

# chicago style author date for graph

## Understanding Chicago Style Author-Date for Graphs

**chicago style author date for graph** citation is a critical element for academic integrity and clarity when presenting visual data. This widely adopted citation style offers a precise method for acknowledging the sources of information, including graphical representations like charts, diagrams, and infographics. Proper attribution not only prevents plagiarism but also allows readers to easily locate the original source for verification and further exploration. This article will delve into the intricacies of implementing the Chicago Manual of Style's author-date system for citing graphs, covering essential elements from in-text citations to the reference list, and addressing common scenarios encountered by researchers and writers. We will explore how to format these citations effectively, ensuring accuracy and adherence to scholarly standards.

## Table of Contents

- Understanding the Chicago Style Author-Date System
- Citing Graphs within the Text
- Creating the Reference List Entry for Graphs
- Special Considerations for Graph Citations
- Best Practices for Chicago Style Graph Citations

## Understanding the Chicago Style Author-Date System

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) offers two primary citation systems: notes and bibliography, and author-date. For many disciplines, particularly those in the social sciences and sciences, the author-date system is preferred due to its conciseness within the body of a work. This system involves placing the author's last name and the publication year directly within the text, typically at the end of a sentence or clause, or sometimes immediately following the data or graph itself. This immediate connection between the cited material and its source is a cornerstone of the author-date method. The goal is to provide readers with immediate information about the origin of the data, facilitating quick checks and enhanced credibility for the presented research.

The author-date system relies on two key components: the in-text citation and the corresponding reference list entry. The in-text citation is brief,

pointing the reader to the full bibliographic information. The reference list, located at the end of the document, provides comprehensive details for each source cited in the text, allowing readers to retrieve the original materials. This dual approach ensures that all sources are properly credited and that the flow of the main text is not significantly disrupted by lengthy citations. When dealing with visual data like graphs, this system requires specific attention to accurately represent the source of the visual information.

## **Citing Graphs within the Text**

When incorporating a graph into your work, whether it's a chart, diagram, or table adapted from another source, you must provide an in-text citation immediately following the presentation of the graph or the data it represents. The standard format for an author-date in-text citation includes the author's last name and the year of publication. For a graph created by an organization or government agency that acts as the author, the organization's name is used in place of an individual's last name. For instance, if you are citing data from a graph published by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2022, the in-text citation would appear as (U.S. Census Bureau 2022).

## **Placement of In-Text Citations for Graphs**

The placement of the in-text citation is crucial for clarity. Ideally, it should follow directly after the graph or the sentence that introduces or discusses the graph's content. For example, if you have a bar chart illustrating population trends, you might write: "Population growth in major metropolitan areas has been steady over the past decade (Smith 2021)." Alternatively, if the graph is presented as a figure, the citation might be placed immediately after the figure caption, before the figure itself, or within the caption if that's where the discussion of the source occurs. The key is to ensure the reader can clearly link the visual information to its origin without ambiguity.

## **Citing Graphs with Page Numbers**

In situations where the graph appears on a specific page within a larger publication, it is recommended to include the page number in the in-text citation. This is particularly helpful for sources like books or reports where locating a specific graph can be challenging without a page reference. The format would then be (Author Last Name Year, page number). For example, (Jones 2020, 15) indicates that the graph can be found on page 15 of Jones's 2020 publication. This level of detail enhances the reader's ability to quickly verify the source of the graphical data.

## **Citing Graphs from Online Sources**

When citing a graph obtained from an online source, the author-date system still applies. If the online source has a clear author and publication date,

the citation follows the same format. However, for online resources that may not have a consistent author or date, you might need to adapt. If no specific author is listed, use the name of the organization or website. If no publication date is available, you may use "n.d." for "no date," though this is generally discouraged if a date can be reasonably inferred or found. For example, (World Health Organization n.d.) would be used if a WHO infographic lacks a specific publication date.

## **Creating the Reference List Entry for Graphs**

The reference list, which appears at the end of your document, provides the full bibliographic details for every source cited in your text. For graphs, the entry should contain enough information for a reader to locate and access the original source. The specific elements required can vary slightly depending on whether the graph is from a book, journal article, website, or other medium.

### **Graphs from Books**

When a graph is taken from a book, the reference list entry should include the author(s), publication year, title of the book, and publication information. If the graph is on a specific page or range of pages, it's beneficial to include this information. The standard format is: Author Last Name, First Name. Year. Title of Book. City: Publisher, page number(s).

