





# Footnotes on the Web

The reference or source anchor no longer needs to be *after* the reference, but can be *within* the reference.

In this changed version we see that the whole phrase is the link.

## Sidenotes (sometimes called Margin Notes)

Clearly the page layout needs to provide the space in the margins for this to be an option. Unless this is a large-format book, the measure of the notes (width of the text), is likely to be narrow, so don't design for this option [if the notes are long or there are lots of them and, the book is small.](#)

**Sidenotes** fall outside the text block unlike footnotes that will be inside the text block.

Sidenotes do not necessarily need superscript numbers within the text (and they themselves do not need to be numbered), if it is obvious what the sidenote refers to.

## Footnotes with InDesign

**InDesign** will help us build footnotes and the software will even import the footnotes from Microsoft Word. InDesign users get their very own configuration panel seen in the image alongside here. In this we can set the way the references are displayed in the text (superscript etc), and how the footnotes appear at the bottom of the page. We need a paragraph style set up for the display of the footnotes themselves and we can (optionally), use a character style for the reference figure in the text.

As you can see from the first example spread the footnote list figure is aligned to the left edge of the text box. You will often see this in the books on your shelves, however, a more attractive arrangement is to 'outdent' these listed figures so that the footnotes are aligned to the text and the number figures are offset from this text box.

InDesign does **not** provide the means to set footnotes outside the text box, so we need to plan for this by indenting all of the text inside the text box by an amount that we then remove from the left margins. This way we can outdent the footnote numbers. You will see from the image provided here that we are using guides to make sure that these items align. My footnote style is using a 4mm offset for the numbers and my paragraph styles are using a 4mm indent.



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Footnotes can be converted to side notes with Javascript/jQuery.

Andrew Clark has created a very elegant way to convert footnotes into side notes when the width of the page allows for it.

Although the side notes are converted the footnotes still remain.

### jQuery.sidenotes

By [Andrew Clark](#)

<sup>1</sup> Wanna see something cool? Resize this page and watch how this note adapts to different screen sizes. ↩

Transform [Markdown](#) footnotes into superpowered<sup>1</sup> sidenotes.

Try it out now by changing the size of your browser window. At full width, notes on this page are rendered as sidenotes. At medium width, they are placed directly after their reference in the text. At small widths, they are rendered as normal footnotes.

You can also use this page's [key bindings](#) to experiment with the API. For example, press h and watch what happens. (Press s to reverse the change.)

#### Features

<sup>2</sup> Useful for floated sidenotes. ↩

- Transform your footnotes into sidenotes.
- Toggle between footnotes and sidenotes, for instance, in responsive designs.
- Toggle between placing the sidenotes before<sup>2</sup> or after their reference in



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