
How to reference images: Chicago

Images can either be mentioned and described (cited) in your text or directly embedded as a figure (reproduced or adapted) in your work.

Referencing an image

Where mentioned in the text, you should provide a footnote and full reference for an image as you would for any other source.

Images cited from books and journal articles

If referring to an image included in a book or article, include the figure number after the page number in the footnote. The final reference given is for the whole text.

For example:

Footnote:

1. Tyler Jo Smith, and Dimitris Plantzos, *A Companion to Greek Art* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 5, fig.1.1.

Bibliography:

Smith, Tylor Jo and Dimitris Plantzos, *A Companion to Greek Art*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Images found online

The exact format of the footnote and reference for images found online will depend on the type of image/work and its location (i.e. is it a painting or photograph? Is it from an online collection or Instagram?) Generally, however, you will need to include the creator's name (where available), title of the work (in italics), plus date of creation, followed by medium and location of the work.

For example:

Image in an online collection

Footnote:

1. *Vietnam: A female NLF (Viet Cong) guerrilla fighter*, 1968, Bridgeman Education.

Bibliography:

Vietnam: A female NLF (Viet Cong) guerrilla fighter. 1968. Bridgeman Education.

See [Cite Them Right](#) for further examples including paintings and drawings, cartoons, and photographs found on the internet etc.

Embedding an image

If you are embedding an image into your work, there are additional steps to take to ensure you format and reference it appropriately. Further guidance is available in the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) (sections 3.3 – 3.41).

1. Captions and credit lines

Under the image you should include a caption that provides a figure number, plus title or short description of the material.

At the end of the caption, add a credit line (reference) for the image in parentheses. The credit line should be formatted according to the source of the image but may include author name(s), title, publication and copyright details, plus any page or figure numbers. If the work is included in your bibliography, a shortened form of the reference can be used.

For example:



Figure 1. An incomplete component of a post medieval carved antler bird dart. (Reprinted from Kath Creed, *Post medieval carved antler bird dart component*, 2011, digital photograph, accessed April 23, 2025, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=55437411>. Photograph courtesy of The Portable Antiquities Scheme, licensed under [CC BY SA 2.0](#).)

If you embed images that you created yourself, a credit line is not required but it may be appropriate to state, 'Photo by your name' for clarity.

If your work has chapters, figures should be numbered within the chapter. For example, chapter 2 would have Figures 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 etc.

2. In the main body of text:

All figures should be referred to within the text by their figure number. In the main text, 'figure' should be written in full, while 'fig.' can be used in parentheses. For example:

Figure 1 shows how antlers were carved to create hunting weapons.

Or

There are many examples of antlers being carved to make hunting weapons, (see fig. 1).

3. Bibliography:

Place the corresponding full reference for the image/ source in your bibliography. For example:

Creed, Kath. *Post medieval carved antler bird dart component*. 2011. Digital photograph, accessed April 23, 2025. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=55437411>.

4. List of Illustrations

We would recommend including a list of illustrations if your work is substantial enough to include a table of contents and/or you have a lot of figures in the body of your text. Your School may also provide guidance in their style guide.

Essentially, a list of illustrations provides an overview of the images, illustrations, graphs, diagrams, maps etc. used throughout your work. In it is included a brief description of the figure and the page number the figure is located on. The list of illustrations will come after the contents page (on a separate page) and before the Introduction.

For example:

List of Illustrations

1. Description of figure	4
2. Description of figure	12
3. Description of figure	21

A note on copyright...

Before using images in your work make sure to check for any [copyright](#) limitations. Generally, using images in student work is acceptable if they are integral to your argument, referenced correctly and will not be used in any published work. This includes any kind of 'public sharing', e.g. public posters, online exhibitions or use at a conference. However, it is your responsibility to check the work can be used for educational purposes. We recommend using images from licenced collections such as [Bridgeman Education](#) or Open Access collections such as [Openverse](#), which provide images suitable for educational use.