

Guide For Writing Research Papers

Department of History

University of South Dakota

Grammar and Style

1. Do not use contractions in formal writing.
2. Indent all quotations of fifty words or more (four lines or more) one-half inch on the left,
3. Use the European form for dates: 24 September 1945. Do not write June 23rd or 17th August, 1961.
4. Capitalize when referring to a specific: Congress, but not congressmen; Senator, but not senators; Constitution, but not constitutional; Queen Elizabeth, but not the queens of England; President Johnson, but not the presidents of the United States.
5. Use two hyphens (--) to represent a dash with no spaces between the words and the hyphens; use square brackets ([]) to enclose parentheses within parentheses.
6. Place commas and periods within quotation marks; colons and semi-colons are always placed outside the quotation marks.
7. A preposition is not a good word to end a sentence with.
8. And do not begin or end a sentence with a conjunction.
9. Avoid abbreviations in your text except for titles, such as Dr., Mr., or Jr.
10. Ellipses in a quotation should be indicated by three periods with a space between each (. . .); ellipses at the end of a sentence require a fourth period with the first in the immediate space following the last letter of the last word quoted. Never use an ellipsis mark at the beginning of a quotation to indicate omission.
11. If you interpolate any words of your own in a quotation, indicate them in square brackets. The same applies to the use of "*sic*" (always italicized) following an error of logic, fact or spelling in a quotation to indicate the error is not yours in transcribing the original text of the writer.
12. When you quote from a primary source reproduced in a secondary source, always indicate in your footnote that it is "Quoted in" that secondary source.
13. In verse quotations, indicate the divisions between lines with slashes.
14. The first time you mention a person in your paper, identify the person by full name. Exceptions are very famous personages such as kings and presidents.
15. Avoid, when possible, listing as (1), (2), (3), etc., and indenting the items listed. Try to work the ideas into sentences so the flow of your narrative will not be interrupted.
16. Whenever possible, go directly to the original sources; avoid quoting sources from secondary works, especially when the source itself is available to you.
17. Do not say "He felt the strategy was wrong," but rather, "He thought," or "He believed." One "feels" with one of the senses.
18. Do not say "Since he opposed the strategy," but "Because he opposed." "Since" connotes passage of time.
19. Indicate italics by underlining, unless your printer can produce them.
20. Avoid one-sentence paragraphs at all times. A paragraph should contain an introductory transition sentence, sentences developing your thought and a concluding sentence that will permit transition to the next paragraph.
21. Although passive voice is appropriate in certain places, until you can identify passive voice, write in the active voice. An example of passive voice would be: "The ball was kicked by the child." To make the sentence active, one would write: "The child kicked the ball."
22. Avoid clichés like the plague - they're old hat.
23. Avoid verbosity and \$20 words. Your writing should be clear and concise.

24. Be consistent in using the same tense in a sentence. Usually historical narrative is written in the past tense.
25. Avoid colloquialisms.
26. Try to balance your writing between simple and compound sentences.
27. Use parallel construction in your sentences.
28. Avoid digressions and awkward repetitions.
29. Do not use double negatives.
30. Buy a thesaurus and improve your style by using synonyms.

Formatting

1. A normal research paper is the equivalent of a chapter. Unless you are writing a thesis, do not break your paper into chapters or include a table of contents.
2. Always use 8 1/2" x 11" white paper at least sixteen pound weight; never use onion skin or erasable paper.
3. Unless directed otherwise, leave a one inch margin on all sides of the paper.
4. All narrative should be double-spaced and notes single-spaced with a double-space between each note.
5. For research papers, use a title page. In addition to the title, this page should include your name, your instructor's name, and the course number.
6. In the case of a thesis, insert a blank page and a title page. The first page of the chapters should have the chapter number and title two inches down and double spaced between the two, in capital letters, with the page number at the bottom. All other page numbers should be at the top of the page, four spaces down and with no punctuation.

