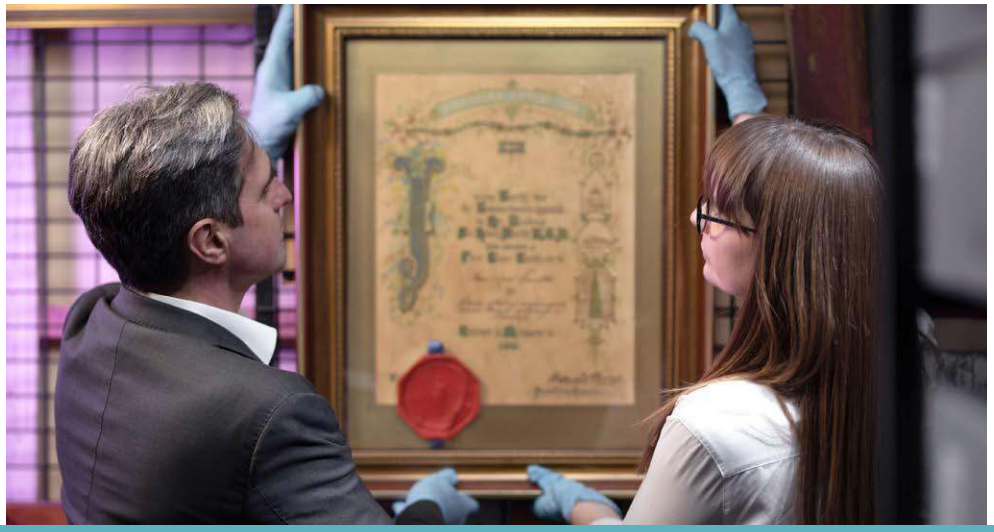
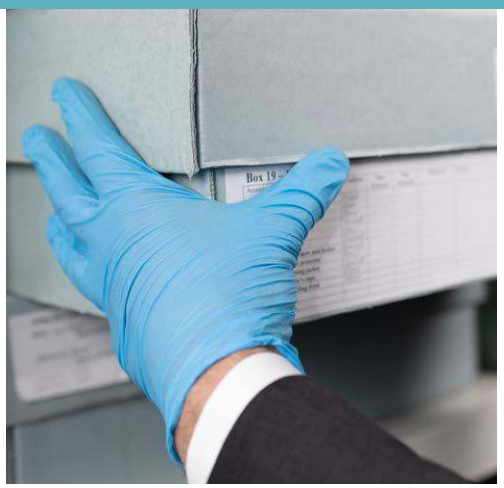


5TH EDITION

Small Museums Cataloguing Manual



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AMaGA Victoria

CREATIVE VICTORIA

Small Museums Cataloguing Manual

5TH EDITION

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES ASSOCIATION VICTORIA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Small Museums Cataloguing Manual was first published in 1983 and has seen four previous updates, the fourth edition being in 2009. This fifth edition has been made possible by generous funding from the Public Record Office Victoria.

Much like a cataloguing project itself, this Manual was not a solo undertaking and required consultation, planning and assistance. We extend our thanks to Advisory Group members Cameron Auty, Kim Burrell, Rachael Cottle, Ali Hayes-Brady, Jillian Hiscock and JD Mittman for their input into the initial planning of the manual, and to all who participated in our preliminary consultation.

As we advise when discussing digitisation, getting the best images is a vital part of cataloguing. We're grateful to the staff and volunteers of Mission to Seafarers, Ringwood RSL, Brighton Historical Society and the Burke Museum who gave so generously of their time during location photography. You will find images of their collections throughout this edition. Thanks also to all Veterans Heritage Project participants whose collection images have been included, with particular thanks to Dandenong/ Cranbourne RSL for the use of the AIF Football as a Sample Record.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

Cataloguing, like all systems and processes used by museums, is an evolutionary process. In much the same way, this fifth revised edition builds on the work of previous publications. It brings with it a renewed focus on computer-based documentation and introduces a chapter exploring digitisation and the management of born-digital collection items.

This edition includes new and improved appendices that bring together term lists, a comprehensive glossary and links to external resources and suppliers. Terms featured in the glossary are indicated throughout the Manual by teal text and an underscore.

If you are using the Manual digitally, you will also find links throughout where the instructions refer to different chapters and sections. These links are indicated by **bold text and an underscore**. Simply click the link to be taken to the respective reference.

Previous editions of the Manual have included sample hard copy worksheets. However, working from the premise that paper-based cataloguing is not the preferred method of data entry, we have instead created a Sample Record demonstrating common fields and examples of the data they are used to record. The Sample Record is a downloadable file designed to be printed out and used as a point of reference in your cataloguing workspace. We have also included a blank template of the Sample Record if you wish to create a custom version based on an item which is more representative of your collection. If using a digital copy of the Manual, simply click the link below to access: Small Museums Cataloguing Manual Sample Record and Blank Template Record.

Contents

1. Why Catalogue Collections?

Cataloguing is a fundamental, multi-step tool for managing collections that now incorporates both documentation and digitisation. As a vital aspect of the cataloguing process, digitisation enables collecting organisations to achieve both preservation and access.

Museum activities, which sit under these interests of preservation and access, can include research, publication, conservation, risk management, significance assessment, exhibition development and outreach work, to name but a few.

Image courtesy of Beechworth Burke Museum

ENHANCING ADMINISTRATION

Having a detailed and up-to-date catalogue greatly assists in the administration of these activities. Some benefits include:

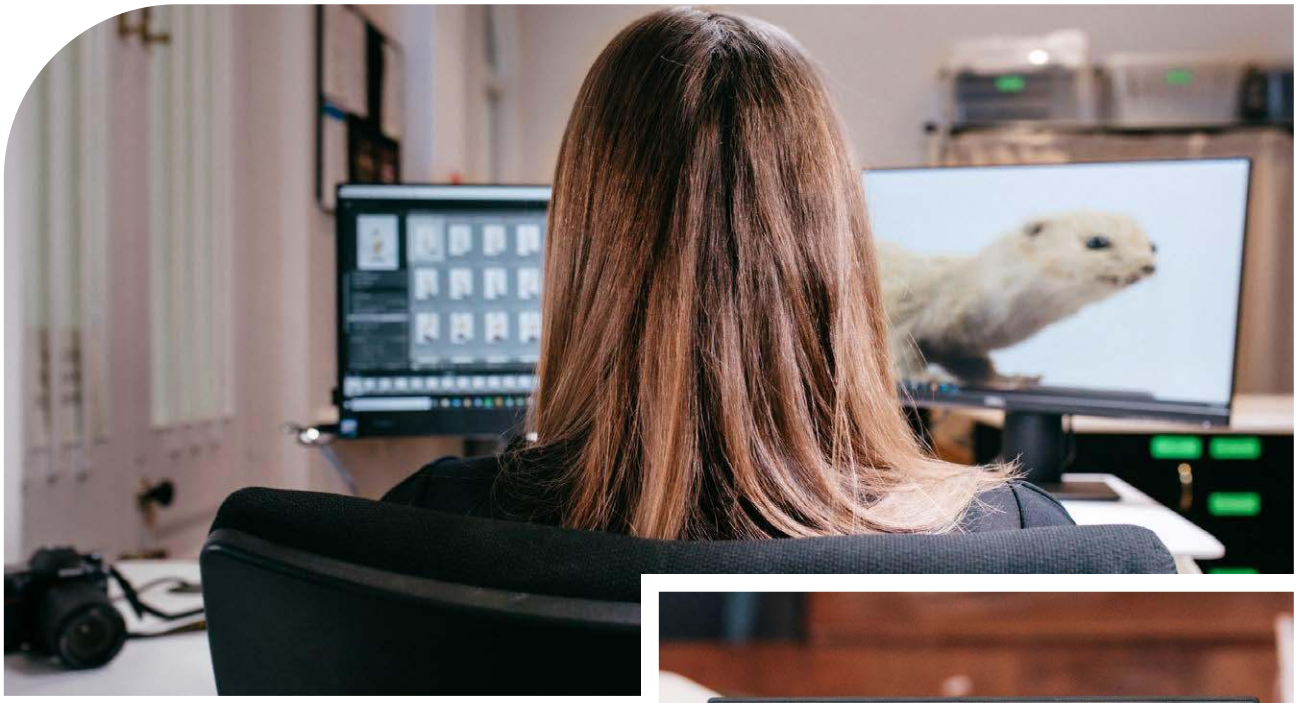
- Providing an accurate record of acquisition and determination of legal ownership of all collection items
- Documenting the location of all collection items to aid with security and retrieval
- Aiding and streamlining research and exhibition planning
- Providing an accurate record of items in the collection to refer to in the case of vandalism, damage or disaster, or in the case of theft, documentation of value to assist police investigations and insurance claims
- Collating condition reports over time

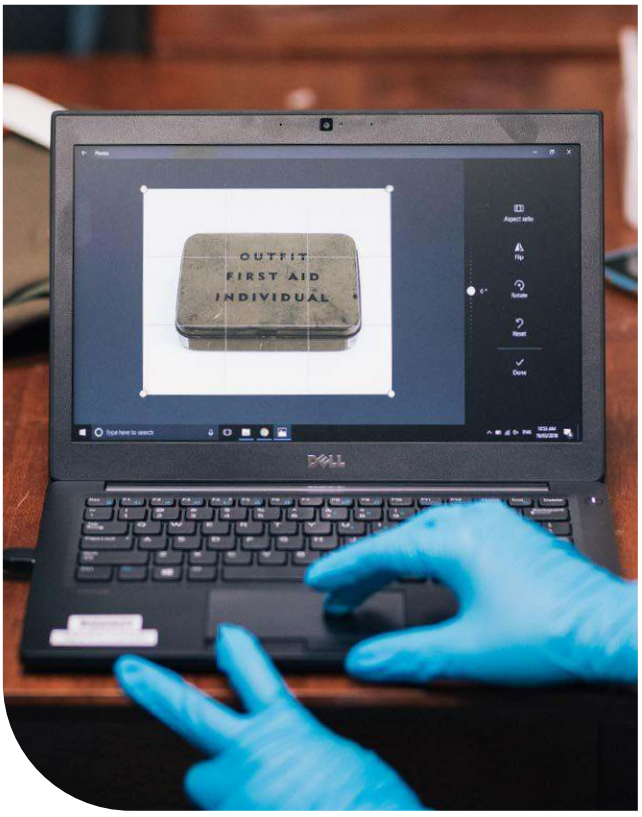
PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

By creating an informative digital record of an item and its context, we can ensure the preservation of that item as a digital entity, long after its physical form deteriorates. We can also use this digitised record as a research and exhibition tool, putting the digital image and documentation to work. This allows the original item to rest in its storage or exhibited location, reducing the need for handling and therefore reducing its exposure to risk.

A notable benefit of creating a ditigised catalogue is now having the option to share your catalogue online, achieving greater public access. Instead of reaching ten, twenty or thirty visitors a day, we can allow our collection to reach hundreds or thousands of viewers daily.

Digitisation can help us to mitigate the physical barriers that exist between museums and museum audiences. Researchers no longer need to travel to museums to discover collections, and we no longer need invest so much of our sometimes-limited resources on physical exhibitions alone to attract audiences. In fact, with digitisation we can now reach broader audiences than we ever dreamt possible in the past.





This increased access allows greater public awareness by showcasing the depth and breadth of cultural material that can be found in many varied collections regionally and interstate, as well as internationally.

Cataloguing is no small task; in fact it's a major undertaking! But it is an essential activity that creates ongoing benefits for the collection, the organisation and the broader public. With all these benefits, we hope you're feeling inspired and ready to catalogue. There are a few things to take into consideration before you begin your cataloguing journey, so let's get started!

IMAGE 1. Cataloguer using a multi-screen desktop computer set-up during the cataloguing process.

IMAGE 2. Using a laptop computer to edit and upload digitised images.

2. Before You Begin

Cataloguing is a multifaceted and complex process and as such it is strongly recommended that you undertake thorough planning prior to commencing. The more detailed your plan, the smoother the cataloguing process will be.

This chapter will explore the processes you will need to implement, the decisions you will need to make, and the physical equipment you will need to source before you start cataloguing.

Image courtesy of Montmorency/ Eltham RSL Sub-Branch

GETTING STARTED

It can be quite an overwhelming prospect when embarking on a cataloguing project, but a good place to begin is to ask yourself where you are on your cataloguing journey, or in other words, where is your starting point?

