

chicago manual of style geographic citation for maps

Navigating the Terrain: A Comprehensive Guide to Chicago Manual of Style Geographic Citation for Maps

chicago manual of style geographic citation for maps requires meticulous attention to detail and a clear understanding of the elements necessary for accurate attribution. Whether you are a scholar, researcher, or writer, properly citing the cartographic sources you employ is crucial for academic integrity and for allowing your readers to locate and verify your information. This comprehensive guide will delve into the nuances of citing maps according to the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS), covering everything from identifying essential bibliographic details to understanding specific requirements for different types of maps and cartographic resources. We will explore the fundamental principles of CMOS citation and then break down the practical application for various scenarios, ensuring you can confidently navigate the complexities of geographic citation.

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Understanding the Core Principles of Geographic Citation

The fundamental purpose of any citation, including those for geographic materials, is to provide your audience with sufficient information to locate and consult the original source. In the context of maps, this means identifying the creator, title, publisher, date, and any other identifying characteristics that distinguish it from other maps. The Chicago Manual of Style emphasizes clarity, consistency, and completeness, ensuring that

readers can trace your research back to its origins. Proper geographic citation lends credibility to your work and acknowledges the intellectual property of cartographers and map publishers.

The Importance of Accuracy in Map Attribution

Accuracy in citing maps is paramount. Even minor discrepancies in the title, publisher, or date can lead to confusion and prevent a reader from finding the correct map. This is particularly true for historical maps or specialized cartographic materials where precise identification is critical for scholarly research. The Chicago Manual of Style provides a framework for achieving this accuracy by outlining the specific pieces of information that should be included in a map citation.

Distinguishing Between Different Cartographic Sources

Not all maps are created equal, and the citation format may need slight adjustments depending on the nature of the cartographic source. This could range from commercially produced atlases and wall maps to online digital mapping platforms and historical hand-drawn charts. Understanding these distinctions is key to applying the Chicago Manual of Style effectively. The manual offers guidance that accommodates this diversity.

Essential Elements for Citing Maps in Chicago Style

When citing a map using the Chicago Manual of Style, several key pieces of information are generally required to create a complete and useful citation. These elements help to uniquely identify the map and provide context for its creation and dissemination.

Author or Creator Identification

The first step in citing a map is to identify its creator. This might be a named cartographer, a government agency responsible for its production (such as a geological survey), or a commercial map publisher. If no specific author is listed, the publisher often takes precedence. CMOS allows for flexibility here, prioritizing the most prominent identifying entity associated with the map's creation.

The Map Title and Edition Information

The title of the map is a crucial identifier. It should be transcribed exactly as it appears on the map itself. If the map is part of a larger work, such as an atlas, the title of the atlas will also be necessary. Any edition or revision information provided on the map should also be included in the citation to specify which version of the map is being referenced.

Publisher and Publication Details

Following the title, the publisher of the map is typically listed. This is the entity that produced or distributed the map. Alongside the publisher, the place of publication and the date of publication are essential. For older maps, you might encounter less standardized publication information, requiring careful transcription of what is available.

Scale and Physical Description (When Relevant)

While not always mandatory for every citation, including the map's scale can be important for providing context, especially in academic or technical contexts. The scale indicates the ratio between distances on the map and corresponding distances on the ground. A brief physical description, such as the material (e.g., paper, digital) or dimensions, might also be included if it aids in identification or understanding.

Citing Specific Types of Maps

The Chicago Manual of Style provides specific guidance for citing various forms of cartographic materials, adapting the general principles to the unique characteristics of each.

Citing Printed Maps

For a standalone printed map, the citation will typically include the author/creator, title, publisher, place of publication, and date. For instance, a state highway map produced by a Department of Transportation would be cited with the department as the creator, followed by the title of the map, and the relevant publication details.

Citing Maps within Atlases or Books

When a map is part of a larger publication like an atlas or a book chapter, the citation will reference the map itself within the context of the larger work. You would cite the map's specific title and, if applicable, its page number or plate number, followed by the full bibliographic information for the atlas or book.

Citing Online or Digital Maps

Citing digital maps, especially those accessed online, requires including the URL and the date of access. For interactive mapping platforms, you may need to describe the specific map layer or view you utilized. The Chicago Manual of Style has evolved to address the ephemeral nature of online resources, emphasizing the importance of stable access points and access dates.

