

chicago style examples for citing corporate authors

chicago style examples for citing corporate authors are crucial for academic integrity and clear communication in scholarly work. Navigating the nuances of citing organizations, governmental bodies, and other entities can sometimes be complex, especially when these groups are the authors of the works you consult. This article aims to demystify the process, providing comprehensive guidance and practical examples for citing corporate authors in Chicago style. We will explore the foundational principles of this citation method, delve into various scenarios including direct corporate authorship and subsidiary entities, and illustrate how to format these citations correctly in both the bibliography and notes. Understanding these elements is key to accurately attributing sources and maintaining a professional academic standard.

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Understanding Corporate Authorship in Chicago Style

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In Chicago style, a corporate author is essentially an organization or institution that functions as the author of a publication. This differs from individual authors who are people. When an organization publishes a report, a manual, a policy document, or even a book, the organization itself is credited as the author, rather than a specific person within that organization unless that person is clearly designated as the primary author of the work. This principle ensures that the originating entity is properly recognized for its intellectual contribution. Recognizing when to treat an entity as a corporate author is the first step in accurate citation.

The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) provides specific guidelines for these situations, emphasizing clarity and consistency. Whether you are citing a multinational corporation's annual report or a non-profit organization's research paper, the approach to identifying the author and formatting the citation shares common roots. However, variations exist based on the specific type of organization and the nature of the publication, requiring careful attention to detail.

Citing Corporate Authors in the Bibliography

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The bibliography entry for a corporate author follows a structure similar to that of an individual author, but with the corporate name taking the authorial position. The general format in Chicago style's Notes and Bibliography system is to list the corporate author's full name, followed by the title of the work, publication details, and so forth. For instance, if the American Medical Association published a guide, their name would appear first in the bibliography entry.

It is important to use the full, official name of the corporation or organization as it appears on the publication. Omissions or abbreviations should be avoided unless the organization itself uses an abbreviation consistently. The subsequent elements of the citation—title, publisher, and date—are then presented in their standard order. Consistency is paramount; once you establish the full name of the corporate author, use it throughout your bibliography and notes.

Standard Corporate Author Entry

A typical entry for a corporate author in the bibliography begins with the organization's name. Unlike personal authors, corporate authors are not typically reversed (e.g., "Smith, John" becomes "John Smith" in the bibliography). The full name of the corporation or organization is used as it appears on the title page.

- Organization Name. *Title of Publication*. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year.

For example:

- World Health Organization. *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023*. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2023.
- National Geographic Society. *Atlas of the World*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2020.

If the publisher is the same as the corporate author, you can omit the publisher's name and simply list the place of publication and year. This is a common practice to avoid redundancy when the authoring entity is also the publishing entity.

- Corporation Name. *Title of Publication*. Place of Publication: Year.

For example:

- International Monetary Fund. *World Economic Outlook*. Washington, D.C.: 2022.

Citing Corporate Authors in Notes

Citing Corporate Authors in Notes

When citing a work by a corporate author in a footnote or endnote, the format is generally similar to the bibliography entry but with some key differences, particularly concerning the order and punctuation. The primary distinction is that the author's name in notes is not reversed, and the title is italicized. The goal of notes is to provide immediate context for the reader about the source being referenced.

For the first reference to a source, the note should be full. Subsequent references can be shortened, following Chicago style conventions for shortened notes. This ensures that readers can easily locate the full bibliographic information if needed, while keeping the notes concise. The structure aims for efficiency without sacrificing necessary detail.

Full Note for a Corporate Author

The full note begins with the note number, followed by the corporate author's name (not reversed), the title of the work in italics, and then the publication details. The place of publication, publisher, and year are typically included.

- 1. Organization Name, *Title of Publication* (Place of Publication: Publisher, Year), page number(s).

Using our previous examples:

- 1. World Health Organization, *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2023), 45.
- 2. National Geographic Society, *Atlas of the World* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2020), 112.

If the corporate author is also the publisher, the publisher's name is omitted in the note, similar to the bibliography:

- 3. International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook* (Washington, D.C., 2022), 67.

Shortened Notes

After the first full note, subsequent references to the same source can be significantly shortened. This typically involves the corporate author's name and the title, along with the page number.

- 4. World Health Organization, *Global Status Report on Road Safety*, 102.
- 5. National Geographic Society, *Atlas of the World*, 205.

- 6. IMF, *World Economic Outlook*, 88. (Abbreviated corporate author name if commonly accepted and used in the bibliography).

It's crucial to ensure that the shortened note still clearly identifies the source to avoid confusion. If there's a risk of ambiguity, a slightly longer note might be preferable.

Variations and Special Cases for Corporate Authors

Variations and Special Cases for Corporate Authors

While the basic principles of citing corporate authors remain consistent, certain situations require special attention. These include publications issued by governmental bodies, subsidiary organizations, and instances where the corporate name also serves as the title of the work. Understanding these nuances ensures that your citations are both accurate and conform to the Chicago Manual of Style's detailed requirements.