Is this your or your organisation's first experience with cataloguing? Have you been using a spreadsheet but are now looking to move to using a digital Collection Management System (CMS)? Do you have an existing CMS that you want to ensure you are fully utilising to capture all relevant information?

Wherever you are in your cataloguing journey it is important to note that cataloguing is an ongoing task and an item's catalogue record will change over the course of its life.

Like any project, you need to start somewhere. Asking yourself the following questions will help you determine which part of your collection to start cataloguing with and where to go to from there.

WHAT IS HAPPENING AT YOUR ORGANISATION?

Take a moment to ask yourself, what is happening within the organisation at present?

Some factors which will inform your approach include:

- Staff and volunteer movement
- Development of exhibition content and programming
- Development of an education program
- Development or redevelopment of exhibition spaces
- Raised public awareness of both the organisation and the collection

WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH THE COLLECTION?

External factors specific to managing collections that will inform your approach include:

- Acquisition of items for the collection
- Research-based enquiries
- High frequency research enquiries
- Development or redevelopment of storage spaces
- Grant applications in process

WHAT IS HAPPENING WITHIN THE COLLECTION?

Factors internal to the collection, which can also assist with decision making include:

- Significance
- Condition
- Financial value
- Risk to the item and to yourself

Items which pose a risk to the cataloguer should not be catalogued, undertake a Risk Assessment and seek expert advice first. For more on Risk Assessments, see Resources.

PRIORITIES FOR CATALOGUING

Using the information gathered above, determine which items should be prioritised for cataloguing. It is best to be strategic about what you do first and how you intend to follow-up, given resourcing and time for cataloguing are not infinite.

HANDLING PROCEDURES

Cataloguing requires you to handle collection items. A guiding principle is that items should be handled as infrequently as possible, as this reduces the risk of damage and deterioration.

Ensuring that all staff and volunteers participating in cataloguing are aware of recommended handling procedures will minimise risk to the items being catalogued, as well as any possible risk to the cataloguers.

GENERAL HANDLING PRINCIPLES:

- Prepare your workspace ensuring you have a clean space for cataloguing, free of any food/drinks and contaminants
- At all times take steps to minimise risk to items and handlers
- Remove any obstacles from your path when handling items
- Ensure you have a clean and clear space to deposit items as they are retrieved from storage
- Ensure you check items for weak spots before moving them
- Move items one at a time

- Handle items with both hands and great care, even if the item is small and light
- Wherever possible move items from the collection store to your workspace within the housing article i.e. archival storage boxes or folders
- Where necessary, examine items on a surface which has been lined with acid free tissue or archival foam to reduce the risk of damage
- Use powder-free nitrile gloves to protect items from the oils on your skin. An exception to this rule, is that when handling rare books, clean, ungloved hands are recommended
- Cotton gloves are not recommended as they have the potential to result in an insecure grip or may risk depositing fibres on the item

IMAGE 1. Two people using both hands to support and remove a framed object from a storage rack.

IMAGE 2. Using nitrile gloves and two hands to support and lift a fragile 3-D object.

IMAGE 1. Removing a box from the collection store. The box and the shelf it is being removed from are labeled with location codes and box numbers.

IMAGE 2. Small collection items inside a storage box are wrapped in acid free paper.

IMAGE 3. Using nitrile gloves and two hands to support a fragile collection object.

TEXTILES

Ensure that you support the item adequately when removing it from storage by using multiple people to lift if it necessary.

2-D ITEMS
SUCH AS PHOTOGRAPHS, DOCUMENTS AND OTHER WORKS ON PAPER

Use a cardboard support beneath items when moving them.

BOOKS

Have an appropriate support, such as a clean book pillow to place your item on in your cataloguing workspace.

SMALL 3-D ITEMS
SUCH AS FRAMED ARTWORKS, SMALL SCULPTURES, DOMESTIC ITEMS AND TOOLS

Avoid carrying items by their handles or rims, as they may have been weakened by age or general deterioration. Ensure items are well supported at the base.

LARGE 3-D ITEMS
SUCH AS FURNITURE, LARGE SCULPTURES, VEHICLES, BOATS, AND OTHER HEAVY MACHINERY

Ensure you have cleared a pathway and have a clear plan before you begin. Depending on the size and weight of the items you are handing, a small team may be required.

If this is the case, it's best that one person directs and supervises activities. Where necessary utilise a trolley, and lift and carry furniture rather than dragging it.

WEAPONRY

This is a special category with legal requirements which differ from state to state. Please check with your local authority for specific instructions. For example, in Victoria, consult the Licensing and Regulation Division of Victoria Police.

CATALOGUING WORKFLOW

Having carefully considered your starting point, priorities and handling procedures, you can now plan your cataloguing workflow. Planning your workflow will increase your efficiency and decrease risk to items in transit. Your workflow will vary depending on the availability of staff and volunteers as well as space and equipment, such as computers and Internet access.

Where possible, you should be aiming to enter your catalogue data directly into a digital CMS from the get-go. This is preferable both for the security of your data and for the accessibility of the records. If this is not possible, you may need to record the information you plan to enter into a digital CMS on paper first, but bear in mind that it will take additional time to transfer this information.

IMAGE 1. A selection of cataloguing equipment, including magnifying glass, labels, measuring tape, cotton tape, 2B-6B pencils, archival marker, eraser, scissors, nitrile gloves, and brushes.

CATALOGUING WORKFLOW IN PRACTICE

1. IDENTIFY YOUR TEAM

- What skills and experience do they bring with them?
- How would they like to contribute to the cataloguing process?

2. IDENTIFY EQUIPMENT, SUCH AS

- Computer(s)
- Internet access
- 2B-6B pencils
- Pencil sharpeners
- An eraser of good quality
- Soft measuring tape
- Powder-free nitrile gloves
- Magnifying glass
- Digital camera (see Chapter 5)
- Labelling equipment (see Chapter 3)

3. PREPARE YOUR WORKSPACE

- Ensure your workspace is clear from any food/drinks and contaminants
- Consider what you will be cataloguing: will you need to line the surfaces of your workspace? Will you need supports or weights?
- Ensure you have a clear pathway between your workspace and the collection store

4. ASSIGN ROLES WITHIN THE TEAM

- Who will be moving items in and out of the storage area?
- Who will be entering data into the digital CMS?
- If entering data directly into the digital CMS isn't possible, then who will be documenting the information on paper and who will then enter the data into the digital CMS?

5. PLAN YOUR DIGITISATION USING THE INFORMATION IN CHAPTER 5

- Identify which digitisation method is most appropriate for the items you are cataloguing
- Identify whether entering data into the CMS and digitisation will be done together or sequentially. This will be determined by the space, the makeup of your team and the nature of the items you are cataloguing

3. Registration

Registration is the process by which items in the permanent collection are assigned a unique identification number. This is sometimes also known as an identifier, registration number or accession number. Each item must be assigned an identification number before you can proceed with the cataloguing process. Labelling is the process by which this identification number is attached to the item in a way that is both permanent and reversible. This chapter explains the registration process and provides guidelines for labelling.

When assigning an identification number, it is good practice to capture additional details about the item. These details should be recorded in a digital format rather than in hard copy. A digital record of registration details is then searchable and can be backed up, whereas a hard-copy registration book is susceptible to loss or damage. An Excel spreadsheet can provide perfectly adequate data capture for the point of registration.

Image courtesy of Beechworth Burke Museum

WHAT TO CAPTURE AT REGISTRATION

The exact details you capture at registration will be determined based on the acquisition process and forms in place at your organisation. A best practice approach is to assign columns to capture the following data:

- Registration date
- Registration or identification number
- Item name
- Item description
- Acquisition method
- Acquisition date
- Acquisition source's name and contact details
- Comments

REGISTRATION DATE

This is a record of when an item is assigned its identification number. It is not the date the item was acquired. Though not ideal, an item might not be registered for several years after it enters a collection. This may occur when a museum has a large documentation backlog, or when a large collection, consignment or acquisition lot has been acquired.

REGISTRATION OR IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

This is the unique identification number that is assigned to the item. It is important to ensure that this number is only assigned to one item. The identification number distinguishes one item from another, so both the item and its documentation, physical and digital, must carry it.

The numbering system you choose to use will depend on your organisation, your collection, and the kind of information you need to include.

These are two examples of numbering systems:

A sequential numbering system assigns a unique identifying number in a sequential order, as each item is acquired and registered. The simplest method is to begin at 1, but this is not imperative.

A compound numbering system assigns a unique identifying number which begins with the year of acquisition followed by a sequential number.

An optional third component could indicate what sub collection the item belongs to or can be used to demonstrate that a set of items have been grouped and registered together, such as a group of items from a single donation. Including the year of acquisition in the identification number means that this information is readily accessible.

An item with the identifier 2000.01 can be easily recognised as having been acquired in the year 2000.

Collection items that have multiple parts which are closely related, such as a tea set, a pair of boots, or handcuffs and a key, are described as having a parent-child relationship. The 'parent' is the full set of items, and each constituent part is a 'child'. Identification numbering can utilise numbers after a decimal point to indicate the relationship between these items.

For example, with the 'Tom-Thumb' boots above, the 'parent' item is the full set of two. This item is assigned the registration number 1618, and each of the boots are assigned the following numbers: 1618.1 and 1618.2.

IMAGE 1. A pair of boots showing the parent-child numbering of each boot on the sole.

ITEM NAME

A one or two word specification of the item, e.g. badge, tea set, or booties.

ITEM DESCRIPTION

A brief description of the item, for example, ‘silver-coloured metal, with two-tone blue enamel inset.’

ACQUISITION METHOD

How the item was acquired, if this information is known. For example, is the item a donation, purchase, or a transfer?

ACQUISITION DATE

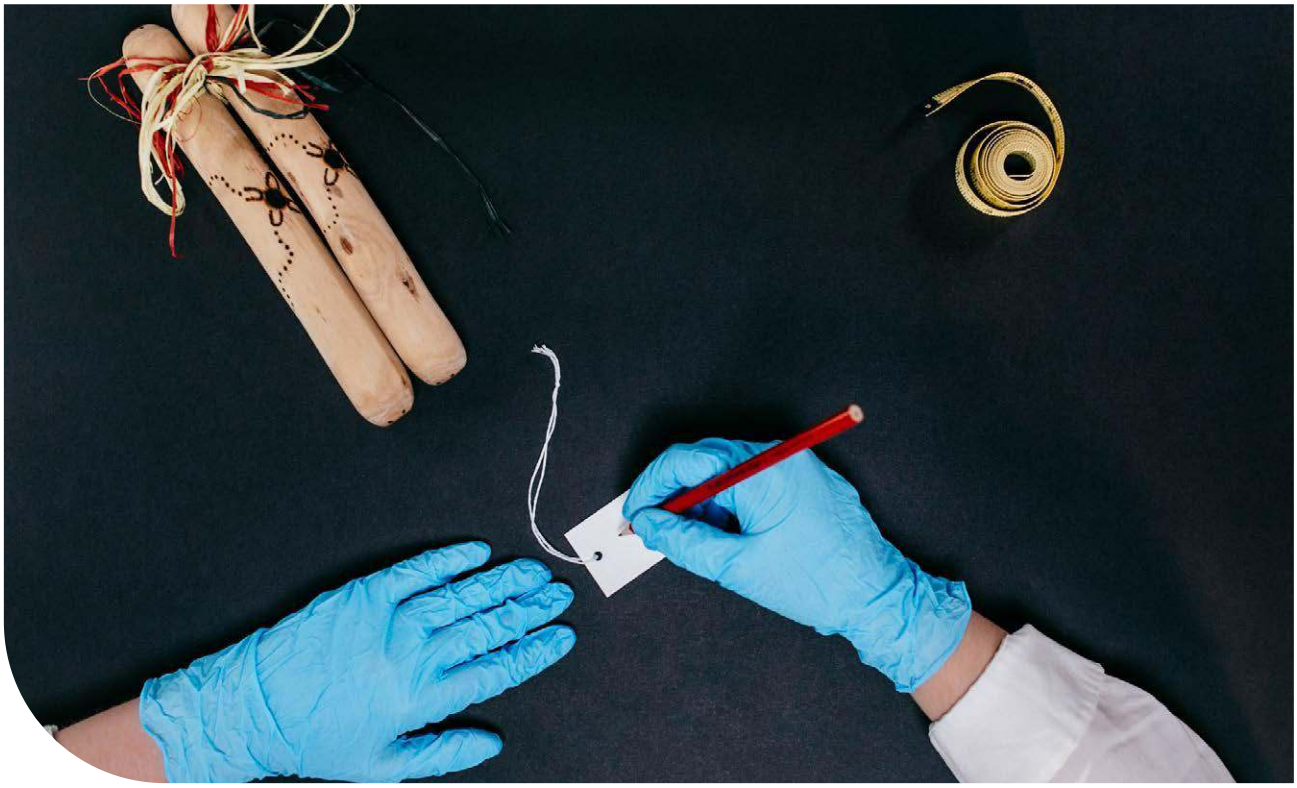
The date when the item was formally acquired by your organisation, if this is known. Dates should always be written in full and be consistent in format, for example, 30-09-2014.

