

SIUC School of Music Guide to Some Music-Specific Issues in Writing

drawn from

Wingell, Richard. *Writing About Music*. 3rd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2002.

and

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 7th ed. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Musical Titles in Prose Writing

Specific Titles Pieces with specific titles (such as operas or tone poems) are capitalized just like book or movie titles (for example: words like "the, a, and" are lower case unless they are the first word in the title) When a title is in a foreign language, you should follow the rules for capitalization in that language. Since few of us are fluent in German, Italian, AND French, we suggest looking to a CD, sheet music, or other reference material, and copy what they do. Also, the titles of larger works are generally italicized, but movements are put in quotes. Turabian suggests that shorter works should also be put in quotes. Opus or other numbers are not italicized. (Long works=italics, short works/sections=quotes)

Orfeo *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* *Don Juan*, Op.20
Vier ernste Gesänge, Op. 121, No. 4 "All You Need Is Love"
"I Know That My Redeemer Liveth" from *Messiah* "Infernal Dance" from *Firebird*

Generic Titles Many works are titled Symphony or Sonata. These should not be in italics, but definitely capitalized. Small ordinal numbers should be written out, long ones should not. (fifth, not 5th)

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony Bartok's Fourth String Quartet Quartet No. 4
Haydn's 103rd Symphony

However, when not referencing a specific work, these words are not capitalized.

They played six string quartets. Haydn wrote dozens of symphonies.

Generic titles should be capitalized, but not in italics or quotes. In a title you capitalize "Major" and "Minor." You should include opus numbers or other (ex. Koechel) numbers whenever possible. Capitalize "Op." "No." or "K".

Piano Concerto in C Minor, K. 491 Piano Sonata No. 12, Op. 121
Concerto No. 20 for Piano and Orchestra in C Minor, K. 491

Works with generic titles that have been given nicknames usually put the nickname in parenthesis and italics when referencing the complete title. If referring to the work by its nickname in prose, just use italics.

In 1801, Beethoven composed his Sonata No. 14 in C-Sharp Minor (*Moonlight*).
Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* is my favorite piano piece.

Note Names Always capitalize note names in a sentence. Write out "flat," "sharp," and "natural" and use a hyphen.

Chopin wrote Prelude in A-Flat Major in 1832. His favorite note was B-flat.

NOT-- Chopin wrote a prelude in a flat major. Bach liked Bb and C#.

Musical Eras Capitalize historical musical eras- Baroque, Classical, Romantic. However, when distinguishing classical music from popular music, that is not capitalized. (Words like "classical" and "romantic" are not capitalized when used as adjectives.) Centuries are not capitalized, but are hyphenated when used as an adjective. No apostrophe is used in "1800s" and decades are in lower-case.

Mozart lived in the Classical era. In his personal life, Beethoven was a romantic man.

Stravinsky lived in the twentieth century. He wrote twentieth-century music.

He lived during the 1900s. He wrote his best music during the thirties.

Citations of Musical Sources in Chicago/Turabian

Recordings You have to make some decisions about which is more important, the performer/s or the composers. On some recordings this is obvious, on others less so. Also, some recordings have a specific title, while others just use the name of the works recorded. It can be useful to look at the spine of the CD before writing your citation, to see what the publisher thought was most important. The format of your recording should be noted: LP, Audiocassette, etc. Turabian suggests listing the code number as well, usually found on the spine of the CD. (Most other style manuals don't do this, and frankly, it isn't much help in locating most CDs.) If you are only citing one specific song or track on the recording, that song title should be in quotes, then follow with other information. For recordings obtained electronically, cite as a normal recording, then include information about where it was accessed. (Whenever possible, cite a "stable URL")

Bartoli, Cecilia. *Chant d'Amour*. London. 1996.

Karajan, Herbert von, dir. *Mass in B Minor, BWV 232*, by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Deutsche Gramophon. LP. B0011340-02. 1993.

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. *Music for the Mozart Effect, Vol. 1*. Various artists. Spring Hill. CD. 1998.

Soustrot, Marc, dir. *The Rite of Spring*, by Igor Stravinsky. Orchestre Philharmonique.

Naxos. 1998. www.naxosmusiclibrary.com. (accessed June 25, 2008).

Drake, Nick. "Pink Moon." *Way to Blue: An Introduction to Nick Drake*. Island Records. MP3. 2003.

Liner Notes

Hoogen, Eckhart van den. "A Bassoon Fest." Liner notes. *United Sounds of Bassoon*.

CD. Milan Turkovic et al. Koch International. 1994.

If there is no author or separate title for the liner notes, (look carefully!) then skip that part of the citation.

Liner notes. *Chant d'Amour*. Cecilia Bartoli, mezzo-soprano. CD. London. 1996.

Musical Scores Citing a score is like citing a book.

Beethoven, Ludwig van. *Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93*. New York: Dover, 1989.

Other Writing Issues

Punctuation reminders

1900s CDs it is= it's belongs to it= its
 the United States' policies the Beatles' records Miles Davis's albums
 Beethoven's symphonies Stravinsky's ballets

Troublesome words

A few words to beware of:

The *principal* horn player has lofty *principles*.

The *Premier* of Russia heard the *premiere* of a new opera.

Bach wrote *canons*. *Cannons* go boom and kill people.

A *song* has words and is sung (and generally is not purely instrumental). *Piece* or *work* is a more appropriate term for instrumental music.

Make sure you know the difference between words such as:

atonal, dissonant

arrangement, orchestration, instrumentation

tempo, rhythm, meter

contemporary, modern

composing, writing

They are not necessarily interchangeable.

Good places to start for music research

Available through Morris Library's site under "Databases"

- Oxford Music Online (includes Grove Opera, Grove Jazz and other Grove articles)
- Credo Reference (includes Harvard Dictionary of Music, other basic reference sources)
- Naxos Music Database (free streamed recordings)
- JSTOR (database that includes many good music periodicals)

Music Reference books

- Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians, Theodore Baker
- Music Since 1900, Nicholas Slonimsky

Bibliographies from your textbooks are also good resources.

Parting Advice When in doubt, ask your professor, or look at a *reliable* music resource and copy what they do. Try oxfordmusiconline.com, your textbook, or other reference books on music. Most style manuals have a chapter on citing recordings, musical works, and other musical issues. Whatever style you choose, be sure you use it *consistently* throughout your paper.