

Generative AI Citation Guide

Generative AI (GenAI) is a useful tool for writing and conducting research. From brainstorming to the final stage of editing, all generated AI content needs to be cited to ensure academic integrity. This handout provides instructions on how to construct in-text and bibliography citations for generative AI content according to MLA, APA, and Chicago Manual of Style.

MLA: In-Text Citation

When quoting from a generative AI model, such as ChatGPT, the first three words of the prompt, enclosed in quotation marks, serve as the title for the in-text citation. When paraphrasing from a generative AI model, the same rule applies for in-text citations.

Example:

When asked to describe the symbolism of the green light in *The Great Gatsby*, ChatGPT provided a summary about optimism, the unattainability of the American dream, greed, and covetousness. However, when further prompted to cite the source on which that summary was based, it noted that it lacked “the ability to conduct research or cite sources independently” but that it could “provide a list of scholarly sources related to the symbolism of the green light in *The Great Gatsby*” (“In 200 words”).

MLA: Works Cited Page Citation

When citing text or images from an AI-generated app, there is no author. The citation begins with the title of the prompt, in quotation marks, followed by the word *prompt*.

Formula:

“Title of prompt” prompt. *Name of the generative AI tool*, Specific version, Name of the company that made the tool, Date the content was generated, Specific URL for the tool.

Example:

“Describe the symbolism of the green light in the book *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald” prompt. ChatGPT, ChatGPT 4o, OpenAI, 16 Sep. 2025, <https://chatgpt.com/share/68c9cada-4dd0-8010-b0df-fbfc717c6d8>.

APA: In-Text Citation

When using a generative AI tool, an explanation of how the tool was used must be included. Provide the prompt that was used and the relevant text that was generated in the response.

Example:

When prompted with “Is the left-brain right-brain divide real or a metaphor?” the ChatGPT generated text indicated that although the two brain hemispheres are somewhat specialized, “the notation that people can be characterized as ‘left-brained’ or ‘right-brained’ is considered to be an oversimplification and a popular myth” (OpenAI, 2025).

APA: References Page Citation

When citing text or images from an AI-generated app, the model is the author.

Formula:

Model. (Year). *Name of the model* (Version Number) [Additional Descriptor]. Specific Web Address

Example:

OpenAI. (2025). *ChatGPT* (ChatGPT 4o version) [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com/share/68c9cada-4dd0-8010-b0df-fbfcc717c6d8>

Chicago Manual of Style: Author-Date

Do not cite a generative AI Model, such as ChatGPT, in a bibliography or reference list because the conversations cannot be accessed by others to view the content unless there is a publicly available link. However, an in-text citation should be used as part of a parenthetical text reference.

Example:

(ChatGPT, March 7, 2023).

Chicago Manual of Style: Notes and Bibliography

Do not cite a generative AI Model, such as ChatGPT, in a bibliography or reference list because the conversations cannot be accessed by others to view the content unless there is a publicly available link. A numbered footnote or endnote should be used.

Example:

Text generated by ChatGPT, OpenAI, March 7, 2023, <https://chat.openai.com/chat>.

If the prompt has not been included in the text, it can be included in the note.

Example:

ChatGPT, response to “Explain how to make pizza dough from common household ingredients,” OpenAI, March 7, 2023.

If the AI-generated text has been edited, that must be stated in the text or at the end of the note (e.g., “edited for style and content”).

Example:

ChatGPT, response to “Explain how to make pizza dough from common household ingredients,” OpenAI, March 7, 2023, edited for style and content.

Additional Resources

For further information regarding MLA, APA, or Chicago Manual of Style, please see the following Academic Center for Excellence handouts: [MLA Format Guide](#), [APA Format Guide](#), [Chicago Manual of Style Citation Guide](#).