ACQUISITION SOURCE’S NAME AND ADDRESS

The details of the acquisitions source, for example, the donor, the company or department the item was transferred to, or the seller. Record the full name and contact details. If the acquisition source is unknown, note that here.

COMMENTS

Any important additional information about the item. This may include references to the identification items of related items, or additional information about the acquisition, such as the details of the purchase or the context of the donation.



LABELLING

Labels provide a means to attach the identification number to each collection item in a way that is both enduring and reversible. Labelling should be undertaken as part of the registration process. The type of label used and the way it is attached will be determined by the type of item being labelled.

Labelling should be enduring in that the identification number on the label should not fade, dissolve in contact with water, or degrade in a way that effects the integrity of the item.

Labelling should be reversible in that the identification number should not be attached in a way that permanently modifies the item. This ensures the ongoing integrity of the item. Avoid using sticky labels as the adhesives can damage item surfaces. Also avoid ballpoint and marker pens as they can permanently mark and damage items.

IMAGE 1. Handwriting a label on an acid free card swing-tag.

GATHER THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

It is recommended that a labelling kit include the following:

- Acid-free card swing-tags or high-density polyethylene labels
- Black Pigma pen (size 0.1)
- 2B–6B pencils
- Quality eraser
- Scissors
- 6mm and 12mm white cotton tape
- Cotton string
- White cotton thread
- Sewing needles

PREPARE YOUR WORKSPACE

Ensure you have a clean, empty surface to work on. Depending on the item you are labelling, you may wish to use supports for your item, or create a buffer for the surface with a layer of acid-free paper or archival foam.

The surface of the item should also be clean before you begin. Dust can be removed gently with a sable brush. If the surface of an item cannot be safely cleaned in this way, it may need more specialised attention, and advice should be sought from a professional conservator. In these instances, a registration label should be attached with cotton tape or enclosed in a box with the item.

Things to consider before starting:

- Be consistent, placing the label in a similar position on similar items
- Choose a place on the item where the label will be easy to access
- This will make it easier for colleagues to locate the label and will save unnecessary handling

3-D ITEMS
SUCH AS DOMESTIC ITEMS, FURNITURE, SCULPTURE, FRAMES

Wherever possible 3-D items should be labelled using a swing-tag or high-density polyethylene label. Attach the label to the item with a 6mm wide cotton-tape tie. Large items may require a 12mm wide cotton tape tie. Very small items may require a white cotton string tie.

Write the identification number on the swing tag or label before attaching it to the item, using an archival quality pen, such as a Pigma pen.

Depending on the size of the label, other information such as the Item name may be included.

Attach the label close to the item so it does not get knotted with other label ties or caught around protruding components, but not so close that the tape cannot be cut for safe removal and reattachment if needed.

Consider how to attach the label so it won't damage the item or become detached. It can be safely tied around a handle or through a hole in an item. If the item is round, with no obvious safe point for attachment, the label can be cross-tied much like a parcel.

IMAGE 1. Attaching an acid-free card swing-tag to the handle of a small handbag.

IMAGE 2. Acid-free card swing tag, attached to a trophy by looping the string of the swing-tag through the handle.

IMAGE 3. A small 3-D item wrapped in acid-free tissue, secured with cotton tape in a cross-tie formation. The tape has been passed through the label to attach it to the item.

LARGE 3-D ITEMS
SUCH AS AGRICULTURAL OR INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY, VEHICLES, MOTORBIKES

For large 3-D items, attach a large high-density polyethylene label using wire. Alternatively, attach an anodised aluminium tag, which has been engraved or embossed with the identification number.

Regardless of the size of the item, if its shape prevents attaching a swing-tag or label, it is not advised to apply labels directly to the surface of the item. Instead, consider other alternatives, such as recording the identification number on the box or housing for this item.

TEXTILE ITEMS
SUCH AS COSTUMES, FLAGS, MANCHESTER AND NEEDLEWORK

Identification numbers should not be written directly onto textiles. Where possible, an acid-free card swing-tag or high-density polyethylene label should be attached to textiles by looping the string or cotton tape through a buttonhole or strap.

For textile items where the structure does not permit this, the identification number should be written onto a piece of 6mm wide white cotton tape (20–25mm in length) with a black Pigma pen, then hand-sewn onto the item in an unobtrusive location using a single thread of white cotton. Small stitches should be made along the short sides of the tag only, and not be visible from the other side of the item.

Be consistent with where you sew the label on the item. This will make it easier to locate and will minimise handling.

For example, the following locations are unobtrusive:

- the inside back waistband of skirts and trousers
- the inside shoulder seam of shirts and coats
- corners of flat items on the reverse side

IMAGE 1. Hand-stitching a label to the inside of a hat band.

IMAGE 2. Cotton tape marked with an identification number sewn into the lining of a wool cap.

IMAGE 3. Acid-free card swing-tag attached to a jacket by looping the string through a button hole.

IMAGE 1. Writing the identification number in 2B-6B pencil on the top right hand corner of the first page of a book.

PAPER ITEMS
SUCH AS PHOTOGRAPHS, BOOKS, DOCUMENTS AND ARTWORKS

Paper items can be very delicate so be sure to take care while labelling. Paper can be labelled by writing directly onto the surface using a slightly blunt 2B-6B pencil. These grades of pencil contain softer graphite which will necessitate less pressure when writing and avoid permanent indentation.

The identification number should be written small enough to be discreet but large enough to be perceptible. Write neatly in an unobtrusive location, such as the lower right-hand corner on the back of the item. Avoid writing over any content, such as words or images, on the item.

If the identification number needs to be removed, apply gentle pressure with a quality art eraser. For items with a glossy finish, such as photographs, apply a chinagraph pencil.

HB pencils should not be used. This is because they contain harder graphite, which can leave an indentation and can be difficult to erase.

4. Cataloguing

Cataloguing is a process by which information about a collection is recorded in a centralised database, known as a Collections Management System (CMS). A digital CMS allows cataloguers to create a record for each collection item. Within each record are a set of fields for descriptive and administrative information about the item. This chapter is designed to be usable by cataloguers regardless of the CMS platform they are working with and as a result provides broad guidance to common field types.

If your organisation uses Victorian Collections, please refer to the Victorian Collections Cataloguing Manual for specific field advice.

A catalogue record should not remain static but rather should be treated as an ongoing record about the life of an item. The record should be updated to reflect any changes or new information that may come to light. For example, if an item's location changes or its condition deteriorates the catalogue should be updated to reflect this information.

Image courtesy of Beechworth Burke Museum

STANDARDISATION

In cataloguing, standardisation of language is important to ensure accurate results when collating reports or conducting research about a collection. One way to achieve standardisation is by using Authority lists or thesauri.

Depending on the CMS platform you are using, it may have built-in Authority lists, or may allow you to import an Authority list. If you need to develop your own Authority list, you can refer to the Appendices for standardised terminology.

Authority lists are particularly useful for the Keywords, Production Methods and Materials fields.

CATALOGUE FIELDS

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

A unique and permanent number given to each collection item as a form of identification, also referred to as the identifier or accession number. See Chapter 3 for more on identification numbers.

ITEM TYPE

A one or two word classification of the item in its simplest terms.

Use consistent and standardised terminologies to describe your collection items. This approach will aid the discoverability of your collection data. For example, use the term ‘Hat’ rather switching between ‘Bowler’, ‘Cap’, or ‘Bonnet’. You can then add qualifiers where necessary such as ‘Hat, slouch’ or ‘Chair, dining’. Keeping to this system makes searching for specific items far easier, allows for alphabetised sorting, and provides a more accurate overview of quantities.

Where an item name has a qualifier, place the qualifier after the primary name, separated by a comma, for example: ‘Hat, bowler’, ‘Chair, dining’ or ‘Trowel, ceremonial’.

When cataloguing visual material, be as accurate as possible about the medium. For example, where it is known, note whether the item is a photograph, transparency, postcard, lithograph or watercolour.

ITEM NAME

A word or two providing further descriptive information if it is needed. For example, if you are cataloguing a domestic object, you can record additional information such as ‘Bottle’ here. If there is no additional information to record you can leave this field blank.

TITLE

The formal title given to the item by its creator, for example, the title of a publication, artwork, or the formal name of an architectural drawing or report. Record the title verbatim without modifying capitalisation or punctuation. Do not ascribe a formal title where there is none, for example, for an untitled photograph, the subject matter of the photograph should not be recorded as a title and this field should be left blank.

IMAGE 1. Wool school cap.

MEDIA

Uploaded digitised images and media files relating to the item and information pertaining to these files. The CMS platform you are using will determine which fields are present to record this information, in general you should be recording the following for each image and media file:

- Image name
- Photographer credit
- Alt-text

You may also record additional information, depending on the type of media:

- Audio recordings or videos which have transcripts or a descriptions of contents
- Items where the digital reproduction copyright is held by the photographer. Generally this is not the case, as it is not common practice to claim copyright in the reproduction of a public domain item
- Attribution

The size and types of files you can upload will be determined by the CMS platform you are using. Generally this includes images, audio, video, and documents such as PDFs. In addition to this, where possible, it is good practice to digitise copies of important paperwork relating to the item. For more information on file types see Chapters 5 and 6.

DESCRIPTION

A description of the item that includes all details that cannot be captured by digitisation alone. The aim is to describe the item in sufficient detail so that the reader is able to visualise it. Consider colour, shape, materials, texture, ornamentation and moving parts, prominent features, imagery and symbols. Be sure to include any damage or missing parts and note whether the item is part of a parent-child set.

If the CMS platform you are using has fields to record context and historical information, you do not need to record that information in this field.

INSCRIPTIONS AND MARKINGS

A verbatim recording of any serial numbers, signatures, text or other inscriptions and markings that are present on the item, including the details of the placement of the inscription.

Transcribe any markings exactly as they appear, within inverted commas. If the inscription runs over more than one line, use a spaced forward slash to indicate the line break, for example:

Engraved on back of tray:
'THE / MELBOURNE MOOMBA FESTIVAL / 1968 PROCESSION / THE CHAIRMAN'S TROPHY / Awarded to / GAS & FUEL CORPORATION'

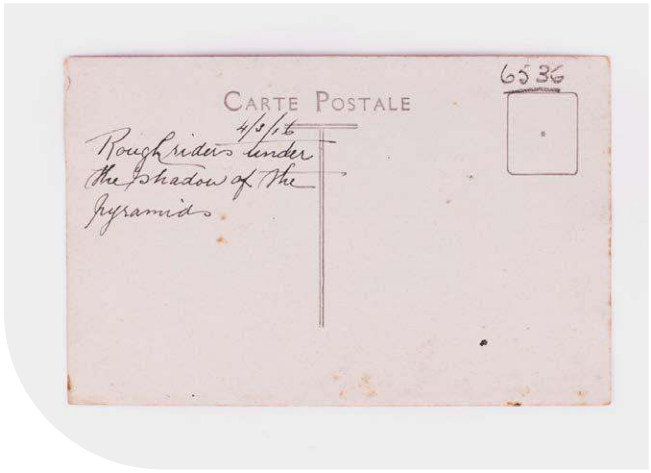


IMAGE 1. Commemorative medallions with an embossed design and inscriptions on both sides. Image courtesy of Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital.

IMAGE 2. Reverse side of postcard with handwriting and printed marks. Image courtesy of Beechworth Burke Museum.

IMAGE 3. Collection of hairballs with remnants of hand-written historic labels. Image courtesy of Beechworth Burke Museum.

DIMENSIONS

Accurate measurements of the item you are cataloguing. This information is important for identification purposes, and for planning storage and display.

What you will measure and the units of measurements will be determined by the item you are cataloguing. For example, if you are cataloguing a hat, you will likely record height, depth and diameter in millimetres, whereas if you are cataloguing a tractor, you will likely record the length, width and depth in centimetres or metres. If you are cataloguing an oral history, video or multimedia art you may also record the duration of the item.