Footnotes, Endnotes & Bibliographic Entries

1. Use

a. Footnotes

There are five types of notes, any or all of which might be used in a research paper or thesis. They are:

- (a) Every direct quotation, each statement of fact that is not generally known or self evident, and any interpretation borrowed from another source. Usually these sources will be written, published or unpublished, but they may also include interviews and oral recordings.
- (b) Cross references to other parts of the narrative or other footnotes, when it is necessary to treat different aspects of the topic at different points in the narrative.
- (c) Explanatory notes to amplify or qualify statements in the narrative. These should be used only when the writer believes it necessary to something outside the narrative.
- (d) Bibliographical notes to cite numerous sources or contrasting accounts on the same point; to give leads to the reader for further study. Normally, this type of situation refers to all the material back to the preceding citation.
- (e) Acknowledgments (which writers of research papers or theses do not use).

Notes are vital to scholarly studies but should be used only when necessary and then kept as brief as possible, within reason. There are few things more annoying to the reader than to attempt to read a thin narrative with many long, detached or explanatory notes. The reader should be given enough information in the note to find the source.

b. Bibliographic Entries

Entries for bibliographies should be categorized according to importance in the following order:

1. manuscripts (archival materials)
2. unpublished documents (all unpublished materials not in archives, such as manuscripts in the possession of authors, interviews or letters from protagonists, oral history)
3. public documents (all public documents that are published)
4. books
5. articles
6. newspapers
7. other

For further details on the form, consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Wood Gray, *Historians Handbook* 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964); or Frank Freidel, *Harvard Guide to American History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).

2. Basic Forms for Footnotes and Bibliographic Citations

a. Footnotes

(1) For footnotes, the first time a source is cited, the note should include the name of the author or editor in its regular order and without title (not reversed); the title of the work underlined (or italicized); the facts of publication (edition, volumes if multiple, place, and date); volume number if multiple; and page. Subsequent citations should use a shorter form

(2) After you have once cited a book or other reference you should refer to it with a shorter form thereafter throughout your paper, for example, Ezell, *The South Since 1865*, 107.

(3) Do not use op. cit. (opere citato) meaning in the place cited. This form is dated.

(4) If you cite an item immediately after the previous footnote, use Ibid. (Ibidem) meaning "in the same place." If the item is on another page, use Ibid. followed by a comma and the new page number. Ibid. is also used to repeat as much of the preceding reference as possible. For example, it can be used to repeat the author and title of multi-volume works followed by a comma and the volume and page number cited. When noting a different work by the same author, use id. (for idem, "the same man or persons") or ead. (eadem "the same woman").

(5) Other frequently used abbreviations:

- (a) ca. (circa) meaning "at or near a given date."

- (b) cf. (confer, compare, or consult).
- (c) i.e. (id est, "that is").
- (d) et al. (et alii) meaning "and others," to be used for multiple authors, etc.
- (e) e.g. (exempli gratia) meaning "for example."
- (f) n. ("note").
- (g) passim ("here and there").
- (h) sic ("thus") italicized in brackets [] to indicate error in original quote.
- (i) n.d. ("no date") if no date is given of publication, letter, etc.

(6) Numbering

The note should be introduced in the text with an Arabic number superscripted above the line, following any punctuation or periods (if using a typewriter, then raise the footnote 1/2 space above the line). This number should come after the sentence or passage to which the note will refer except in cases of direct quotation, or when two or more different citations are made in the same sentence. In the latter instances, the note numeral should be inserted immediately after the punctuation of the quotation or the statement cited. Note numbers should follow in numerical order throughout the paper. In the case of a thesis, they should run consecutively through each chapter.

(7) Position

Footnotes should be arranged in numerical order at the bottom of the page that contains the number, and endnotes at the end of the paper, beginning on a new page. Footnotes should be started and completed on the same page. They should be separated from the text by a solid line extending no more than half-way across the page. The Arabic number in the footnote should be superscripted. The first line of the footnote should be indented five spaces, as with the first sentence of a paragraph.

b. Bibliographic Citations

The form for bibliographic entries is the same except in the case of authors, with the last name coming first, followed by a comma, a period after the first name and after the title of the book. Following the title, list the volumes, edition, place of publication, publisher and date. Do not enclose this information in parentheses as you do in a footnote. These are then arranged alphabetically, and the same is true of articles.

3. Examples of Footnotes and Bibliographic Citations

The first line of a footnote is indented five spaces (or an equivalent measure) from the left-hand margin. Subsequent lines go back to the left margin.

