

# Chicago from DAY 1 Songwriters Blueprint

## 1. Basics of the song lyrics. Answer these:

Relatable Premise:

Where you come from shapes who you are. And no matter how hard life gets, your roots make you strong.

Emotion:

Pride, resilience, toughness, belonging, loyalty.

Central Point/Core Idea (What's song about?)

Being born and raised in Chicago builds grit, character, and identity. The city may "bleed but never break," and neither do its people.

What is the key emotion evoked?

Unbreakable pride.

Unique because of:

It blends generational storytelling with a sports-anthem energy while keeping it personal and emotional. It's not just about a city. It's about inherited strength and identity passed down from DAY 1.

Singer style/mood/attitude:

Strong, bold, confident, gritty, emotionally grounded but powerful. A leader voice - not cocky, but proud.

Backing vocals:

Gang-style chants on:

- "We own the night"
- "Brave to the bone"
- "We won't lay low"
- "Chicago from day one"

Layered harmonies on "Ooo" sections for anthem lift.

What's the juicy part that everybody can relate to?

“Here you can be yourself. Why would anybody wanna live anywhere else?”

Everyone feels pride about where they're from - hometown loyalty is universal.

**2. Point of view. Answer these:**

Who is talking?

A lifelong Chicago native speaking for himself and his city.

What is their character avatar?

Blue-collar, resilient, generational Chicagoan. Could be an athlete, worker, artist, parent.

What pronoun?

“We” (primary), “I” implied through collective identity.

Who are they talking to?

- Fellow Chicagoans
- Outsiders who question the city
- The next generation

Their character avatar:

The community. The city itself. The future kids running those same streets.

What pronoun?

“You” (outsiders) and “we” (insiders).

Why are they talking to them?

To declare pride, defend identity, and celebrate the toughness built from birth.

**3. What is the musical/lyric hook that encapsulates the relatable premise? Write the lyric and sing the melody. The only part of the song you want to write out of pure inspiration is this step.**

What is the Hook?

“Chicago from day one”

What is the Melody?

Strong, rising melodic line on “Chi-CA-go” (emphasis on CA) drop slightly on “from day,” then resolve powerfully upward on “ONE.”

It should feel chantable — almost stadium-ready. Long-held note on “one” for crowd participation.

**4a. Where will the hook be in the chorus? Beginning? Middle? End?**

End of chorus for maximum punch and repetition.

Main Idea:

We are born bold and built and made to survive.

Details (imagery/senses):

Cold wind. Thunder. Night skyline. Fire in blood. Standing tall in storms.

Sensory/metaphor:

City as forge, cold steel shaped by fire. “Legends unfold in the cold” = hardship creates greatness.

**4b. What will comprise the remainder of the chorus?**

Statements of identity:

- Born bold
- Made to survive
- Burn bright
- Never back down
- Brave to the bone

Short, punchy, chant-ready declarations.

**5. What will I say in the 1st verse that will set up my chorus? (Only one main thought idea per section so you don't confuse listener with too much). You need to know the What and Why and When And How and Where and Who. Tell the Story in the verses. Use human senses - what can the character and listener see, hear, touch, taste and smell? Use details in verses - what is the central character wearing? Who else is in the song? What are other characters doing, wearing, saying, etc.?**

Main Idea:

Introduce Chicago as alive, loud, and shaping you from the beginning.

Details (imagery/senses):

- Roar of approaching night
- Echoes under shifting skies
- City beat running hot and wild
- Streets pulling you in
- Heartbeat pounding through concrete

People in jackets, boots on pavement, neon reflecting on wet asphalt.

Sensory/metaphor:

City as a living heart. Streets as magnets pulling destiny. Night as a roaring animal.

**6. What will I say in the pre-chorus (if there is one) that will set up my chorus?**

Main Idea:

Chicago may bleed, but it never breaks - and that strength lives in us.

Details (imagery/senses):

Blood imagery (symbolic). Fire in veins. Standing after storms.

Sensory/metaphor:

City as wounded warrior. Fire in blood = inherited resilience.

**7. What will I say in the 2nd verse that will further the story and set up and keep moving the chorus along? It has to be different than verse 1 – don't say the same**

**thing or idea again. (Only one main thought idea per section so you don't confuse listener with too much).**

Main Idea:

Generational strength - lessons learned through hardship passed to our kids.

Details (imagery/senses):

- History is like a restless tide
- Loss teaching cost
- Kids running same old streets
- Learning fast through lasting lessons

Parents watching from porches. Kids in hoodies and sneakers. Echo of past footsteps.

Sensory/metaphor:

Time as a tide. City as teacher. Children as continuation of the song.

**8. If the bridge has lyrics, what will be said there? Must fit into relatable premise but offer a different twist/perspective but still make sense. The most emotional lyrics tend to come in the bridge where the story is being resolved, or where you're adding an extra twist in the tale to heighten the emotion. There are three things a bridge can do:**

- 1) Change time**
- 2 Change perspective**
- 3) Go universal/philosophical**

Main Idea:

We ARE Chicago - not just living in it, but embodying it.

Details (imagery/senses):

Heart of everything. Unified voice. Collective strength.

Sensory/metaphor:

City as heart. Pulse of millions beating as one drum.

## **9. If there is a 3rd verse or ending, what will be said there? Is it really needed?**

Not needed, just final chorus. The repetition of “Chicago from day one” acts as emotional reinforcement.

## **10. Ending**

Main Idea:

Reclaim ownership. Triumphant declaration of identity and belonging.

Details (imagery/senses):

“This city’s ours” “It made us strong” Heart belongs here.

Sensory/metaphor:

City as parent. Roots planted deep.

## **11. Final Checklist – answer these questions:**

**DID YOU TELL THE WHOLE STORY?**

Yes - from origin, to struggle, to generational legacy, to declaration.

**DID YOU INVITE THE LISTENER IN?**

Yes - through universal hometown pride and “we” language.

**DID YOU FULFILL EXPECTATIONS?**

Yes - it delivers anthem energy while staying emotional and grounded.

**DID YOU SAY WHAT YOU MEANT TO SAY?**

Yes - Chicago builds strength from DAY 1.

**DOES THE SONG FEEL COMPLETE?**

Yes - it feels like a stadium anthem with heart and heritage.