Depending on the nature of the item you are cataloguing, weight may also be important information to capture in the record. Use the size of the item as a guide to determine whether the weight should be recorded in grams or kilograms.

The CMS platform you are using may inform how this data is recorded. In general, height is recorded first, followed by length and then width/depth or diameter, depending on the item.

IMAGE 1. Recording the dimensions of an OBE medal case while the case is open.

IMAGE 2. Recording the dimensions of an OBE medal case while the case is closed.

Generally, these measurements are prefixed with a letter to clearly denote which dimension they refer to:

- Height (H) indicates the greatest distance from the top to the bottom of an item that is usually in an upright position
- Length (L) indicates the greatest distance (other than height) along the item's front, back or side
- Width/Depth (W/D) indicates the greatest distance between the item's front and back, or its sides
- Diameter indicates the greatest measurement across a circular or elliptical item, such as a hat, bowl or circular image

Some items are more straightforward to measure than others. Regardless of the shape of the item, its storage and display requirements will most likely be determined by its highest and widest points, so these are the most important dimensions to record.

Depending on the item, you may need to record additional sets of dimensions. For example, when measuring framed artworks, you can also record the dimensions of the frame and/or mount. If the item you are cataloguing has multiple configurations, you can record these too. For example, a book or a case will have differing dimensions depending on whether it is open or closed. It is important to record both sets of dimensions for storage and display purposes.

PRODUCTION METHODS

The methods and techniques of how the item you are cataloguing was made. Be specific to the method of production, if known, and then list as many terms as may apply. For example, in the case of a handmade wooden doll you might record the production methods as ‘carved’ and ‘sewn’ as well as ‘handmade’ and ‘handsewn’. This will increase the item’s traceability when conducting research.

MATERIALS

The materials that the item you are cataloguing is made or comprised of. Be detailed in listing as many terms as apply. For example, a garment where the predominant material is satin may also include glass beads and acetate sequins while a domestic item such as a saucepan may include a stainless steel base and glass lid.

CONTEXT OR HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The context and significance of the item you are cataloguing. This information is important as it is often what gives the item meaning or value to the collecting organisation and the broader public.

Tell the story of the item, link it to relevant historical events, themes, people if known, or provide contextual information about the item. If the item you are cataloguing is an artwork, you can include the art movement or an artist’s biography.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A statement outlining the significance of the item, including why the item is significant and what significance criteria apply. The length and formality of this statement will vary depending on the item you are cataloguing. See Resources for further information.

KEYWORDS

A set of terms related to the item that you are cataloguing. These may be broad thematic terms, alternate spellings, or related people, places and eras. The number of keywords you record will be determined by the item you are cataloguing.

Put yourself in the shoes of a researcher searching for your item but unaware of the item’s exact name. For example, researchers searching for items relating to World War One may use the alternate terms ‘Second World War’, ‘WWII’, or ‘military history’.

IMAGE 1. Satin evening gown with detailed beading and sequins on the bodice.

IMAGE 2. Voluntary Aid Detachment nurse's scarf with the Red Cross emblem. Image courtesy of Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital.

IMAGE 3. A Ned Kelly death mask.

PROVENANCE

The CMS platform you are using will determine how to record the creation and events that have occurred during the life of the item you are cataloguing. In general you should be aiming to record the following:

CREATOR/MAKER'S DETAILS

The creator's name and any other relevant details. Depending on the nature of the item, it may have more than one maker, such as a designer who is different from the manufacturer.

Any company names should be documented as commonly known or used, e.g. Tom Peterson & Sons Pty. Ltd.

If the address of the maker and other associated facts are known –such as if the company changed name or if the rights of production were transferred–these facts too should be recorded in this field, e.g:

Name: Tom Peterson & Sons Pty. Ltd.
Role: Founders
Street: 89 Napier Street
Town: Fitzroy, Melbourne
Country: Australia
Comments: Company sold in 1967 and renamed Fitzroy Foundry

WHERE CREATED/MADE

The place of manufacture or creation if it is known. Enter as many details as you have available, as per the example above. Including specific details can assist researchers in building a more comprehensive understanding of the item and the terms of its creation.

WHEN MADE

The date the item was created. Write the exact date if you know it, e.g. 31-07-1986. If the exact date is unknown, make this clear, e.g. c.1974-76 or c.1955.

When giving a year range, make sure four digits are used in each component date. If a circa date is given, the 'c' should be followed by a full stop and a space before the date.

Packaging can provide key information in determining dates for manufactured products. The design and typography of packaging can give clues, as can patent numbers and dates of importation if given.

PROVENANCE EVENTS

Depending on the item you are cataloguing you may have information about one or more events in the life of the item. Specific fields, and the way this is recorded will be determined by your CMS. As a general rule, for each event, record when and where it took place, and any additional details about the event. For example, if the event is that the item was sold at auction, provide the details of the sale.

IMAGE 1. Scrapbook with the front cover showing the edition number and commencement date.

IMAGE 2. Beaded bathing suit with the manufacturer's swing-tag attached.

ACQUISITION

The details of how the item came to be in your organisation's custody and the ownership status of the item. It is especially important to record the method of acquisition, whether it be donation, purchase, bequest, transfer or field collection.

Depending on the CMS you are using, you may be able to attach a digitised copy of the relevant Donor Forms.

While the specific fields will differ between CMS platforms, in general you should be including the following information:

- How acquired: the method of acquisition, whether it be donation, purchase, commission, bequest, transfer or field collection
- Date acquired: the date when the item was acquired into your collection, e.g. 31-07-1986, c.1960
- Acquired from (name and contact details): the name and contact details of the person or organisation the item was acquired from
- Comments: any further information about the acquisition, e.g. the details of any non-standard forms of acquisition, information about the donor, or details of a purchase, such as the date of the auction or the conditions of the commission
- Acknowledgement: if the item was donated, the details of any acknowledgements that have been made to the donor

LOANS

The details of any loan agreements pertaining to this item. If this item has been loaned to another organisation, this is known as an outward loan. In these instances, you can record the following information:

- name and address of the borrowing organisation
- purpose of the loan, e.g. exhibition or research
- agreed length of the loan
- expected date of return
- contact details for the individual at the borrowing organisation responsible for the loan

You may choose to digitise and upload relevant documentation regarding the specifics of the loan, or any images taken when completing a condition report for the loan.

Items which are loaned to your organisation from another organisation are known as inward loans. These items are not part of your permanent collection, however depending on the CMS platform you are using, you may be able to create a record for these items to document descriptive and administrative information that is relevant to your loan purposes. In these instances, you can record the details of the loan, as outlined above.

Keeping information on loans assists administration and provides historical information regarding why the item was loaned.

IMAGE 1. Museum worker documenting a collection item.

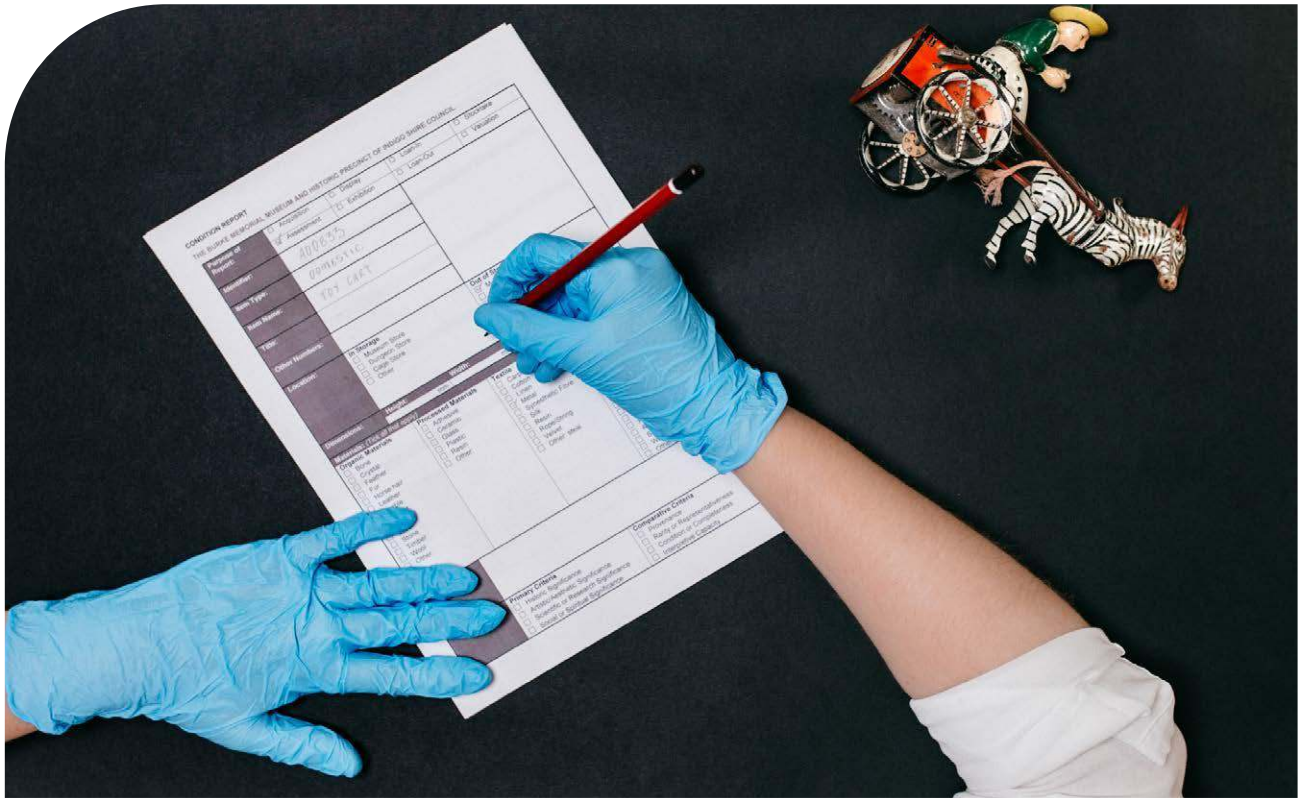


IMAGE 1. Examining a collection object and completing a condition report.

CONDITION

A description of the condition of the item and the date of assessment. It is important to regularly update this information, to provide an up-to-date record of any changes to the item. If your CMS platform allows it, you can add multiple condition reports which will allow you to create a record of changes to the condition of the item over time. This information allows you to anticipate which items are likely to require conservation treatment, and whether an item is a contender for display based on its condition.

The following standardised terminology can be used for assessments:

- Good: the item is in a reasonable state of preservation. It is clean and generally in a stable condition. Any deterioration is minor and does not detract from its display potential
- Fair: the item may require some conservation treatment before it is displayed
- Poor: the item is not structurally sound. It is subject to environmental conditions that cause deterioration and it will be lost if steps are not taken to preserve it

Condition reports are inherently a subjective process. One person's 'Poor' assessment is another's 'Excellent' based on personal experience or perception, so it's important to accompany the standardised terminology above with a detailed written description. Use accurate and descriptive terminology to outline your observations. See **Resources** for common condition reporting terminology.

RISK

Details of any risk assessments undertaken for this item. As with condition reporting, using a framework to regularly keep track of potential risks to items, and what actions you might take to mitigate those risks, can be recorded in your catalogue. See **Resources** for more information about Risk Assessments.

LOCATION

Details of where the item is located. Recording these details accurately will ensure your catalogue provides a reliable means to track your collection items. Depending on the CMS you are using you may be able to record both the Current Location and the Regular Location.

Regular Location denotes where the item is usually kept, and can pertain to either display or storage locations.

Current Location denotes where the item is at present. If the item is in storage, the Regular Location should be recorded in this field as well as in the field above. If the item is not in storage, for example if it is on display, on loan, or is undergoing treatment, record the details of the display location, or loan or treatment venue in this field.

If the current location of the item is uncertain, record ‘unknown’ in this field.

IMAGE 1. Using two gloved hands to remove a box containing collection items from a shelf.

It is best practice to use a system of codes to refer to the rooms, storage units, shelves and boxes that your collection is stored in. These elements comprise a location code.

- The first element of the location code refers to the building or room
- The second element of the code refers to the wall or the storage unit
- The third element of the code refers to the shelf or drawer where the object can be found, numbered sequentially from the top
- Depending on the nature of your storage unit, your code may have additional elements to denote bays and boxes

For example, an item stored in one of three boxes in the top shelf of one of two compactus units in storage room two would have the location code **S2C1S1 Box3.** You can use decimal points dashes or slashes to delineate between each element if necessary. The most important thing is to ensure that whatever system you use, it is used consistently throughout your collection.