The first line of a bibliographic citation starts on the left margin, but subsequent lines are indented five spaces (or an equivalent measure).

a. Books

Footnote/Endnote	¹ John Samuel Ezell, <i>The South Since 1865</i> (New York: Macmillan, 1963), 84.
Bibliographic Citation	Ezell, John Samuel. <i>The South Since 1865</i> . New York: Macmillan, 1963.
Footnote/Endnote	¹ Harry S. Truman, <i>Memoirs</i> , 2 vols. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955 and 1956), 1:324.
Bibliographic Citation	Truman, Harry S. <i>Memoirs</i> . 2 vols. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955 and 1956.
Footnote/Endnote	¹ Henry Steele Commager, ed., <i>Documents of American History</i> , 8th ed. (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1968), 146.
Bibliographic Citation	Commager, Henry Steele, ed. <i>Documents of American History</i> . 8th ed. New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1968.
Footnote/Endnote	¹ Tacitus <i>Histories</i> 4.29-30 (trans. R. Warner).
Bibliographic Citation	Tacitus <i>Histories</i> . Translated by R. Warner.

A note on classical sources: Abbreviations are used extensively for author and title of a work, for collections, and for journals and reference works; see the lists of abbreviations in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd ed.) and *L'Année philologique*. References are made not to pages but to parts of works (e.g., books, sections, lines).

b. Articles

Footnote/Endnote	¹ L. A. Weissberger, "Machiavelli and Tudor England," <i>Journal of Political Economy</i> 42 (February 1927), 589.
Bibliographic Citation	Weissberger, L. A. "Machiavelli and Tudor England." <i>Journal of Political Economy</i> 42 (February 1927): 581-96.
Footnote/Endnote	¹ "Schooling for a Speaker," <i>Time</i> , 14 June 1954, 54.
Bibliographic Citation	"Schooling for a Speaker." <i>Time</i> , 14 June 1954.

c. Newspapers

Footnote/Endnote ¹"New Political Disclosures," *New York Times*, 21 January 1949.

Bibliographic Citation "New Political Disclosures," *New York Times*, 21 January 1949.

Footnote/Endnote ¹"State Enjoys Budget Surplus," *Sioux Falls* (South Dakota) *Argus Leader*, 12 August 1966.

Bibliographic Citation "State Enjoys Budget Surplus," *Sioux Falls* (South Dakota) *Argus Leader*, 12 August 1966.

d. Public Documents

Footnote/Endnote ¹U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, *Hearings on S. 240, Labor Relations*, 81 Cong., 1 sess., 1949, S. Rept. 34, pp. 1124-25.

Bibliographic Citation U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. *Hearings on S. 240, Labor Relations*, 81 Cong., 1 sess., 1949, S. Rept. 34.

Footnote/Endnote ¹U.S., Congress, Senate, Senator Blank speaking for the *Amendment of the Standing Rules of the Senate*, S. Res. 103, 89th Cong., 1st sess., 14 November 1965, *Congressional Record* 102: 6522.

Bibliographic Citation U.S. Congress. Senate. Senator Blank speaking for the *Amendment of the Standing Rules of the Senate*, S. Res. 103, 89th Cong., 1st sess., 14 November 1965, *Congressional Record* 102: 6522.

Footnote/Endnote ¹U.S., *Statutes at Large*, vol. 67.

Bibliographic Citation U.S. *Statutes at Large*, vol. 67.

Footnote/Endnote ¹Reynolds v. Sims, 377 U.S. 533 (1964). (No italics in court citations.)

Bibliographic Citation Reynolds v. Sims, 377 U.S. (1964.) (Same as footnote, omitting only page number.)

e. Book Reviews

Footnote/Endnote ¹Gilbert C. Fite, review of *Nevada's Key Pittman*, by Fred L. Israel, *The Journal of American History* 51 (June 1964), 133.

Bibliographic Citation Gilbert C. Fite. Review of *Nevada's Key Pittman*, by Fred L. Israel. *The Journal of American History* 51 (June 1964): 133-34.

f. Theses/Dissertations

Footnote/Endnote ¹Barton J. Bernstein, "The Politics of Inflation" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1968), 84.

