

chicago manual of style citing photographs

The Chicago Manual of Style citing photographs requires careful attention to detail to ensure proper attribution and avoid copyright infringement. This guide will delve into the nuances of citing various types of photographic works, from historical images to contemporary digital creations, within the framework of Chicago style. We will explore the essential components of a photographic citation, including the photographer, title, date, and source, and discuss how these elements vary depending on whether the image is published in print, online, or exists as an original artwork. Understanding these guidelines is crucial for academics, researchers, writers, and anyone working with visual materials to maintain scholarly integrity and respect intellectual property rights. This comprehensive overview will equip you with the knowledge to confidently cite photographs according to the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style.

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Understanding the Basics of Photograph Citation

Properly citing photographs is fundamental to academic honesty and the ethical use of visual resources. The Chicago Manual of Style provides a robust framework for acknowledging the creators and origins of images, ensuring that readers can locate the source material if they wish. This process not only gives credit where it's due but also helps to establish the credibility of your own work by demonstrating thorough research and responsible sourcing. Whether you are using a well-known artwork or a casual snapshot found online, a systematic approach to citation is paramount.

The core principle behind citing any source, including photographs, is transparency. Researchers must be able to trace the lineage of information and images used within their work. For photographs, this means identifying the photographer, the title of the work (if applicable), the date of creation or publication, and the location where the photograph can be found or accessed. The specific format for presenting this information will vary depending on the medium and context of your work, as well as whether you are using footnotes/endnotes or a bibliography.

Citing Photographs in Print Publications

When incorporating photographs into print publications, the Chicago Manual of Style offers specific guidance to ensure clarity and accuracy. The primary goal is to provide enough information within your notes or bibliography so that a reader can identify and find the photograph in question. This often involves detailing the publication where the photograph appeared, along with information about the photograph itself.

Photographs from Books and Journals

Citing a photograph that appears within a book or journal article typically involves referencing the book or article itself, and then providing details about the photograph. The note would usually include the photographer's name, the title of the photograph (if given), the date it was created or published, and the publication details of the book or journal. The bibliography entry would then consolidate this information in a standardized format.

For instance, a note might read:

- Henri Cartier-Bresson, "Behind the Gare Saint-Lazare," 1932, photograph, in *Henri Cartier-Bresson: The Decisive Moment* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1952), plate 37.

And the corresponding bibliography entry might look like this:

- Cartier-Bresson, Henri. "Behind the Gare Saint-Lazare." 1932. Photograph. In *Henri Cartier-Bresson: The Decisive Moment*, plate 37. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1952.

Photographs as Standalone Artworks in Print

When citing a photograph that is presented as a standalone artwork within a book, such as in an exhibition catalog or an art history survey, the approach shifts slightly. Here, the emphasis is more on the photographic artwork itself, with the book serving as the access point. You would list the photographer, the title of the photograph, the date of its creation, and then the publication details of the book containing it.

A note example for this scenario could be:

- Ansel Adams, "Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico," 1941, photograph, in *Ansel Adams: 400 Photographs*, ed. Andrea G. Stillman (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2007), 72.

The bibliography entry would mirror this structure:

- Adams, Ansel. "Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico." 1941. Photograph. In *Ansel Adams: 400 Photographs*, edited by Andrea G. Stillman, 72. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2007.

Citing Photographs in Digital and Online Sources

The proliferation of digital imagery presents unique challenges and considerations for citing photographs. Online sources can be ephemeral, and access information can change, making it crucial to provide stable and verifiable citations. The Chicago Manual of Style emphasizes providing enough information for the reader to locate the image, even if the original URL becomes defunct.

Photographs from Websites

When citing a photograph found on a website, you need to include the photographer's name (if known), the title of the photograph, the date of creation or publication (if available), the name of the website, and a stable URL. It's also good practice to include the date you accessed the material.

A typical note for an online photograph might appear as:

- Dorothea Lange, "Migrant Mother," 1936, photograph, The Dorothea Lange Collection, The Oakland Museum of California, accessed October 26, 2023, <https://oaklandmuseumca.org/collections/dorothea-lange>.

The bibliography entry would be similar:

- Lange, Dorothea. "Migrant Mother." 1936. Photograph. The Dorothea Lange Collection, The Oakland Museum of California. Accessed October 26, 2023. <https://oaklandmuseumca.org/collections/dorothea-lange>.

Photographs from Digital Archives and Databases

Digital archives and specialized databases often provide stable identifiers, such as collection numbers or accession codes, which are invaluable for citing photographs accurately. When using images from these sources, include the photographer, title, date, collection name, archive or database name, and the accession number or relevant identifier, along with a URL if available.

An example of a note for an image from a digital archive:

- Carleton Watkins, "Yosemite Valley from the Mariposa Grove," ca. 1865-1866, albumen silver print, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Department of Photographs, object no. 84.XO.736.2, <https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/1032G6>.

The corresponding bibliography entry:

- Watkins, Carleton. "Yosemite Valley from the Mariposa Grove." Ca. 1865-1866. Albumen silver print. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Department of Photographs. Object no. 84.XO.736.2. <https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/1032G6>.