SUPPLEMENTARY FILE

The details and location of any relevant support documentation or supplementary files. These files are an important companion to cataloguing data, and are typically historical documents, research papers, reference material, instruction manuals, personal communications, or other associated material. Some CMS platforms allow for these files to be uploaded to item records, or provide fields for additional information, references and external URLs. Importantly, the collection item's identification number should be included in the filename of the supplementary file, hardcopy or digital, to preserve the link between the item and the related material.

RESTRICTIONS

The details of any access restrictions that apply to this item. Depending on the nature of the item you are cataloguing, there are several reasons that you may need to restrict access. These reasons are not mutually exclusive and can include:

- Privacy considerations, for example a photograph which depicts children or a document that contains identifying information
- Cultural considerations, for example Aboriginal cultural items
- Legal considerations, for example R-rated material, weaponry
- Copyright considerations, for example conditions that have been placed on the use of digital images of the item by the copyright holder
- Content considerations, for example the item may contain sensitive or disturbing imagery

IMAGE 1. Handwritten letter and envelope.

Depending on which of these examples apply to the item you are cataloguing, you may be required to restrict physical access, digital access, or both. Your CMS may provide fields to record details of access permission provided by the respective Traditional Owners of Aboriginal cultural items, or fields to record the copyright holder's instructions, for example 'Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation have given permission for this item to be digitised for management purposes only. Images of this item are not to be published.' or 'When displayed or reproduced, the photograph must be credited 'Courtesy of H. Higgins.'

RIGHTS

The details of any copyright or moral rights that apply to the item. For example, the name and contact details of the rights holder, the applicable copyright category and duration.

Copyright is a set of rights (to copy, to communicate, to perform etc.) granted to the creator of an original work for a specific period of time. An original work may mean literature, dramatic works, artistic works, sound and video recordings, even computer programs. This has implications if your CMS platform allows you to publish the collection items you are cataloguing, and you intend to use this functionality. While there are exemptions from copyright for collecting organisations, they only apply to instances where copyrighted material is being used for preservation, research and administration purposes. This information is provided as a guideline only and does not constitute legal advice. Refer to Resources for further information.

NOTES

Whether you have a Notes field and how you use it will depend on your CMS. In general, the Notes field provides a means to document any relevant information which is about the record itself rather than the item being catalogued. For example, you could use Notes to indicate to other cataloguers that the record is incomplete and requires further research, or additional measurements to be taken.

CATALOGUER

The name of the cataloguer and the date the record was modified, unless this is recorded automatically by the CMS platform you are using. This enables any queries that arise about this record to be directed to the right person.

5. Digitisation

Just like physical collections, digital collections must be catalogued and preserved. Digital collections can include digitised collection items as well as born-digital items. The next two chapters detail both digitisation and cataloguing and preserving born-digital collections.

Collection items may be digitised for preservation (to limit the handling of the physical item), or access (to allow sharing of a collection remotely), as laid out in more detail in Chapter 1. Enhancement is also a benefit of digitisation (to see a small item in more detail or to view negatives as if they're developed).

Digitised collection items can include:

- Scanned or photographed books and artwork
- Scanned photographs (negatives, slides, prints, etc.)
- Digitised motion pictures
- Digitised audio
- Scanned or photographed documents
- Photographs of 3-D collection items

Born-digital items are those that were captured in electronic formats from the get-go and do not have an analogue or physical manifestation. These can include:

- Digital photographs, video and audio
- Digital image files
- Digital documents, such as PDFs
- Software
- Digital artworks
- Social media
- Websites
- Databases

Digitised and born-digital collections should be treated differently. There is no replacing a degraded born-digital item, therefore they should be catalogued as collection items and treated with the same care as physical collections are.

The purpose of digitisation for the catalogue is to create a true digital copy of the original, so the result should not be enhanced in any way. For example: remember to capture the cover and spine of a book; keep the digitised negative image of photographic mediums—not just the positive image; do not hide or edit out imperfections in an item.

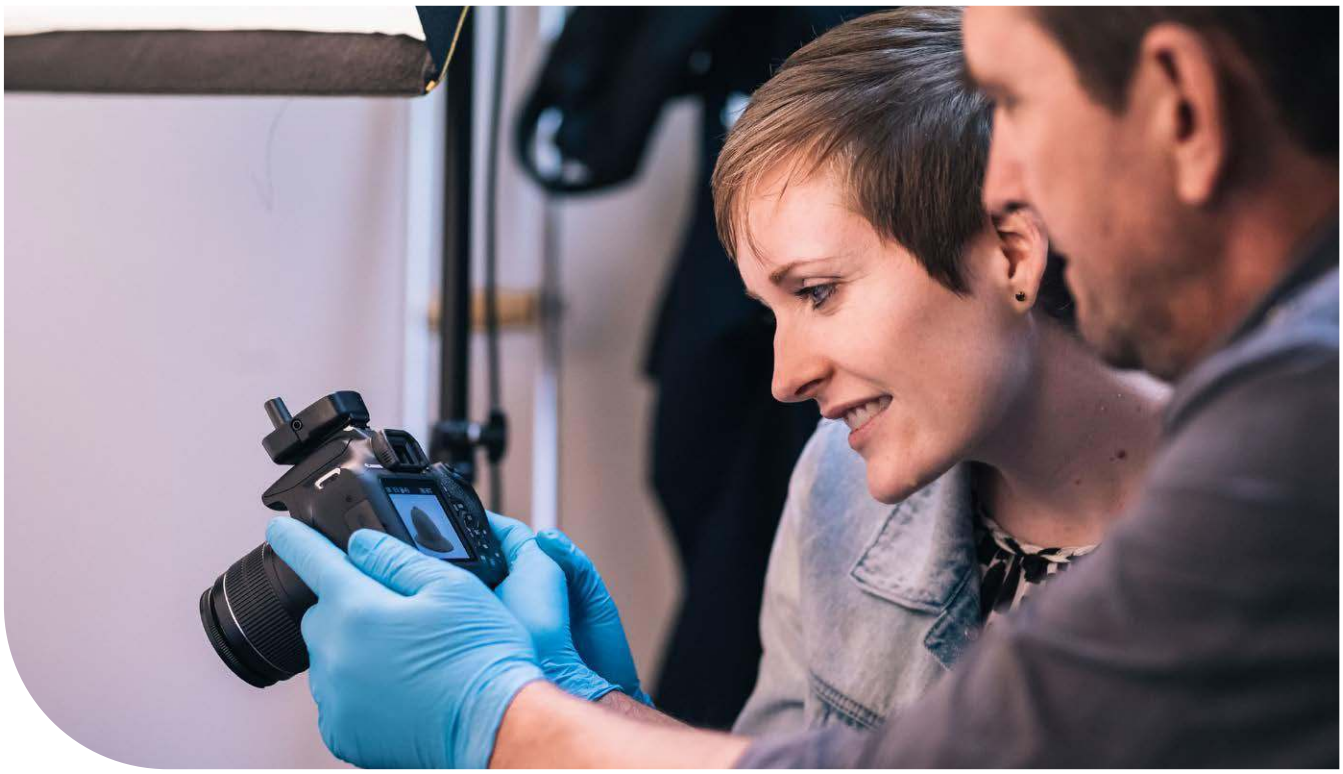


IMAGE 1. Examining a digital photograph on the camera screen during the digitisation process.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Digitisation is a rewarding yet complex process. There are multiple requirements including time, equipment, skills, and in some circumstances, funding. Because of this it is important to undertake planning before commencing a digitisation project, just as you did prior to commencing cataloguing. Planning phases include gathering information, making decisions, and preparation and documentation.

GATHERING INFORMATION

1. IDENTIFY THE SCOPE OF YOUR PROJECT

Firstly, answer the question, what will you be digitising? You may prioritise the digitisation of your collection based on upcoming exhibition content, recently acquired items, or collection items about which you receive frequent enquiries. This assessment will determine the scale and duration of your project and assist you to determine whether any items will require preparation or conservation prior to digitisation.

2. IDENTIFY THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU

'Resources' refers to much more than the equipment (covered below) you have on hand. You should also consider resources in terms of time (How many staff or volunteers will be working on the project? How much time can they dedicate to it?); skills (What experience does your team possess? Is training available to address any specific skill sets you are missing?); space (Do you have a workspace dedicated to this project? Where is your workspace located in relation to your collection storage?); finances (Is there a budget assigned to your project? Will you need to apply for funding?); and information (What information such as condition reports and significance statements can be used to inform the project?).

3. IDENTIFY ANY RISKS

Even seemingly robust items in perfect condition may be subject to risk from the digitisation process, so it is good practice to carry out a risk assessment prior to commencing digitisation. This will place you and your organisation in a better position to undertake the digitisation process in a manner which mitigates any risk to the items you are digitising, and will help you to identify collection items that may require professional assistance to digitise. For more on risk assessments, see Resources.

4. UNDERTAKE COPYRIGHT RESEARCH

This section provides general advice about copyright duration and the appropriateness of online publication. If you need to know how the law applies in a particular situation, please seek advice from a lawyer.

The easiest approach to sharing digital images of your collection online is to follow the Copyright Traffic Light approach. Start with the safe-to-publish material outlined in GREEN, then direct your efforts towards identifying copyright-restricted items and obtaining permission where required in the items outlined in AMBER and RED.

See the following page for the Copyright Traffic Light checklist.

5. IDENTIFY ANY NECESSARY PREPARATION

Based on the condition and location of the items you intend to digitise, determine whether any items need any specific preparation prior to digitisation. Examples could include having items treated by a qualified conservator based on risks you have identified, or ensuring you are aware of the locations of all items and able to safely and efficiently access them.

COPYRIGHT TRAFFIC LIGHT CHECKLIST

GREEN: CAN BE FREELY PUBLISHED ONLINE

- Images of mass-produced items where copyright does not apply e.g. medals, clothing, utilitarian items
- Images of works where copyright has been waived by the copyright holder (such as through a Creative Commons License)
- Works where copyright has expired and the work is in the public domain
- Materials where the copyright is owned by your organisation

AMBER: CAN BE PUBLISHED AFTER INVESTIGATION / CONSIDERATION

Works for which copyright may have expired, including:

- Photographs: copyright expires seventy years after the death of the photographer, or is expired if taken before 1955
- Literary works published during the lifetime of an author: copyright expires seventy years after the death of the author, or is expired if the author died before 1955
- Artworks: copyright expires seventy years after the death of the artist, or is expired if the artist died before 1955
- Unpublished materials: copyright expires seventy years after the death of the author, or if the author died before 1949
- Orphan works (where the creator cannot be identified): copyright expires seventy years after publication or creation
- Works for which you have permission to copy, by way of a license or transfer granted by the copyright holder (e.g. a signed Donor Form or Licence Agreement)

RED: EXERCISE CAUTION!

- Works that are under copyright –particularly books, artwork, film or any material which is commercially available–should only be shared online with the permission of the copyright holder
- If you are unable to obtain a license or copyright transfer from the original owner, explore whether you are eligible for any exemptions under s200AB of the Copyright Act

When sharing or publishing copyright material you must also respect the moral rights of the creator. Refer to the Glossary for further detail.

MAKING DECISIONS

6. SELECT A DIGITISATION METHOD

Based on the size, materials and condition of the items you intend to digitise, and any identified risks, determine a suitable digitisation method. Scanning will be most suitable if the items are flat, 2-D documents, at A3 size or smaller. Photography will be most suitable if the items are 3-D items, 2-D items that are too large to fit in a scanner, or 2-D items that risk being damaged by the scanning process. See Digitisation Workflow for more information.

7. IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE FILE FORMAT AND RESOLUTION

Based on the type of collection items you are digitising, determine the file formats and resolutions you will capture. When digitising, it's important to adopt a 'do it once and do it well' approach. For this reason, whether you are scanning or photographing your collection items, it's important to capture them in lossless file formats.

In order to prevent digital corruption, photographs and scans should be captured in an image format such as TIFF.

Documents can also be scanned in image formats, or if using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) can be captured as PDF/A. PDF/A is a version of the common document file format PDF, that has been designed for long-term digital archiving.

Colour depth or bit depth indicates how many colours can be used in an image. A digital image is made up of lots of small dots, but there is a limit to how many different colours each of those dots could be. A higher bit depth allows for a broader range of colours that will be used in the image. For scanning, select between 8-bit and 24-bit colour.

