

Company Identifiers

Many databases have unique codes or names which specifically identify a company (or group / fund) in a database. Sometimes these identifiers are not specific to one database and then you can use them to merge company data from more than one database into a new data set for your research. Some company identifiers, however, appear to be unique and unchangeable but when you research them carefully they are not and may (through time) even be used by more than one company. A typical example is the Ticker or Ticker symbol used by companies at stock exchanges: a Ticker may be popular and is sometimes purchased from one company by another company. CUSIP and the ISIN are often *reasonably* reliable identifiers. Datastream, CIK and GVKEY codes usually are also reliable. Please remember that company identification codes may change when a company changes due to a merger or demerger. Sometimes codes are continued or discontinued and sometimes new codes are introduced. New codes may also be applied retrospectively ¹.

Company Identifier	SDC Platinum			FactSet	I/B/E/S/ (WRDS) ²	Audit Analytics ²	Compustat ²			CRSP/ Compustat Merged Database ²	CRSP ²	Zephyr	Orbis Europe ²	Orbis Bank Focus	NYSE Trades & quotes ²	Lexis Nexis
	Mergers & Acquisitions	Ventur- Expert	Global New Issues				Global	North America	Execucomp							
Company Name (or Fund)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nickname																
Ticker (Stock exchange)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ³
IBES Ticker					Yes											
Stock Index ID							Yes	Yes								
CUSIP ⁴	6 characters	Yes	Yes	Yes												Yes ³
	8 characters					Yes			Yes							Yes ³
	9 characters			Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes					Yes ³
Sedol	Yes		Yes	Yes			Yes									Yes ³
ISIN			Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes				Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes ³
Reuters instrum. Code (RIC)																
BvDEP ID Numbers											Yes	Yes	Yes			
S&P identification number																Yes ³
DSCode	Yes															Yes ³
Extel Ref. No.																Yes ³
GVKEY							Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes						
Disclo Number																Yes ³
CIK Number						Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes				
Permno / Permco										Yes	Yes					
Bloomberg code																Yes ³
Worldscope Number																Yes ³
NSIN																Yes ³
Hoover ID																Yes ³
Chamber of Commerce											Yes	Yes				Yes ³
Swift code												Yes	Yes			
Legal Entity Identifier (LEI)												Yes	Yes			
MFI ID number														Yes		

¹ A recent example is the demerger of Fortune Brands Home & Security Inc from Fortune Brands Inc in 2011. Fortune Brands not only changed it's name to BEAM Inc but also the Ticker FO was changed to BEAM retrospectively in many databases. The CIK of Fortune Brands Inc remained the same for BEAM Inc. The CUSIP code, however, also changed for the new company.

² Can be searched through the Wharton interface; Amadeus (predecessor to Orbis Europe) is still available through WRDS. For Amadeus it is currently not clear how long this will still be the case.

³ Availability depends on the source in LexisNexis

⁴ Cusip 6 identifies a company. Version 8 or 9 identifies a specific listing/equity (the ninth character is a check digit).