- Example: Smith, John. 2021. Urban Development Trends. New York: Academic Press, 45.

### **Graphs from Journal Articles**

For graphs found within a journal article, the reference list entry will include the author(s) of the article, the publication year, the article title, the journal title, the volume and issue numbers, and the page range where the article appears. If the graph is on a specific page within the article, you might also include that detail. The format typically looks like this: Author Last Name, First Name. Year. "Article Title." Journal Title Volume (Issue): page range.

- Example: Lee, Mei. 2019. "Economic Indicators in Southeast Asia." Journal of Asian Studies 78 (2): 112-130, fig. 3.

### **Graphs from Websites and Online Reports**

Citing graphs from online sources requires careful attention to available information. Include the author (individual or organization), the publication date (or last updated date), the title of the webpage or report, and the URL. If a direct link to a PDF report is available, that is often preferred. The format for a website is generally: Author Last Name, First Name (or Organization). Year. "Title of Webpage." Title of Website. Last modified/accessed Date. URL.

- Example: World Health Organization. 2023. "Global Health Statistics Overview." WHO website. Accessed January 15, 2024.  
[https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/topic\\_details/gho\\_indicator\\_details/indicator\\_id/133100](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/topic_details/gho_indicator_details/indicator_id/133100).

For online reports that are more formal, the entry might resemble a book or journal entry, but with a URL. Ensure you capture the most specific date available. If a document was updated, note the update date as the publication date. If no date is present, and no update date can be found, use "n.d." followed by an access date.

## **Graphs from Government and Institutional Publications**

Government agencies and institutions often produce reports and statistical data that include graphs. When citing these, the institution itself often serves as the author. The entry will include the name of the agency, the year of publication, the title of the report or document, and the URL if accessed online. If it's a physical document, include publisher information. For online government documents, the URL is essential.

- Example: U.S. Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2022. Employment Projections Summary.  
<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/proj.nr0.htm>.

Pay close attention to the exact naming conventions of government bodies, as they can be quite specific. For instance, using the full name of the bureau is often preferred over an abbreviation, unless the abbreviation is widely understood and has been established earlier in the text or reference list.

## **Special Considerations for Graph Citations**

When dealing with graphs, several specific scenarios require particular attention to ensure accurate and compliant Chicago style author-date citation. These include original graphs you create based on data from a source, graphs that have been adapted or modified, and situations where there might be multiple authors or editors involved.

## **Original Graphs Created from Source Data**

If you have compiled raw data from one or more sources and created your own graph, chart, or diagram based on that data, you still need to cite the original source(s) of the data. The graph itself is your creation, but the information it presents originates elsewhere. In such cases, the citation typically appears within the caption or a note accompanying the graph. You would cite the source(s) of the data in your in-text citation format and include the full details in your reference list. The graph's caption might state something like: "Figure 1. Projected economic growth, 2023–2027 (Data from Global Economic Outlook 2023)."

## **Adapted or Modified Graphs**

When you adapt or modify a graph from a source—for instance, by highlighting certain data points, changing the axes, or combining elements from different graphs—it is crucial to indicate that the graph has been altered. The in-text citation should clearly reflect the original source, and the caption or a note should explicitly state that the graph is adapted. The reference list entry will be for the original source of the graph you adapted. The format might look like this: "Figure 2. Consumer spending patterns, adapted from Johnson (2020)."

## **Graphs with Multiple Authors or Editors**

If the source of the graph has multiple authors, the in-text citation format changes slightly. For two authors, include both last names connected by "and": (Smith and Jones 2022). For three or more authors, list the first author's last name followed by "et al.": (Davis et al. 2021). The reference list entry will include all authors up to ten; for works with more than ten authors, list the first seven followed by "et al.".

## **Graphs without Clear Authors (Corporate Authorship)**

As mentioned earlier, many graphs are produced by organizations, institutions, or government agencies. In these cases, the organization's name serves as the author. Ensure you use the full, official name of the organization for both in-text citations and the reference list. For example, if citing a graph from a report by the World Bank, the citation would be (World Bank 2021).

## **Graphs with No Date**

In instances where a graph or its source has no discernible publication or update date, the Chicago Manual of Style allows for the use of "n.d." in place of the year in both the in-text citation and the reference list entry. However, it is always best to exhaust all efforts to find a date, as its absence can sometimes indicate a less authoritative or outdated source. If an

approximate date can be inferred, it is generally better to use that and perhaps note the approximation, rather than "n.d.".