FILE RESOLUTION GUIDELINES

TYPE	COPY	RECOMMENDED RESOLUTION
PRINTED TEXT (as an image)	Master	300dpi
	Access	300dpi
	Thumbnail	72dpi
PHOTOGRAPH	Master	300dpi if larger than A4 600dpi if A4-A6 1200dpi if smaller than A6
	Access	300dpi if larger than A4 600dpi if A4-A6 1200dpi if smaller than A6
	Thumbnail	72dpi
MAP	Master	Maximum allowable
	Access	600dpi
	Thumbnail	72dpi
NEWSPAPER	Master	300dpi
	Access	300dpi
	Thumbnail	72dpi
OBJECT / ARTWORK	Master	Maximum allowable
	Access	600dpi
	Thumbnail	72dpi

Image resolution is described in pixels or dots per inch (ppi or dpi). The higher the number, the clearer the image will be, but the file size will be larger because there is more information to be saved. Smaller items should be digitised in as high definition as your equipment can allow. This is because the level of detail is more important for smaller items that will be viewed larger on your computer screen (take for example a postage stamp– it will likely appear enlarged on a computer screen so needs to be captured at a higher resolution). Remember that scanning at a higher resolution will take longer, as the machine is capturing more detail.

IMAGE 1. A tripod holding a DSLR camera, ready to start digitising collection items.

8. SOURCE AND COLLECT YOUR EQUIPMENT

Based on the decisions you have made above, and the equipment you already have on hand, assemble or purchase the necessary equipment.

CAMERA: The most recommended camera for digitisation is a DSLR, a digital single-lens reflex camera, which is a digital camera combining the optics and the mechanisms of a single-lens reflex camera with a digital imaging sensor, as opposed to photographic film.

LENS: DSLR cameras can take interchangeable lenses and the best lens to buy for optimum resolution would be a zoom lens with a focal length of 18 to 55mm. This is the standard often supplied with a DSLR. Most cameras that can't take interchangeable lenses can zoom from around 24mm up to 500mm.

TRIPOD: Using a tripod will help to prevent camera shake, which can occur when using a hand-held camera, and will help create consistency from one shot to the next. Tripods allow you to adjust both height and position, so they can be used with multiple photography set ups.

DIGITISATION WORKFLOW

Now that you have planned your digitisation project, you are ready to digitise.

Before you begin on a day of digitisation, consider what your workflow will look like. Planning your workflow will increase the efficiency and volume of digitisation and decrease the risk to items in transit. Your workflow will vary depending on the availability of volunteers, space and equipment.

1. IDENTIFY YOUR TEAM

Have a clear understanding of the roles that each team member will play during this process. You will need a dedicated photographer (or scanner), an item 'courier' who will handle and move the items, and a documenter.

2. IDENTIFY ITEMS & EQUIPMENT

Work strategically. This means identifying a series of items which have common requirements.

By photographing like items in one session, you can avoid excessive equipment change or adjustment.

3. SET UP YOUR WORKSPACE

Choose a large area with easy access to your storeroom, as well as sufficient power points for your equipment, which—depending on the method of digitisation—could include a computer, scanner, lights or lightbox.

IMAGE 1. A room set up for digitisation, featuring lighting, a camera on a tripod, a table and a backdrop.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography is the digitisation method that should be used for 3-D items. Your photography set-up will be determined by items you are digitising.

COSTUME OR TEXTILES

- White/black backdrop
- Two light sources (windows, lamps, studio lights)
- Camera
- Tripod (optional)
- Mannequin
- Computer

A trick for photographing pants and skirts without a mannequin: pass cotton string ties through structurally sound belt loops and hold the item in front of your backdrop.

3-D ITEMS
SUCH AS FURNITURE, DOMESTIC ITEMS AND SCULPTURES

- Table
- Light box/tent (or white backdrop with two light sources)
- Camera
- Tripod (optional)
- Computer

IMAGE 1. Trousers held in front of a backdrop by looping cotton tape through the belt loops. Image courtesy Warrnambool RSL Sub-Branch.

BOOKS

When digitising a book, you may need to create a copy-stand set up with your camera and tripod. Rather than risking damage to your book by squeezing it onto a scanner bed, reconstruct the elements of a scanner (white light, aerial capture) on a table and hold your pages down with snake weights or similar. Ensure that the book is supported by using book pillows or supports.

The following considerations apply to photography regardless of the item you are digitising or the set-up you are using.

COMPOSITION

Composition refers to the relevant placement and framing of the subject. This framing and placement is important for catalogue photography, which aims to capture a complete and accurate representation of the collection item. A well composed catalogue photograph ensures that the collection item is depicted in its entirety, with minimal visual distraction.

FILL THE FRAME

The item is the subject being documented–it should fill the frame as much as possible, it should be in focus and the photograph should capture it in its entirety. You can take photographs of additional details to document inscriptions, markings, fixtures, damage or parts. To ensure the item fills the frame:

- Frame your photograph according to the shape of the item–a tall item is best captured in portrait format, whereas a wide item is best captured in landscape format
- Move your camera closer to the item, or the item closer to the camera. Only use your camera's zoom function if you're using a manual or semi-manual DSLR camera (compact cameras and smartphone cameras use digital zoom rather than optical zoom so the resolution will reduce as you increase the zoom)
- Use the 'rule of thirds' approach to composition. When framing the item, mentally divide the area of the photograph into thirds horizontally and vertically. Use these thirds to assist you to centre the item you are photographing in the frame

THE ITEM AND ONLY THE ITEM

There are several things to keep in mind for photographing your item:

- Remove any labels or registration numbers from the item
- Catalogue photography which will be published online should **not** include scale bars, rulers or colour charts
- For in-house collection management purposes (**not** published online), you may wish to take additional photographs of each item which include a scale bar and registration number
- Where necessary use supports or display mounts for the items you are photographing
- Do not hold the items as they are being photographed

IMAGE 1. Image overlaid with a grid, demonstrating how you can use the rule of thirds to centre an item in the frame.

BACKDROP

Make sure the backdrop is consistent and does not distract from the item you are photographing.

Use a clean monochrome background, preferably white for dark items, and black for light items. To achieve this you can use a backdrop created from cardboard. If the item you are photographing is large, fabric can be used. The backdrop should be used behind and underneath the item, with a gentle slope in order to make the surroundings of the item appear consistent.

LIGHTING

Appropriate lighting is essential for the accurate documentation of collection items. Light has a huge impact on the way details are perceived. Cameras are also very sensitive to light and will interpret and capture physical information according to the lighting set-up. A collection item photographed without optimal lighting will not accurately represent the colours of the item, and details may be obscured by shadows. By organising an optimal lighting scenario, the quality of your images will be improved and your collection will be better documented.

In order to achieve effective lighting, you may need to invest in professional photographic equipment. The following list includes commonly required equipment with some inexpensive alternatives.

- Lamps: professional 'continuous' or 'strobe studio' lighting kit will be the most effective; however, if you are on a tight budget, desk or clamp lamps, or even diffused daylight will work
- Diffusers: professional light diffusers are usually called grid cloths, frosts, umbrellas or soft boxes and can be purchased from photographic suppliers. You can achieve a similar affect with a semi opaque, white, flame-resistant nylon fabric attached to a suspended bar
- Light kit: this is essentially a tent lit with LED lights which creates a miniature lighting studio for small items. You can purchase a ready-made kit or construct one yourself using a box and white fabric or paper

SELECTING THE RIGHT BULB

All sources of light omit different colour temperatures. Warmer colour temperatures will appear slightly red and cooler colour temperatures will appear slightly blue. In order to capture the colour of an item accurately, choose white or daylight bulbs. These sit somewhere in the middle of the colour temperature scale. Colour can also be corrected by changing the white balance in the camera's settings.

SETTING UP YOUR LIGHTS

You will need to arrange your lamps in a manner that produces an even distribution of light. Position your lamps at an equal distance from either side of the camera location at 45-degree angles. Adjust the height and tilt the head of your lamps so that they direct light to the centre of the item. If you are photographing an item from above, tilt the lamps to 30-45 degrees off the horizontal plane of where the item is placed.

IMAGE 1. A correctly lit photograph.

IMAGE 2. An incorrectly lit photograph. Here the image is too dark and the detail of the item depicted is obscured.

IMAGE 3. Using a light tent to obtain a clean and well-lit image.

IN LIEU OF LAMPS, CHOOSE A WELL-LIT SPACE

If you do not have access to lamps you may need to rely on the light from a well-lit room. Bear in mind that the colour temperature of the lights may impart an orange or blue tone to the photographs which can be mitigated by adjusting the white balance settings. If you are struggling to find a space with enough light it can be helpful to make use of natural sunlight by opening blinds or windows.

DIFFUSE AND/OR REFLECT THE LIGHT

Once your lights are set up, if there are stark shadows or bright highlights you will want to soften the light with diffusers and/or reflect it around the item.

- Place diffusers centrally in front of the lamps to disperse the light. The objective is to broaden the light source so that it is not being omitted so directly and harshly. Diffusers also reduce reflection on shiny surfaces. If you do not have a diffuser, you could use thin white paper or fabric.
- Use reflective material to bounce light around the item. If you are still combatting shadows and highlights, or do not have any diffusers, it is possible to troubleshoot this problem by strategically reflecting light. Position a reflective or white surface so that it catches the light and reflects it into the shadows. You may need a second pair of hands to assist you with this while you are capturing the images with your camera! If you do not have a reflector, you could use foil, card, or styrofoam.

IMAGE 1. Photography set-up with a clean white backdrop, lights, camera and tripod.

IMAGE 2. Using a diffuser to reflect light.

IMAGE 3. Photography set-up in a well-lit room.

CAMERA SETTINGS AND QUICK FIXES

Your camera settings will allow you to manually change the appearance of photos. In most situations, the automatic settings will work quite well, but if you are shooting in the below examples of less-than-ideal conditions, there are some changes you can make to improve the photos.

TOO DARK

- Decrease the shutter speed. A slower shutter speed will leave the lens open for longer while the image is captured, letting more light in. However, any movement will blur the image, so it is best to use a tripod or something similar to stabilise the camera
- Increase the aperture. A smaller aperture number will open the lens more and let more light in. However, this will also broaden the depth of field which may stop the desirable blurred background effect
- Increase the ISO. An ISO of around 100 is recommended for best results, but the ISO can be increased to make the image appear brighter. However, higher ISOs can make the image appear grainy

TOO LIGHT

- Increase the shutter speed. A faster shutter speed will open the lens for less time, letting less light in
- Decrease the aperture. A larger aperture number will close the lens more and let less light in. However, this will narrow the depth of field, so check to ensure that the entirety of the item you're capturing is in focus
- Decrease the ISO. An ISO of around 100 is recommended for best results. If the image is appearing too light, check that the ISO hasn't been set higher

THE BACKDROP IS TOO CLEAR OR DISTRACTING

- Decrease the aperture. This will narrow the depth of field, keeping the item in focus while blurring the background
- Move the backdrop further away

THE IMAGE APPEARS TOO RED OR TOO BLUE

- Natural light can change colour depending on the time of day, and indoor lights can appear warmer or cooler (for example fluorescent lights can be quite blue; low-watt light bulbs are often very yellow)
- Look for the white balance settings on your camera. Some cameras will have pre-set white balance for different conditions (tungsten, cloudy, fluorescent, etc.) and some will have a sliding scale. Work through the white balance settings until a natural result is achieved

THE IMAGE IS BLURRY

This could be due to movement or inaccurate focus.

- If the image is blurry due to movement, try using a tripod rather than holding the camera in your hands
- If a tripod or other way to stabilise the camera is not possible, try decreasing the shutter speed. This will leave the lens open for a shorter period of time, making movement have less of an impact on the clarity of the image
- Check that the focus is set to automatic. This will allow the camera to find the focal point
- If the camera isn't focussing on the item, set the focus to 'manual' and find the focal point manually
- Increase the aperture. This will broaden the depth of field, allowing more of the item to come into focus. However, this will make the image appear brighter

THE ITEM IS TOO REFLECTIVE

- Soften direct light by using diffusers or reflective material
- Use a light kit to block reflections from behind the camera. If you don't have a light kit, cut a hole in a sheet of fabric or paper for the lens of the camera to fit through

SCANNING

Scanning is the digitisation method that should be used for 2-D items and documents. Documents and print photographs can be captured with a standard flatbed scanner, while some scanners have purpose-built cradles for glass slides and negatives. There are some exceptions to this, where the item risks being damaged by the scanning process. In these instances, you should use the copy-stand method outlined above.

