

A Cite for Sore Eyes: A Short Guide to Citing Sources in Historical Writing

“Chicago Style” is the preferred method of citation in historical writing. When a teacher asks for you to use Chicago Style, do not turn in a deep dish paper or a paper covered with hot dog fixings. That’s the wrong Chicago Style! Also, while other disciplines use the “author-date” system, historians use notes and bibliographies.

Source citations show up in two places - notes & bibliography - and have slight variations for each. Notes can be either footnotes (spread out on the bottom of the page where cited) or endnotes (all collected at paper’s end). This handout explains how to cite sources for footnotes or endnotes. Check out the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) online for bibliography formats.

Every source has a similar order for citation information, but different sources will have different information available. In general, citations include the author, title, and facts of publication, in that order. Commas separate most elements; parentheses enclose the facts of publication. Titles of larger works are italicized; titles of shorter or unpublished works are enclosed in quotation marks. And if you are referencing information/quotes on specific pages, include the page numbers at the end, right before the closing period.

Books are the most common reference. Depending on the number of authors or publication type, book citations can look a little different. Can you notice where the different information fits in?

Book: Single Author

1. William Reese, *Testing Wars in the Public Schools: A Forgotten History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 21-22.

Book: Multiple Authors

26. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Modern in the Southern Slaveholder’s Worldview* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Book: Single Chapter in an Edited Volume

7. Nan Enstad, “Popular Culture,” in *Blackwell Companion to American Cultural History*, ed. Karen Halttunen (London: Blackwell, 2008), 360.

Book: No Author but Single Editor

41. Tony Michels, ed., *Jewish Radicals: A Documentary History* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 5.

Note: If you are using an electronic book, include the e-book information at the citation’s end.

15. Suzanne Desan, *The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 80-81, ACLS Humanities E-Book.

If your professor allows you to reference their lectures, cite that as well. They worked hard; give them credit! You will need the lecture's date and speaker's name. The best citations will also have the title of the lecture. Try to write these in your notes, so you don't need to ask a friend.

Lecture

5. Cindy I-Fen Cheng, "Citizenship Rights in the U.S., 1790-1924," (lecture, HIS 161, University of Wisconsin - Madison, Madison, WI, January 30, 2015).

Often authors publish shorter written pieces in larger publications - journals, magazines, and newspapers - sources which have different publication information. This type of citation looks more like the citation of a single chapter from a book.

Journal Article

9. Francine Hirsch, "Getting to Know 'The Peoples of the USSR': Ethnographic Exhibits as Soviet Virtual Tourism, 1923-1934," *Slavic Review* 62, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 690.

Newspaper Article

12. Sean Dinces, "Gov. Scott Walker's Plan for the Bucks Is a Sucker's Bet," *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, March 8, 2015.

Magazine Article

17. Jill Lepore, "The Man Who Broke the Music Business," *New Yorker*, April 27, 2015, 59.

Note: Did you find your article online or through a digital database? If online, include the url at the end of the citation. (ex: <http://time.com/3759629/cuba-us-policy/>) If in a digital database, just include the database name. (ex: Proquest, Jstor, etc.)

Your source may not have all the information expected in a citation. With less information, a reader will struggle to find the original source; try to find the needed information. If you *can't* find it, however, move to the next element of the citation. For some elements, acronyms help fill in missing information. No date of publication? Include "nd" when a citation otherwise calls for the date. No page numbers? Include "np" for a source that otherwise should have them.

So many types of sources exist, that the Chicago Manual of Style takes over 900 pages to detail them all! Do you have a source that is not listed here? Follow online examples for other formats.

Visit the Library of Congress web page, for examples of primary sources like cartoons, films, government documents, oral histories, photographs, and sound recordings.

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/chicago.html>

Visit the Chicago Manual of Style Online for absolutely any source. Type your source (ex: painting) in the search box on the upper right side, and select an entry that begins with a "14" (the citations chapter).

<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/book/ed17/frontmatter/toc.html>