Bibliographic Citation Bernstein, Barton J. "The Politics of Inflation." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1968.

g. Manuscripts

Footnote/Endnote ¹Harry S. Truman to Elbert D. Thomas, 23 August 1945, Harry S. Truman Library, Archives, Truman Papers, OF 245.

Bibliographic Citation Harry S. Truman Library. Archives. Truman Papers.

h. Interviews, Letters

Footnote/Endnote ¹Interview with Harry S. Truman, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri, 3 August 1961.

Bibliographic Citation Truman, Harry S. Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri. Interview, 3 August 1961.

Footnote/Endnote ¹Letter to the author, from James J. Reynolds, 19 September 1961.

Bibliographic Citation Reynolds, James J. Letter to the author. 19 September 1961.

i. CD-ROM

Footnote/Endnote ¹Martin L. Sternberg, *The American Sign*

- Bibliographic Citation** *Language Dictionary on CD-ROM*, Windows vers. CD-ROM (New York: Harper Collins, 1994).
Sternberg, Martin L. A. *The American Sign Language Dictionary on CD-ROM*. Windows vers. CD-ROM. New York: Harper Collins, 1994.

j. FTP Sites

- Footnote/Endnote** ¹Gregor Heinrich, , "Where There is Beauty, There is Hope: Sao Tome e Principe," [ftp.cs.ubc.ca/pub/local/FAQ/african/gen/saoep.txt], July 1994.
- Bibliographic Citation** Heinrich, Gregor. [100303.100@compuserve.com]. "Where There is Beauty, There is Hope: Sao Tome e Principe." [ftp.cs.ubc.ca/pub/local/FAQ/african/gen/saoep.txt]. July 1994.

k. WWW Home Pages

- Footnote/Endnote** ¹Limb, Peter. "Relationships between Labour & African Nationalist/Liberation Movements in Southern Africa." [http://neal.ctstateu.edu/history/world_history/archives/limb-1.html]. May 1992.
- Bibliographic Citation** Limb, Peter. "Relationships between Labour & African Nationalist/Liberation Movements in Southern Africa." [http://neal.ctstateu.edu/history/world_history/archives/limb-1.html]. May 1992.

l. Listserv Messages

- Footnote/Endnote** ¹Gretchen Walsh, [gwalsh@acs.bu.edu], "REPLY: Using African newspapers in teaching," in H-AFRICA, [h-africa@msu.edu], 18 October 1995.
- Bibliographic Citation** Walsh, Gretchen. [gwalsh@acs.bu.edu]. "REPLY: Using African newspapers in teaching." In H-AFRICA. [h-africa@msu.edu]. 18 October 1995.

m. E-mail Messages

- Footnote/Endnote** ¹Mel Page, [pagem@etsuarts.east-tenn-st.edu], "African dance...and Malawi," private e-mail

- Bibliographic Citation** message to Masankho Banda, [mbanda@igc.apc.org], 28 November 1994.
Page, Mel. [pagem@etsuarts.east-tenn-st.edu]. "African dance...and Malawi." Private e-mail message to Masankho Banda, [mbanda@igc.apc.org]. 28 November 1994.

n. Videorecordings/Movies

- Footnote/Endnote** ¹*Itzak Perlman: In My Case Music*, prod. and dir. Tony DeNonno, 10 min., Denonno Pix, 1985, videocassette
- Bibliographic Citation** Perlman, Itzak. *Itzak Perlman: In My Case Music*. Produced and directed by Tony Denonno. 10 min. Denonno Pix, 1985. Videocassette.

4. Preparation for Publication

- (1) If you plan to submit your paper for publication, consult the journal in which you wish to publish for the form of citation it follows.
- (2) Remember that editors want all notes double-spaced and placed at the end of the paper.
- (3) A paper submitted for consideration for publication does not include the bibliography of the original research paper.
- (4) Always be certain to keep a photocopy or disk back-up in case the original is lost by the editor, reader or post office.

Statement on Plagiarism

When a student submits work purporting to be his own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording, or anything else from a source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the student is guilty of plagiarism. If someone else's exact words are used, the passage must be contained in quotation marks and noted. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content, and phraseology intact is plagiarism. Ideas or themes need not be quoted exactly, but must be referenced in a note. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated.

Consult often with your advisor/professor to avoid potential pitfalls in pursuit of evidence, in construction, and writing.