Citing Historical Maps

Historical maps often present unique challenges due to less standardized publication data. The focus remains on accurately transcribing all available identifying information, including the name of the cartographer, the year of creation or publication, and any known repository or collection where the map is housed.

Incorporating Map Citations into Your Work

How you integrate map citations depends on whether you are using the notes-bibliography system or the author-date system, as outlined in the Chicago Manual of Style.

Using the Notes-Bibliography System

In the notes-bibliography system, you will provide a detailed citation in a footnote or endnote the first time you refer to a specific map. Subsequent references to the same map can be shortened. A bibliography at the end of your work will then list all cited sources alphabetically.

Using the Author-Date System

The author-date system requires in-text citations that include the author's

last name and the publication year, for example, (Smith 2018). A full reference list at the end of your document will provide the complete bibliographic details for each cited map, organized alphabetically by author.

Footnotes vs. Endnotes in CMOS

Both footnotes (at the bottom of the page) and endnotes (at the end of the chapter or document) are acceptable within the notes-bibliography system of the Chicago Manual of Style. The key is consistency throughout your work.

Common Pitfalls and Best Practices in Map Citation

Avoiding common errors and adhering to best practices will ensure your map citations are accurate and professional.

Ensuring Completeness of Information

A common pitfall is omitting crucial details like the publisher or date. Always double-check that all essential bibliographic components are present for each map citation.

Handling Ambiguous or Missing Information

When information is unclear or missing, it's best to state that. For example, if a publication date is uncertain, you might use "n.d." (no date) if it is a formal citation, or simply note the absence of the information.

Consistency in Formatting

Maintaining strict consistency in formatting – including capitalization, punctuation, and the order of elements – is a hallmark of good scholarly practice and is emphasized by the Chicago Manual of Style.

Advanced Considerations for Cartographic Sources

Beyond basic map citations, there are more specialized scenarios that writers

may encounter when dealing with cartographic materials.

Citing Geospatial Data and GIS Layers

For researchers using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), citing the underlying geospatial data and specific layers becomes important. This often involves detailing the data source, its format, and how it was accessed, in addition to any associated metadata.

Citing Aerial Photographs and Satellite Imagery

Aerial photographs and satellite imagery, while visual representations of geographic areas, are also considered cartographic products. Their citation requires identifying the source of the imagery (e.g., NASA, USGS), the date of acquisition, and any specific project or mission associated with it.

Citing Maps from Archives and Special Collections

When citing maps found in archival collections or special library holdings, you should include the collection name, the box or item number, and the repository where the collection is housed, in addition to the map's own identifying details.

FAQ

Q: What is the primary goal of geographic citation for maps according to the Chicago Manual of Style?

A: The primary goal of geographic citation for maps, as per the Chicago Manual of Style, is to provide readers with sufficient and accurate information to locate and verify the original cartographic source consulted by the author.

Q: What are the essential elements typically required when citing a printed map in Chicago style?

A: The essential elements typically required for a printed map in Chicago style include the author or creator, the map title, the publisher, the place of publication, and the date of publication.

Q: How should one cite a map that is part of a larger publication like an atlas?

A: When citing a map within an atlas, you should cite the specific map's title (if it has one), and then provide the full bibliographic citation for the atlas, including the map's page or plate number if applicable.

Q: What specific considerations are there for citing online or digital maps in Chicago style?

A: For online or digital maps, Chicago style requires including the URL where the map can be accessed and the date of access. If the map is interactive, describing the specific view or layers used is also important.

Q: How does Chicago style handle missing or ambiguous publication information for historical maps?

A: Chicago style handles missing or ambiguous publication information by advising the author to transcribe what is available and, if necessary, to indicate the absence of specific details, such as using "n.d." for no date.

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

A: Including the scale of a map is not always mandatory for every citation, but it is often recommended, especially in academic or technical contexts where understanding the map's spatial representation is important.

Q: What is the difference in how maps are cited between the notes-bibliography system and the author-date system in Chicago style?

A: In the notes-bibliography system, maps are cited in footnotes or endnotes upon first reference, with a shortened form for subsequent references, and a full listing in the bibliography. In the author-date system, in-text citations include author and year, with a full reference list at the end.

Q: When citing aerial photographs or satellite imagery, what information should be included

according to Chicago style?

A: When citing aerial photographs or satellite imagery, Chicago style suggests including the source of the imagery (e.g., NASA, USGS), the date of acquisition, and any relevant project or mission details.

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