Special Cases for Photograph Citation

Beyond the standard scenarios, certain types of photographs and their use require specific citation approaches. These can include images created by the author, found images without clear attribution, and photographs used in multimedia projects.

Photographs Created by the Author

If you are using a photograph that you yourself have taken, the citation requirements are minimal, but it's still good practice to acknowledge its origin. In notes or the bibliography, you might simply identify it as "Author's photograph" or provide a brief caption indicating its creation. The primary purpose here is to distinguish it from sourced material.

A caption could read:

- Figure 1. Author's photograph of the local farmers' market, August 15, 2023.

Found or Anonymous Photographs

Occasionally, you may encounter photographs without a credited photographer or a clear date. In such cases, you must report what information is available. If the photographer is unknown, state "photographer unknown." If the date is unclear, use "ca." (circa) or "n.d." (no date) as appropriate. The source where you found the image remains crucial.

A note for an anonymous photograph might be:

- "Street scene with horse-drawn carriage," photographer unknown, ca. 1900, photograph, personal collection of John Smith, accessed October 26, 2023.

Photographs in Multimedia Projects

For projects that integrate photographs with other media, such as websites with embedded videos or interactive presentations, the citation style should be consistent with the primary medium. If the photograph is a key component of a multimedia work, cite it with the same detail as if it were in a standalone publication, but also note its context within the larger project.

Key Elements of a Chicago Style Photograph Citation

Regardless of the specific source or medium, a comprehensive Chicago Manual of Style citation for a photograph generally includes several core pieces of information. Ensuring these elements are present and correctly formatted is key to a proper citation.

- **Photographer's Name:** The name of the individual who created the photograph. If unknown, state "photographer unknown."
- **Title of the Photograph:** The official title of the photographic work, if one exists. Enclose titles in quotation marks.
- **Date of Creation or Publication:** The year the photograph was taken, or the year it was first published. Use "ca." for approximate dates.

- **Description of Medium:** Briefly identify the type of photograph (e.g., photograph, digital image, albumen silver print).
- **Source Information:** This is where the citation diverges based on the origin. It could be the title of a book or journal, the name of a website, the name of an archive or collection, or the owner of a private collection.
- **Publication Details:** For books and journals, include publisher, place of publication, and page or plate numbers.
- **Access Information:** For online sources, provide a stable URL and the date of access. For physical objects, mention the location or accession number.

By systematically collecting and organizing these details, you can construct accurate and complete citations for any photograph used in your work, adhering to the standards set forth by the Chicago Manual of Style. This meticulous approach to acknowledging sources is a hallmark of scholarly research and professional practice.

Remember that the Chicago Manual of Style advocates for consistency. Whichever approach you choose for your notes and bibliography (Notes-Bibliography system or Author-Date system), apply it uniformly throughout your document. The goal is always to provide clarity and enable readers to find your sources, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness and academic rigor of your work.

Frequently Asked Questions about Chicago Manual of Style Citing Photographs

Q: What are the essential pieces of information required when citing a photograph in Chicago style?

A: The essential pieces of information for citing a photograph in Chicago style include the photographer's name, the title of the photograph, the date of its creation or publication, the medium of the photograph, and the source where it was found (e.g., book title, website name, archive name). For online sources, a URL and access date are also crucial.

Q: How do I cite a photograph that I found online and doesn't have a clear

photographer's name?

A: If the photographer's name is unknown, you should explicitly state "photographer unknown" in your citation. The rest of the citation would then follow the standard format for online sources, including the title of the photograph, the date if available, the website name, the URL, and the date you accessed the material.

Q: What is the difference between citing a photograph as a standalone artwork versus one included in a book?

A: When citing a photograph as a standalone artwork, the emphasis is on the photograph itself, with the book serving as the source where it is reproduced. When citing a photograph that appears within a book as part of its content (e.g., an illustration), you reference the book as the primary source and provide details about the photograph within that context.

Q: Should I include the accession number when citing a photograph from a museum's online collection?

A: Yes, if a museum or archive provides an accession number or object number, it is highly recommended to include it in your citation. This unique identifier helps readers locate the specific item within the institution's collection more precisely.

Q: How do I cite a photograph that I took myself for my own publication?

A: For photographs you have taken yourself, the citation is simpler. You can typically indicate this in a caption or by stating "Author's photograph" in the note or bibliography to distinguish it from sourced material.

Q: What if a photograph has an approximate date of creation?

A: If the date of a photograph's creation is approximate, use "ca." (for circa) before the date. For example, "ca. 1910." This indicates that the date is an estimation.

Q: How does the Chicago Manual of Style address citing historical photographs without clear copyright information?

A: The Chicago Manual of Style focuses on proper attribution and source location rather than copyright status within the citation itself. However, when using historical photographs, it is always advisable to research their copyright status separately and adhere to all relevant legal requirements. Your citation

should still include all available information about the creator and source.

Q: When citing a photograph from a photography exhibition catalog, what information is most important?

A: For a photography exhibition catalog, you would cite the photographer, the title of the photograph, the date of creation, and then the catalog's publication details, including the editor, publisher, place, and date of publication. Often, the catalog will also indicate where the photograph is reproduced within it.

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