care than others.<sup>3</sup>**

3. **Hernandez, 38.**

Depending on your instructor’s preferences, you may be expected to use your footnotes to include some commentary about the source. If so, include the citation first, and separate the citation from your commentary with a period.

**Example: Hernandez remarks that certain breeds are friendlier than others.<sup>4</sup>**

4. **Hernandez, 39. For example, while evidence is largely anecdotal, buff Orpingtons seem more accepting of human interaction like petting than breeds like brown leghorns, which have a reputation for being flighty and timid.**

You can find a sample paper formatted according to Chicago style at the Purdue OWL:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/chicago\\_manual\\_17th\\_edition/cmos\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/cmos\\_nb\\_sample\\_paper.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/cmos_nb_sample_paper.html)

## Formatting the Bibliography Page

General rules:

- Start the Bibliography page directly after the last page of your paper. Title it “Bibliography” and center-justify it.
- The Bibliography page should be single-spaced, but bibliographic entries should be separated with one space.
- List sources in ascending alphabetical order (A-Z).
- Indent all lines BESIDES the first for each source so it’s clear to readers where one source ends and the next begins.

Note: Your instructor may have individual preferences for formatting the Bibliography page. Always follow your instructor’s guidelines, even if they contradict the Chicago style guidelines.

## Formatting Bibliographic Entries

It would be overwhelming to include instructions for how to format the bibliographic entry for every type of source you might use. Instead, this section provides some guidelines to follow regardless of what sources you use. To find the format for a specific type of source, consult the most recent edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The Cottey Library also has a tool for generating bibliographic entries; however, you should always cross-check its results. You can also access a sample Bibliography page by going to the Purdue OWL at the link above.

Generally, the goal of a bibliographic entry is to provide as much of the following information about your sources as possible, in this order:

- The author’s name (last name, first name)
- The title of the source (in quotation marks if it’s a shorter work like an article; italics if it’s longer like a book)
- The “container” of the source, if applicable (see note below)
- The entity that published/sponsored/featured the source
- The date that the source was published

Note: The “container” of a source is the larger entity in which the source is included. For example, a book would be a container for an individual chapter; a TV show would be a container for an individual episode; a journal would be a container for an individual journal article. Put the names of containers in *italics*.

If you use an online source, you will also need to include the URL (web address). Remove the hyperlink of a URL by right-clicking it and selecting “Remove hyperlink.” In Chicago style, you do not need to include the date of access.

## Frequently Asked Questions about the Bibliography

Q: What if I don’t know the author’s name or the date of publication?

A: If you don’t know the author’s name, simply exclude it from your bibliographic entry and begin the entry with the source’s title instead. If you don’t know the date of publication, use the abbreviation “n.d.” (“no date”) instead.

Q: What if my source has more than one author?

A: Use (last name, first name) format for the first listed author, but use (first name last name) format for subsequent authors. **Example: Hernandez, Emilia, Dwight Williams, and Maribel Schultz.** If you have four or more authors, list the first author followed by the abbreviation “et al.” **Example: Hernandez, Emilia, et al.**

This resource was prepared by the Cottey College Writing Center.

<https://cottey.edu/campus-community/kolderie-center/learning-center/writing-center/>