Recommended set up for 2-D items:

- Scanner
- Computer

The following considerations apply when scanning:

NEGATIVES

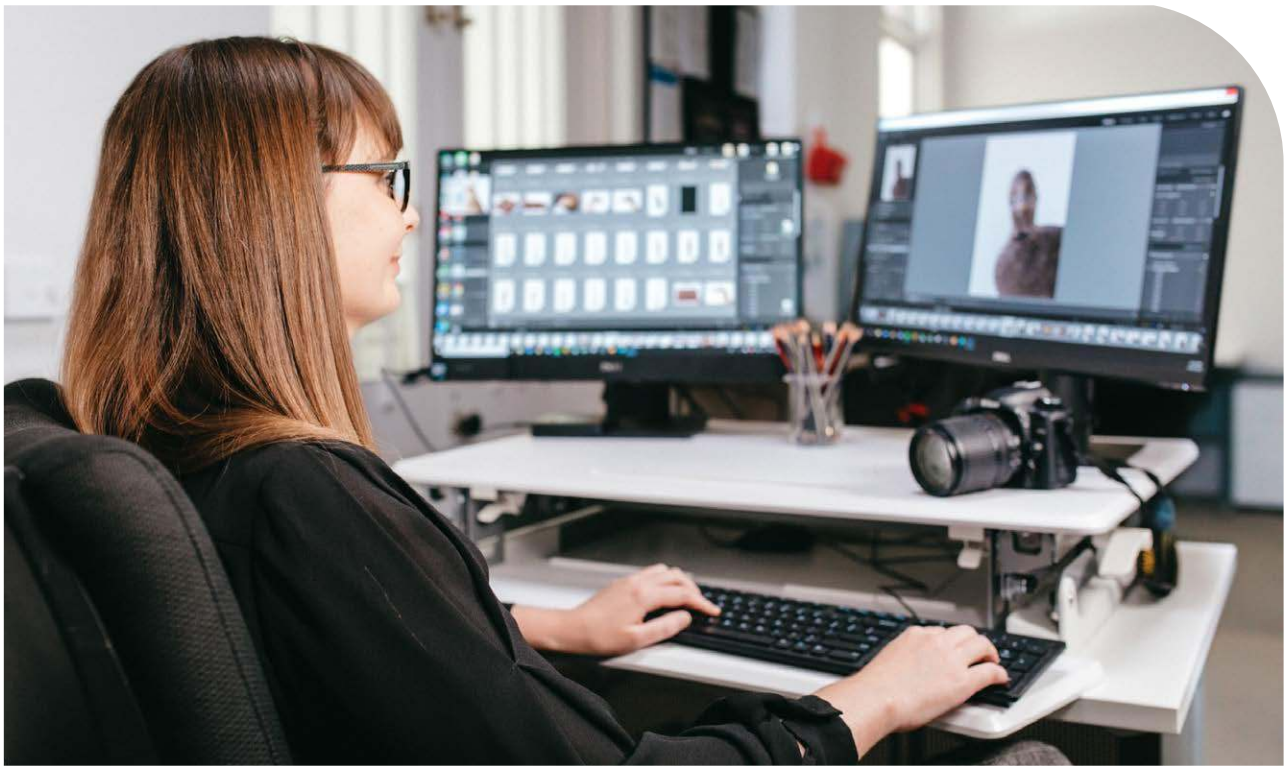
When scanning negatives, keep the original as well as the positive image. Remember that when digitising an item, the aim is to create a digital copy of the original –which in this case is the negative, not the resulting positive picture.

OCR

Some scanners are capable of recognising text in an image. This is called Optical Character Recognition (OCR) and is only supported by some file types; usually PDFs. The advantage of scanning with OCR is that the resulting document is searchable. Bear in mind that OCR can only work with typescript text, not handwritten text.

PLACEMENT

The item or document should be placed on the bed of the scanner a few millimetres from the edge. This ensures that there is sufficient extra space in case the scanner does not capture all the way to the frame. It also leaves a margin of error for any straightening that needs to occur post-capture.



START DIGITISING

Your courier should bring items to the digitisation space one at a time, using support trays or card backing where necessary. Your documenter should follow behind to record where the item was collected from and ensure it returns to that location.

Your documenter should also keep a list of items in the order they were digitised or alternatively, take a photograph of the label before the formal photography begins. This will aid in the naming of image files.

Ensure that as you take each photograph or scan, you assess the lighting, colour, composition and focus of the image.

Once satisfied that the image capture is accurate, return the item to storage and repeat for the remaining items.

It's important to remember that digitisation is undertaken both to preserve information about collection items, and to make them accessible to the public. While you are working, keep in mind what a photo that meets both purposes might look like.

Depending on the items you have digitised and the camera settings applied, you may need to undertake some minor corrective edits prior to uploading the digitised files to the CMS.

IMAGE 1. A computer workstation showing digitised collection items on-screen.

POST-EDITS

Catalogue photography aims to capture a complete and accurate representation of the collection item depicted. Ideally this is achieved through the carefully planned lighting and composition considerations outlined in the Digitisation Workflow.

In some instances, additional corrections are required to ensure an accurate representation. If you discover that your catalogue photography has not captured your collection items as accurately as possible, post-edits can often remove the need to re-shoot by adjusting and refining minor errors. Begin by considering what image editing software you will use. For example:

- Your computer's built-in Image editing program: Microsoft Windows includes Paint and Photos; Apple Mac includes Photos; and all feature basic image editing functions
- Free image editing software: Examples include GIMP and Pixlr
- Paid image editing software: Examples include Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom

CROPPING

Cropping involves adjusting or removing the outside edges of an image. It can be helpful for improving framing and composition, or removing unwanted details from an image. You can use your mouse to drag the crop handle to exclude unwanted areas of the image.

STRAIGHTENING AND ROTATION

It is important that you take your photographs straight, so that any vertical or horizontal elements of the item depicted line up with the sides of the image. If your photograph is slightly crooked, you can use the straightening or rotation tool to adjust it.

EXPOSURE

A photograph is underexposed when the light level is too low. The resulting image may be dark, with white backdrops appearing grey, and colours appearing dull and lacking in intensity.

By contrast, an overexposed photograph where the light level is too high, may appear unnaturally bright, with the colours appearing pale and washed out.

You can use the exposure tool to adjust an under or overexposed photograph so that it is a more accurate representation of the true colours of the item.

COLOUR CORRECTION AND WHITE BALANCE

Colour correction involves adjusting the colours of an image to accurately reflect the true colours of the item depicted. If the item appears discoloured or the white of your backdrop appears blue or yellow, you can use the colour correction or white balance tool to adjust tones and tint.

Once you have completed any necessary editing, it's time to upload. Follow the instructions in your CMS to upload the digitised image and record any extra data relating to the new file such as credit, title or copyright data. In general, the most efficient approach is to do this in batches after you have completed a digitisation session, returned your items to storage and packed up your digitisation equipment.

IMAGE 1. Overexposed photograph of a fan.

IMAGE 2. Correctly exposed photograph of a fan.

IMAGE 3. Underexposed photograph of a fan.

6. Born Digital Collections

Put simply, born-digital items are digital works which are not copies of analogue items. While digitised files are digital copies of physical items in your collection, born-digital items exist only in the digital space.

The proportion of gallery, library, archive and museum collections that is comprised of born-digital items is rapidly growing.

Although it's not possible to handle or package born-digital items, they still require similar collection management activities, including cataloguing and preservation.

It is a good idea to familiarise yourself with processes related to managing born-digital items. You can find several excellent resources which explain the acquisition, preservation and maintenance of born-digital items in Resources.

Image courtesy of Beechworth Burke Museum

CATALOGUING BORN-DIGITAL ITEMS

In many ways, a born-digital item can be catalogued in the same manner as a physical item. Other fields might require different information:

ITEM TYPE

You can identify an item type for your born-digital item in the same way you would for a physical item. An electronic document, can be recorded as 'Document' and an oral history recording can be recorded as 'Audio'.

TITLE

Born-digital files will have file names given by their creators, in this way a file name such as 'Family_Photographs_2017' is equivalent to the formal title of a painting, such as 'The Man from Snowy River'. Record this information as it was given by the creator—even with spelling mistakes—just as you would for a painting or book.

DATE OF CREATION

Born-digital files will often have more than one date. For example, you may have a date for 'Date Created' or 'Date Last Modified'. Be sure to record all known dates, as this is important information regarding the life and iterations of a born-digital item.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

While born-digital items don't have materials and textures like a physical collection item, you can use the Physical Description and Measurements fields to record file specifications such as height, width, PPI and file format.

These are important details about the properties of your digital file. You can see these details by opening the Properties window after right-clicking your born-digital file. To protect against loss from software and hardware obsolescence, also record any other relevant textual or image content listed in the file's Properties window.

MEDIA UPLOAD

At the point of acquisition, you may have converted your born-digital files into lossless file types for digital preservation. If not, ensure that you create the appropriate file types before uploading your media to your CMS.

Where possible, upload the original master file to the CMS in one of the following lossless file types: PDF/A (for text and documents), TIFF (for images), WAV (for audio), MJP2 or MPEG-4 (for video). You may also upload a compressed accessible version in a file format such as JPEG for easy user access and download

CONDITION

For physical items any loss or instability is documented in the Condition fields of the record, whereas for born-digital files what should be documented here is the details of any digital corruption. This may be the case if a file opens but has missing content, so may be given a 'Poor' rating with an explanation, 'Damaged digital file. Partially missing content.'

LOCATION

Just as you document the locations of physical collection items, you should document where your born-digital files are stored, for example on a server or an external hard drive. This directory path can be included as the location of the born-digital item, for example, G:/Collection/Digital files/Born-digital/Master Copies/1245-2.pdf

Use meaningful file structure and naming conventions that connect the file to its information in the catalogue (i.e. include the identification number in the file name). You may also need to set access permissions on storage folders which contain master files as a means of protection. You can manage access to a folder by right-clicking and opening the Properties window and going to the Security tab.

PRESERVING BORN-DIGITAL ITEMS

Born-digital collection items must be preserved with the same level of care as physical collection items.

FILE FORMATS

File format refers to the type of file, denoted by a file extension such as .docx for Microsoft Word documents, or .tiff for Tagged Image File Format images. Generally speaking, open file formats have a greater lifespan than proprietary file formats, however there are exceptions in ubiquitous proprietary formats such as those generated by the Microsoft Office suite, as it is highly likely that the software that can read them will be available for a long time, and it is now built in such a way that it can even open old versions of those file formats.

Another factor to consider in file formats is the type of compression they will undergo. Compression is a process often applied when a file is changed and then saved, in order for the computer to save disk space.

Some files, such as TIFFs undergo lossless compression which is a computer process that saves file space by carefully bundling together bits of the file. Other files, such as JPEGs undergo lossy compression, which bundles together bits of a file with a more indiscriminate approach resulting in a poorer quality image as it is changed and saved repeatedly over time.

Consider preparing a list of accepted file formats for your collection. If there are fewer file formats, any preservation actions (such as migrating to a new format, or checking using a particular type of software) can be applied at scale. This will ensure that born-digital items will be in your accepted file formats at the time of acquisition in order to remove the need to migrate copies to your preferred format.

STORAGE

It's good practice to store born-digital collection items separately from digitised images of physical collection items. Ideally they should be stored on a separate storage medium, and where this is not possible, at least in separate folder locations within the same storage medium. This will ensure that collection items can be kept in the most appropriate environmental conditions should there be a need to prioritise, for example, lack of shelf space for the storage medium in desirable conditions, or space on the storage medium itself.

Backups should be made on a regular basis (as often as possible when there are new additions to the collection, depending on the resources and time available). At least two backups should be made on a different storage medium to the master copy. For example, your masters may be on a server, with one backup on a hard drive and another in cloud storage. Storage medium options include:

- Cloud
- Desktop computer
- Disk
- Hard drive
- Server

FIXITY

Fixity is simply the extent to which a digital item remains unaltered. Ideally, fixity is ensured using checksums. Free checksum tools can be downloaded, however they usually require some level of coding skill. A checksum can be generated when the digital file is acquired and saved with the item metadata, then in the future the checksums can be regenerated and compared to the original. If the checksums differ, the file has deteriorated or changed in some way, and an unchanged backup can be restored.

An alternative is simply to assess digital items in much the same way as a conservation assessment of physical items—by viewing them.

