

Using and Citing Illustrations in Essays

What images should I use?

All images, photos, graphs, etc. that you use in your essays should be *directly relevant* to your argument. Don't just insert pretty pictures for the sake of it; select images that will:

- Help your readers understand your point.
- Illustrate your ideas.
- Provide examples and evidence of your thesis.

Example: If you are writing about Louis XIV furniture, we may need to see a picture of a Louis XIV-style chair; we do not need a picture of King Louis XIV. What he looked like has no bearing on your argument about the furniture.

How do I put them in my essay?

Make *direct references* to your images in your essay. A few ways to do this:

- “An example of this style can be seen in Figure 1.”
- “This style was very ornate. (See example Figure 1)”
- “Many chairs of this era, particularly the chairs at Versailles (Figure 1), were very ornate.”

There are two ways to organize your images: either place them in your text next to the paragraph where you discuss them (Figure 1), or put them all together at the end of the essay (Figure 2).

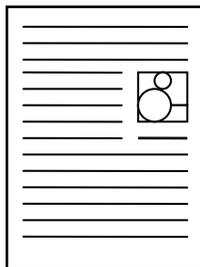


Figure 1: Figure in text.
Diagram by Author.

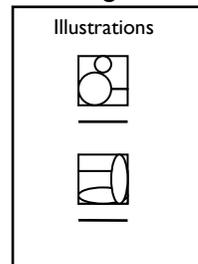


Figure 2: Figures at end of essay.
Diagram by Author.

Captions

Images always need *captions*. Captions should do two things; label the image and tell us the image's *source*.

To label the image you can simply say, “Figure 1,” or you can give a little more information, for example, “Figure 1: Chair at Versailles.” (This information should really also be covered in the text of your essay, but it doesn't hurt to remind your readers of it.)

Also tell the reader where you found the image, for example:

- Taken from *History of French Furniture*
- Taken from www.WorldofFurniture.com

Even if you created the image, give yourself credit:

- Photo by Author (if you took the picture yourself)

So the whole caption for your image might look like this:



Figure 3: Louis XIV chair.
Taken from www.theatre.ubc.ca.

How do I put captions in my essay using Microsoft Word?

Microsoft Word can automatically format captions for you. To add a caption using Word, first insert an image into your Word document. Then:

1. Select the image.
2. On the **Insert** menu, go to **Reference**, then click **Caption**.
3. Select any other options you want, and then click OK.

Citation

Images that you use in your essay have to be cited; make sure the source, if it isn't already, is listed in your **Bibliography**. See our Tip Sheet "Citation Guide" for guidelines on how to create a bibliography.

For additional research assistance, please consult the writing tip sheets "Annotated Bibliographies," "Quoting," and "Paraphrasing."