Governmental and Organizational Publications

Government agencies and various types of organizations often produce substantial bodies of work. When citing these, it's important to identify the most specific entity responsible for the publication. This might involve including higher levels of government or parent organizations in the authorial line, depending on how the publication is presented and the hierarchy involved.

- United States, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2021.
- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. *World Population Prospects: The 2022 Revision*. New York: United Nations, 2022.

In notes, these would be formatted similarly:

- 1. United States, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2021), 345.

For very well-known government agencies, sometimes the country name can be omitted if the agency name is distinctive enough and the context is clear. However, it is generally safer to include the full hierarchy for clarity.

Subsidiary and Related Corporate Entities

When a publication originates from a subsidiary or a specific division of a larger corporation, the citation should reflect this. The corporate author is the entity that directly produced the work, but it

may be beneficial to include the parent company for context, especially if the subsidiary is not widely known or if the parent company is also involved in the publication.

- Google AI. *Responsible AI Practices*. Mountain View, CA: Google, 2023.
- The Coca-Cola Company, Minute Maid Division. *Nutritional Information Guide*. Atlanta, GA: The Coca-Cola Company, 2022.

In the notes:

- 1. Google AI, *Responsible AI Practices* (Mountain View, CA: Google, 2023), 15.
- 2. The Coca-Cola Company, Minute Maid Division, *Nutritional Information Guide* (Atlanta, GA: The Coca-Cola Company, 2022), 30.

The key is to accurately attribute the authorship to the entity that demonstrably created the content. If the parent company is named as the publisher and the subsidiary is mentioned as part of the work's origin, you cite the subsidiary as author.

When the Corporate Name is the Title

Occasionally, a corporate author's name might also serve as the title of the publication, especially for documents like annual reports or official statements. In these cases, the corporate name appears both as the author and, in effect, the title. Chicago style handles this by italicizing the name as the title.

- Apple Inc. *Apple Inc. 2023 Annual Report*. Cupertino, CA: Apple Inc., 2023.
- Microsoft Corporation. *Microsoft Corporation: A History*. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2021.

In notes:

- 1. Apple Inc., *Apple Inc. 2023 Annual Report* (Cupertino, CA: Apple Inc., 2023), 5.
- 2. Microsoft Corporation, *Microsoft Corporation: A History* (Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2021), 78.

This convention helps distinguish the authorial credit from other publication details while clearly identifying the source. It ensures that even in less conventional naming structures, the citation remains informative and correctly formatted.

FAQ

Q: How do I cite a report published by a department within a larger government agency in Chicago style?

A: You should cite the most specific department as the author. For example, if you are citing a report from the "Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Air and Radiation," you would list "Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Air and Radiation" as the corporate author. In the bibliography, it would be followed by the report title, publication details, and page number. In notes, the format is similar but not reversed, and the title is italicized.

Q: What if the corporate author is also the publisher?

A: If the corporate author is also the publisher, you typically omit the publisher's name in both the bibliography and notes to avoid redundancy. The format would be: Organization Name, *Title of Publication* (Place of Publication: Year), page number(s).

Q: How do I cite a company's website content authored by the company itself in Chicago style?

A: For content directly authored by a company on its website, treat the company as the corporate author. The citation would include the company name, the title of the specific web page or document, the website name (if different from the author), the publication or last updated date if available, and the URL. For example: Apple Inc., "About Us." Apple Inc. Website. Last modified October 26, 2023. <https://www.apple.com/about/>.

Q: Is there a difference between citing a corporate author and a corporate author that is also a trade association?

A: The fundamental principles remain the same. A trade association is a type of organization, and if it is the author of a publication, it is cited as a corporate author. The key is to use the full, official name of the association as it appears on the publication.

Q: What if a publication has both an individual author and a corporate author listed?

A: If a publication clearly lists both an individual and a corporate author, Chicago style generally prioritizes the individual author if they are clearly designated as the primary author. However, if the corporate body's contribution is significant or they are listed first, you might cite the corporate author and then mention the individual author in a subtitle or note. Always consult the specific publication to determine the primary authorship.

Q: How do I handle an abbreviation for a corporate author in subsequent notes?

A: After the first full citation, you can use a shortened note. For well-known organizations, you may be able to use a common abbreviation for the corporate author in the shortened note, provided this abbreviation is also used in your bibliography entry and is clear to your reader. For instance, "IMF" might be used for "International Monetary Fund" if established.

Q: What if the corporate author's name is very long?

A: You should always use the full, official name of the corporate author as it appears on the publication for the initial citation. In subsequent shortened notes, you can usually omit descriptive terms like "Inc.," "Ltd.," or "Company" if the core name remains clear. However, avoid abbreviating unless the abbreviation is standard and clearly identified.

Q: How do I cite a policy document from a think tank?

A: Think tanks are generally considered corporate authors. Cite the think tank by its full name. For example: Brookings Institution, *Policy Brief on Renewable Energy*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2023. In notes: 1. Brookings Institution, *Policy Brief on Renewable Energy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2023), 10.

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