

chicago manual of style geographic data sources citation examples

Navigating Geographic Data Sources: Chicago Manual of Style Citation Examples

chicago manual of style geographic data sources citation examples are crucial for researchers, academics, and anyone needing to accurately attribute information derived from maps, geospatial datasets, and other spatial resources. Proper citation ensures academic integrity, allows readers to verify your sources, and avoids plagiarism. This comprehensive guide will delve into the intricacies of citing various geographic data sources according to the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), covering everything from atlases and gazetteers to digital datasets and online mapping platforms. We will explore the fundamental principles of CMOS citation for geographic materials and provide detailed, practical examples to help you navigate this often complex area of scholarly communication. Understanding these citation conventions is essential for presenting your work with credibility and precision.

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Understanding the Core Principles of CMOS Citation for Geographic Data

The Chicago Manual of Style, in both its author-date and notes-bibliography systems, emphasizes providing sufficient information for a reader to locate and consult the original source. When citing geographic data, this means identifying the creator, title, publisher, date, and location of publication or access. The specific format will vary depending on whether you are using the notes-bibliography system (common in history and the arts) or the author-date system (prevalent in the sciences and social sciences). Regardless of the system, clarity and completeness are paramount. The goal is to distinguish one source from another, especially when dealing with multiple editions or versions of the same geographic work or dataset.

Key Elements of a Geographic Data Citation

Regardless of the specific type of geographic data, certain core elements are generally required for a complete citation. These elements help readers understand the origin and nature of the information presented. Pay close attention to these components to ensure your citations are both compliant and informative.

- **Author/Creator:** This could be an individual cartographer, a government agency, a research institution, or the entity responsible for creating

the data.

- **Title:** The full title of the map, atlas, dataset, or report.
- **Publication Information:** Details about the publisher, place of publication, and date of publication or release. For digital sources, this may include the website name and URL.
- **Edition/Version:** If applicable, specify the edition or version number, which is critical for maps and datasets that are updated regularly.
- **Scale (for maps):** The ratio of a distance on the map to the corresponding distance on the ground.
- **Date of Access (for online sources):** The date on which you accessed the digital resource.
- **DOI or Persistent Identifier:** For digital datasets, a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) or other stable identifier is highly recommended for easy retrieval.

Notes-Bibliography vs. Author-Date Systems

The Chicago Manual of Style offers two primary citation systems. The notes-bibliography system uses numbered footnotes or endnotes for in-text citations, followed by a bibliography at the end of the work. The author-date system uses parenthetical in-text citations (Author Year, page) and a reference list at the end. When citing geographic data, the information you present will be similar, but its placement and formatting will differ between these two systems. Familiarizing yourself with the nuances of your chosen system is essential for consistent and accurate citation.

Citing Traditional Geographic Resources

Traditional geographic resources include printed maps, atlases, gazetteers, and globes. Citing these items requires attention to their specific publication details, including publisher, date, and edition. The physical nature of these sources means you'll often cite their printed publication information directly.

Citing Printed Maps

Printed maps are a fundamental form of geographic data. When citing a single map, you should include the cartographer (if known), title, scale, publisher, place of publication, and year. For maps that are part of a larger work, such as an atlas or a book, you will need to cite them accordingly.

In the notes-bibliography system, a note might look like this:

1. "Map of Chicago," by John Smith, scale 1:24,000, published by Chicago Cartographic Society, Chicago, 1985.

The corresponding bibliography entry would be:

Smith, John. "Map of Chicago." Scale 1:24,000. Chicago: Chicago Cartographic Society, 1985.

In the author-date system, the in-text citation would be (Smith 1985) and the reference list entry would be similar to the bibliography entry above.

Citing Atlases

Atlases are collections of maps, often with accompanying text. When citing an entire atlas, you'll cite the editors or authors, the title, the edition, the publisher, the place of publication, and the year. If you are citing a specific map within an atlas, you would include the map's title as well.

Notes-bibliography system example:

2. National Geographic Atlas of the World, 10th ed., edited by John Doe, National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C., 2018.

Bibliography entry:

Doe, John, ed. National Geographic Atlas of the World. 10th ed. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2018.

Author-date system example:

In-text: (Doe 2018)

Reference list:

Doe, John, ed. 2018. National Geographic Atlas of the World. 10th ed. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society.

Citing Gazetteers and Dictionaries

Gazetteers and geographical dictionaries provide descriptive information about places. When citing these resources, focus on the author or editor, the title, the edition, the publisher, the place, and the year. If you are referencing a specific entry, you will need to indicate that in your citation.