## **Best Practices for Chicago Style Graph Citations**

Adhering to best practices in Chicago style author-date citation for graphs ensures clarity, accuracy, and academic integrity. Consistency is paramount; once you establish a method for citing graphs, stick to it throughout your document. This includes the format of your in-text citations and the structure of your reference list entries. Double-checking all details against the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style is also advisable, as guidelines can be refined.

When presenting graphs, always aim for clear and informative captions. These captions should not only describe the content of the graph but also include the in-text citation where appropriate and any necessary notes about adaptation or source modification. This makes it easy for your readers to understand both the visual data and its origin. Furthermore, ensure that every source cited in your text, including those for graphs, has a corresponding, complete entry in your reference list.

Pay close attention to the specific details of the source. For online graphs, prioritize stable URLs that are likely to remain active. If a graph is part of a larger document that is available in multiple formats (e.g., print and online), choose the format that is most accessible and relevant to your audience and provide the appropriate citation details. Diligence in these areas will contribute significantly to the overall quality and credibility of your work, making it easier for readers to engage with and verify your research.

The accurate citation of graphs is not merely a formality; it is a fundamental aspect of responsible scholarship. By diligently applying the Chicago style author-date system, you empower your readers with the ability to trace the origins of the data presented, fostering transparency and trust in your research. This practice upholds ethical research standards and enhances the overall academic rigor of your work.

## **FAQ**

### **Q: How do I cite a graph I created myself using data from a published source in Chicago style author-date?**

A: When you create your own graph using data from a published source, you must cite the original source of the data. The in-text citation should follow the data or the discussion of the data, using the author-date format. For example, if you created a bar chart based on data from a book by Smith published in 2021, your in-text citation might look like (Smith 2021). In your reference list, you will include a full entry for Smith's book. The caption for your graph should also indicate that the data is from Smith, e.g., "Figure 1. Projected Population Growth (Data from Smith 2021)."

**Q: What is the difference in citation format for a graph found in a book versus one found on a website in Chicago style author-date?**

A: The core difference lies in the details provided in the reference list entry. For a graph from a book, the entry will include the author, year, title of the book, publisher, and city of publication, along with page numbers. For a graph from a website, the entry will include the author (or organization), year, title of the webpage or specific graph, the name of the website, the URL, and ideally an access date. The in-text citations will follow the author-date format in both cases, pointing to these respective entries.

**Q: Can I use an abbreviation for a government agency in Chicago style author-date citations for graphs?**

A: Generally, you should use the full, official name of the government agency or organization as the author in both in-text citations and reference list entries. Abbreviations are typically only used if they are widely recognized and have been previously defined within your text or if the organization itself commonly uses that abbreviation. However, for formal academic writing, the full name is usually preferred for clarity and completeness.

**Q: What if the graph is not on a specific page, but rather embedded within a webpage in Chicago style author-date?**

A: If a graph is embedded within a webpage and doesn't have explicit page numbers, you would cite it using the standard website citation format. The in-text citation would still be author-date. In the reference list, you would provide the author, year, title of the specific page or graph, the website name, and the URL. If the graph is a distinct visual element on the page, you might refer to it by its title or a descriptive phrase in your text, followed by the citation.

**Q: How do I cite a graph that has been modified from its original source using Chicago style author-date?**

A: When you modify a graph from its original source, you must still cite the original source. The in-text citation remains the same as if you were citing the original graph (e.g., (Author Year)). However, your graph's caption or accompanying note should explicitly state that the graph has been adapted or modified. For example, "Figure 3. Comparative Sales Data, adapted from Green (2018)." The reference list entry will be for the original source.

**Q: What is the Chicago style author-date format for a graph from a report that doesn't have an author listed, only a corporate body?**

A: If a report has no individual author listed but is attributed to a corporate body (like an organization or institution), that corporate body's

name serves as the author. The in-text citation would be the corporate body's name and the year, for instance, (International Monetary Fund 2020). The reference list entry would start with the full name of the corporate body, followed by the year, the title of the report (*italicized*), and publication details including publisher and URL if applicable.

**Q: Should I include the figure number from the original source in my Chicago style author-date citation?**

A: It is generally not necessary to include the original figure number from the source in your Chicago style author-date citation or reference list entry. Your own figure numbering (e.g., Figure 1, Figure 2) is what matters within your document. However, if the original figure number is crucial for identifying a specific visual within a complex source, you might consider including it in a note or in the caption for added clarity, but it's not a standard part of the citation format itself.

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