Notes-bibliography system example:

3. "Lake Michigan," in Encyclopedia of Earth's Geography, edited by Jane Roe, vol. 2, 678. New York: Academic Press, 2020.

Bibliography entry:

Roe, Jane, ed. "Lake Michigan." In Encyclopedia of Earth's Geography, vol. 2, 678. New York: Academic Press, 2020.

Author-date system example:

In-text: (Roe 2020, 678)

Reference list:

Roe, Jane, ed. 2020. "Lake Michigan." In Encyclopedia of Earth's Geography, vol. 2, 678. New York: Academic Press.

Citing Digital Geographic Data and Online Platforms

The rise of digital mapping and geospatial data has introduced new challenges and complexities to citation. Digital sources require information about their accessibility, the date of access, and any specific version or update details.

Citing Geospatial Datasets

Geospatial datasets are collections of geographic data, often in digital formats (e.g., shapefiles, GeoJSON). Citing these requires identifying the data creator, the title of the dataset, its version, the date of release, and the source from which it was obtained, including a DOI if available.

Notes-bibliography system example:

4. U.S. Geological Survey, "National Hydrography Dataset," version 2.3, accessed March 15, 2023, <https://nhd.usgs.gov/>.

Bibliography entry:

U.S. Geological Survey. "National Hydrography Dataset." Version 2.3. Accessed March 15, 2023. <https://nhd.usgs.gov/>.

Author-date system example:

In-text: (U.S. Geological Survey 2023)

Reference list:

U.S. Geological Survey. 2023. "National Hydrography Dataset." Version 2.3. Accessed March 15, 2023. <https://nhd.usgs.gov/>.

If a DOI is available, it should be prioritized:

5. Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI). "WorldStreetMap." Accessed April 10, 2023. doi:10.1000/xyz123.

Bibliography entry:

Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI). "WorldStreetMap." Accessed April 10, 2023. doi:10.1000/xyz123.

Author-date system example:

In-text: (ESRI 2023)

Reference list:

ESRI. 2023. "WorldStreetMap." Accessed April 10, 2023. doi:10.1000/xyz123.

Citing Online Mapping Platforms

Platforms like Google Maps, Bing Maps, or OpenStreetMap allow users to create and view maps. When citing information derived from these platforms, you should mention the platform name, the specific map or layer used, the date of access, and the URL. If you have captured a screenshot or specific view, describe it.

Notes-bibliography system example:

6. Google Maps, satellite view of Statue of Liberty, accessed April 1, 2023, <https://www.google.com/maps/>.

Bibliography entry:

Google Maps. Satellite view of Statue of Liberty. Accessed April 1, 2023. <https://www.google.com/maps/>.

Author-date system example:

In-text: (Google Maps 2023)

Reference list:

Google Maps. 2023. Satellite view of Statue of Liberty. Accessed April 1, 2023. <https://www.google.com/maps/>.

Citing Geographic Information System (GIS) Software and Outputs

If you have used GIS software to create or analyze geographic data, you may need to cite the software itself and any specific outputs generated. This often involves citing the software developer, the software name, its version, and the operating system.

Notes-bibliography system example:

7. Esri, ArcGIS Pro, version 3.0.1 (Redlands, CA: Esri, 2022).

Bibliography entry:

Esri. ArcGIS Pro. Version 3.0.1. Redlands, CA: Esri, 2022.

Author-date system example:

In-text: (Esri 2022)

Reference list:

Esri. 2022. ArcGIS Pro. Version 3.0.1. Redlands, CA: Esri.

Handling Specific Geographic Data Types

Certain types of geographic data have unique citation requirements. Understanding these specific needs ensures your citations are as precise as possible.

Citing Georeferenced Images

Georeferenced images are digital images that have been spatially referenced to a real-world location. Citation requires identifying the source of the image, its acquisition date, its spatial reference information, and where it was accessed.

Notes-bibliography system example:

8. Aerial photograph of Yellowstone National Park, dated 2021, georeferenced by National Park Service, accessed April 15, 2023, via the NPS Digital Photo Archive.

Bibliography entry:

National Park Service. Aerial photograph of Yellowstone National Park. Dated 2021. Georeferenced. Accessed April 15, 2023. Via NPS Digital Photo Archive.

Author-date system example:

In-text: (National Park Service 2021)

Reference list:

National Park Service. 2021. Aerial photograph of Yellowstone National Park. Dated 2021. Georeferenced. Accessed April 15, 2023. Via NPS Digital Photo Archive.

Citing Satellite Imagery

Satellite imagery is a common source for geographic research. When citing it, you should include the satellite system or sensor, the acquisition date of the imagery, the processing level (if known), and the data provider.

Notes-bibliography system example:

9. Landsat 8 OLI/TIRS, "Collection 2 Level-2," scene acquired July 8, 2022, provided by the U.S. Geological Survey, EarthExplorer, <https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov/>.

Bibliography entry:

U.S. Geological Survey. "Landsat 8 OLI/TIRS, Collection 2 Level-2." Scene acquired July 8, 2022. EarthExplorer. <https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov/>.

Author-date system example:

In-text: (U.S. Geological Survey 2022)

Reference list:

U.S. Geological Survey. 2022. "Landsat 8 OLI/TIRS, Collection 2 Level-2." Scene acquired July 8, 2022. EarthExplorer. <https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov/>.

Authoritative Practices and Common Pitfalls

Adhering to CMOS guidelines for geographic data citation involves understanding best practices and being aware of common mistakes to avoid. Consistency and clarity are your guiding principles.

Maintaining Consistency and Clarity

The most important aspect of any citation practice is consistency. Ensure that all your citations follow the same format, whether you are using the notes-bibliography or author-date system. If you encounter a type of geographic data not explicitly covered by CMOS, follow the general principles of the manual, providing as much detail as necessary for your reader to locate the source. Clarity means presenting information in a straightforward and unambiguous manner.

Avoiding Common Citation Errors

Several common errors can undermine the credibility of your work. These include:

- Omitting crucial information, such as the date of access for online sources or the edition of an atlas.
- Using inconsistent formatting for similar types of sources.
- Failing to provide a persistent identifier (like a DOI) when one is available for digital data.
- Not specifying the scale of a map when it is relevant to your analysis.
- Assuming that general knowledge of a common platform (like Google Maps) negates the need for a citation.

By carefully reviewing your citations against the guidelines and examples provided in the Chicago Manual of Style, you can ensure your work is both ethically sound and professionally presented.

When in Doubt, Consult the Manual

The Chicago Manual of Style is the definitive authority. When in doubt about how to cite a particular geographic data source, always refer to the latest edition of the manual for the most accurate and up-to-date guidance.

Understanding its principles will empower you to cite even the most novel or complex geographic resources with confidence.

FAQ: Chicago Manual of Style Geographic Data Sources Citation Examples

Q: What is the most critical piece of information to include when citing a digital map in CMOS?

A: The most critical piece of information when citing a digital map in CMOS is the date of access, along with the URL and the name of the mapping service. This ensures readers can view the map as it existed at the time of your research, as online maps are frequently updated.

Q: How do I cite a specific region or feature within a digital map, like a particular neighborhood on Google Maps?

A: When citing a specific region or feature within a digital map, you should still cite the platform and URL, but you can also add a descriptive phrase in your citation that clarifies what you were viewing. For example, "Google Maps, satellite view of Millennium Park, Chicago, accessed April 1, 2023."

Q: What is the difference in citing a printed map versus a digital map in CMOS?

A: The primary difference lies in the publication details. For a printed map, you cite its physical publisher, place, and date of publication. For a digital map, you cite the online platform, the URL, and crucially, the date of access, as digital content is dynamic.

Q: Is it necessary to include the scale of a printed map in the citation?

A: Yes, it is generally necessary to include the scale of a printed map in your citation, especially in the notes-bibliography system, as it provides important contextual information about the map's detail and purpose.

Q: How do I cite a geospatial dataset downloaded from a government agency like the USGS?

A: You should cite the agency as the author, the title of the dataset, the version number, the acquisition or release date, and the source or URL where it was accessed. A DOI, if available, should be prioritized.

Q: What if the geographic data source has no clearly identifiable author?

A: If there is no identifiable author, you should start the citation with the title of the work. For digital sources, the name of the website or organization hosting the data would follow.

Q: Should I cite the GIS software I used to create a map?

A: Yes, if the map you are presenting as part of your research is a direct output of GIS software, it is good practice to cite the software itself. This typically includes the developer, software name, and version number.

Q: Are there specific guidelines for citing historical maps found in archives?

A: For historical maps found in archives, you would cite the archive as the collection holder, the name or description of the map, its creation date, and its accession number or reference code. You would also note where the archive is located.

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