FILE FORMATS AND THEIR SUITABILITY FOR PRESERVATION

ITEM TYPE	FILE FORMAT	FILE EXTENSION	SUITABILITY FOR PRESERVATION	DESCRIPTION
TEXT AND DOCUMENTS	Comma-separated values	.csv	Preservation friendly	Text file that can be read as a spreadsheet
	Microsoft Word document	.doc .docx	Somewhat preservation friendly	As a proprietary file, risks becoming obsolete. Convert to PDF/A if possible
	PDF/A	.pdf	Preservation friendly	In order to retain formatting, convert text files to PDF/A
IMAGES	JPEG	.jpg .jpeg .jp2	Not preservation friendly	JPEGs are compressed. Use as an access copy and save master files as TIFFs if possible
	TIFF	.tif .tiff	Preservation friendly	The most commonly accepted image format
AUDIO	MP3	.mp3	Somewhat preservation friendly	MP3 is a compressed audio file type. Convert to WAV if possible
	FLAC	.flac	Somewhat preservation friendly	FLAC uses lossless compression. This is a good alternative to WAV if concerned about file size
	WAV	.wav	Preservation friendly	So widely used that it has become the most preservation friendly. Files can be large due to the uncompressed format
VIDEO	Motion JPEG 2000	.mj2 .mjp2	Somewhat preservation friendly	This open standard file format is under consideration as a digital archive format
	MPEG-2	.mp2	Not preservation friendly	MPEG-2 is the precursor to Motion JPEG 2000. Convert if possible
	MPEG-4	.mp4	Somewhat preservation friendly	This file type is suitable for digital preservation

Appendices

SMALL MUSEUMS CATALOGUING MANUAL

SAMPLE CATALOGUING RECORD (PAGE 1)

AMaGA Victoria

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER
A unique and permanent number given to each collection item

0507

ITEM TYPE
A one or two word classification of the item in its simplest terms

Leisure item

ITEM NAME A word or two providing descriptive information	TITLE The formal title given to the item by its creator
Football, AIF	

MEDIA
Uploaded digitised images and media files relating to the item and information pertaining to these files

0507 Football (left view)

DESCRIPTION
A description of the item that includes all details that cannot be captured by digitisation alone

Brown leather football, deflated. Stitched together. Four leather threads at top of ball. Has stencil painted markings on both top sections.

INSCRIPTIONS AND MARKINGS
A verbatim recording of any serial numbers, signatures, text or other inscriptions and markings that are present on the item, including the details of the placement of the inscription

THE AIF BALL / MATCH .II.

DIMENSIONS Accurate measurements of the item	PRODUCTION METHODS The methods and techniques of how the item you are cataloguing was made
H17cm x W32cm x D22cm	Handmade, sewn

MATERIALS
The materials that the item you are cataloguing is made or comprised of

Leather, thread, paint

CONTEXT OR HISTORICAL INFORMATION
The story of the item, link it to relevant historical events, themes, people if known, or provide contextual information about the item

This ball was possibly made by Corporal C. McMullen during WWI. McMullen made footballs for the Australian Imperial Force, all of which were hand stitched. He made the original ball for the 1916 Australian Rules exhibition match in London watched by 3000 spectators. McMullen's balls were commonly referred to as 'The AIF Ball', indicating that this might be one of them. The inscription 'Match .II.' suggests it was used for a later match.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
A statement outlining the significance of the item, including why the item is significant and what significance criteria apply

The provenance of this object is unknown, but it was potentially made by Corporal C. McMullen for use in an AIF exhibition match. If so, it is a highly significant piece of sporting memorabilia, and holds national significance as an object that tells the early evolution of Australian Rules Football and the importance of sport to the armed forces. This object also has comparative significance due to its rarity: one of the only surviving footballs used in WWI.

KEYWORDS
A set of terms or subjects related to the item you are cataloguing: broad thematic terms, alternate spellings, or related people, places and eras

SAMPLE CATALOGUING RECORD (PAGE 2)

AMaGA Victoria

PROVENANCE
Record the creation and events that have occurred during the life of the item you are cataloguing

CREATOR/MAKER'S DETAILS
The creator's name and any other relevant details

Possibly made by Corporal C. McMullen.

WHERE CREATED/MADE The place of manufacture or creation if it is known	WHEN MADE The date the item was created
Unknown	c. 1915-1919

PROVENANCE EVENTS
As a general rule, for each event, record when and where it took place, and any additional details about the event

ACQUISITION
How the item came to be in your organisation's custody and the ownership status of the item

Donation

LOANS
The details of any loan agreements pertaining to this item

CONDITION A description of the condition of the item	CONDITION REPORT DATE The date of assessment
Fair	29/11/2020

RISK
The details of any risk assessments and what actions you might take to mitigate those risks

Leather may be subject to drying out if not stored correctly. Suggest keeping stored in archival box.

LOCATION The details of where the item is located regularly and/or its current location	SUPPLEMENTARY FILE The details and location of any relevant support documentation or supplementary files
CURRENT LOCATION: On display REGULAR LOCATION: R1/C2/S1/B10	AIF exhibition match in London http://australianfootball.com/articles/view/The+A.I.F+match+in+London%252C+1916/

RESTRICTIONS
The details of any access restrictions that apply to this item

No restrictions apply

RIGHTS
The details of any copyright or moral rights that apply to the item. For example, the name and contact details of the rights holder, the applicable copyright category and duration

This item is mass-produced, no restrictions apply

NOTES
This field provides a means to document any relevant information which is about the record itself rather than the item being catalogued

Need more research about the provenance of the ball's creation.

CATALOGUER
The name of the cataloguer and the date the record was modified

SMALL MUSEUMS CATALOGUING MANUAL

CATALOGUE RECORD - BLANK TEMPLATE (PAGE 1)

AMaGA Victoria

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER
A unique and permanent number given to each collection item

ITEM TYPE
A one or two word classification of the item in its simplest terms

ITEM NAME A word or two providing descriptive information	TITLE The formal title given to the item by its creator

MEDIA
Uploaded digitised images and media files relating to the item and information pertaining to these files

DESCRIPTION
A description of the item that includes all details that cannot be captured by digitisation alone

INSCRIPTIONS AND MARKINGS
A verbatim recording of any serial numbers, signatures, text or other inscriptions and markings that are present on the item, including the details of the placement of the inscription

DIMENSIONS Accurate measurements of the item	PRODUCTION METHODS The methods and techniques of how the item you are cataloguing was made

MATERIALS
The materials that the item you are cataloguing is made or comprised of

CONTEXT OR HISTORICAL INFORMATION
The story of the item, link it to relevant historical events, themes, people if known, or provide contextual information about the item

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
A statement outlining the significance of the item, including why the item is significant and what significance criteria apply

KEYWORDS
A set of terms or subjects related to the item you are cataloguing: broad thematic terms, alternate spellings, or related people, places and eras

CATALOGUE RECORD - BLANK TEMPLATE (PAGE 2)

AMaGA Victoria

PROVENANCE Record the creation and events that have occurred during the life of the item you are cataloguing
CREATOR/MAKER'S DETAILS The creator's name and any other relevant details

WHERE CREATED/MADE The place of manufacture or creation if it is known	WHEN MADE The date the item was created

PROVENANCE EVENTS As a general rule, for each event, record when and where it took place and any additional event details
ACQUISITION The details of how the item came to be in your organisation's custody and the ownership status of the item
LOANS The details of any loan agreements pertaining to this item

CONDITION A description of the condition of the item	DATE OF CONDITION REPORT The date of assessment

RISK The details of any risk assessments and what actions you might take to mitigate those risks

LOCATION The details of where the item is located regularly and/ or its current location	SUPPLEMENTARY FILE The details and location of any relevant support documentation or supplementary files

RESTRICTIONS The details of any access restrictions that apply to this item
RIGHTS The details of any copyright or moral rights that apply to the item. For example, the name and contact details of the rights holder, the applicable copyright category and duration
NOTES This field provides a means to document any relevant information which is about the record itself rather than the item being catalogued
CATALOGUER The name of the cataloguer and the date the record was modified

GLOSSARY

ACID-FREE SWING TAGS – archival grade tags used for labelling collection items

ALT-TEXT - alternative or 'alt' text is a common term for descriptive text which allows users of assistive technology such as text-readers, a more equitable experience when accessing digital content. Unlike a caption, which might contain photographer credits or the specifications of a collection item, alt-text is purely a description of image content.

APERTURE – the size of the opening in the lens. If the lens is wider, more light will be let in; if the lens is narrower, less light will be let in. The smaller the number, the wider the opening. When photographing items, a smaller number is good because it brings the item in the foreground into focus and makes the background blurry

ATTRIBUTION – an acknowledgement which gives credit to the creator or copyright holder of an original work

AUTHORITY LISTS – a set of standardised terminologies commonly used across a variety of collecting organisations for cataloguing purposes, often built into the CMS software

BOOK PILLOW – a pillow support produced from conservation grade material (such as inert ethafoam crystals within a high-density polyethylene cover) which can be moulded to shape for gentle support of rare books, delicate items, etc.

BORN-DIGITAL – items that originate from a digital source and are not copies of analogue documents. This can include digital photographs, digital documents such as Word or PDF, electronic records such as emails or spreadsheets and harvested online content such as websites

CHECKSUM – a checksum is generated by a computer using an algorithm, and will create the exact same unique string of letters and numbers when run over a file every single time. If even a bit of the file is different, the checksum generated will be different. Checksums are used to confirm fixity

CHINAGRAPH PENCIL – a waxy pencil useful for applying to hard surfaces such as ceramics or glass

GLOSSARY

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS) – software designed for the collation and management of data records pertaining to collection items and archives specific to Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums, known as the GLAM sector

COPYRIGHT – is a set of rights (to copy, to communicate, to perform etc.) granted to the creator of an original work for a specific period of time. An original work may mean literature, dramatic works, artistic works, sound and video recordings, even computer programs

COPY-STAND – a device or camera set-up used to facilitate the digitisation of large 2-D items such as works on paper, books or manuscripts. The camera is attached to either a tripod or an adjustable stand, and is angled so that the item can be captured from above

CREATIVE COMMONS – provides a way for copyright holders and content creators to allow the public to use material in certain ways without having to seek a formal license agreement. The licences allow the public to use material free of charge under the varying levels of restrictions. Learn more here: http://creativecommons.org/about/licenses/

DEPTH OF FIELD – the area in front of and behind the focal length that is still in focus

DIFFUSER – a device that makes light less direct. This could be a translucent sheet (paper, plastic, or fabric) through which a light is pointed, or a reflective surface that diffuses the light back onto the subject

DIGITAL ZOOM – after a camera has reached its optical zoom limit, it will zoom digitally. This means that it is simply making the digital image larger (and therefore lower quality)

DIGITISED – a process by which an analogue or physical collection item has a digital media file created and documented with its catalogue record

DONOR FORM – a binding document, signed by both the donor and recipient organisation, which records the transference of legal title (ownership) of an item

DSLR – stands for Digital Single Lens Reflex camera. A DSLR camera combines the optics and mechanisms of a single-lens reflex camera with a digital imaging sensor, rather than photographic film

GLOSSARY

EXPOSURE – the amount of light that reaches the camera's sensor. This term comes from film, indicating how long the film is exposed. A higher exposure results in a brighter photograph, and a lower exposure results in a darker photograph. Exposure is controlled with aperture, shutter speed, and ISO

FILE FORMAT - a standardised way that data is encoded for storage in a computer file. Common file formats include Image files (.TIFF), Adobe Acrobat files (.PDF), Word documents (.DOC) and multimedia files (.WAV)

FIXITY – the extent to which a digital file remains unchanged. Fixity can be confirmed using checksums

HANDLING PROCEDURES – a set of sector specific standards and guidelines for how to handle collection items minimising risk to both the item and the cataloguer

HIGH-DENSITY POLYETHYLENE – a low branched polyethylene, robust with a wax-like, lustreless and opaque appearance. A stable material that is widely used for labelling items in collections due to its durability. Commonly referred to by the brand-name 'Tyvek'

HIGHLIGHTS – the lightest parts of an image. Overexposure will 'blow out' highlights

IDENTIFIER – a unique number given to an item during registration

ISO – a measure of light sensitivity. A high ISO number will make the image brighter, but it will have an unpleasant grainy appearance. An ISO around 100 is recommended for best results

LICENCE AGREEMENT – a contract between the creator of an item and the person or organisation using the copyrighted item

LOSSLESS COMPRESSION – method of compressing files that maintains data quality. The file can also be decompressed to its original quality. Lossy compression on the other hand permanently removes data

LOSSY COMPRESSION – a method of compressing files that results in a poorer quality image as a file is changed and saved repeatedly over time

MIGRATION – moving or copying files to new formats, systems, or media

GLOSSARY

MORAL RIGHTS – are the rights individual creators have in relation to copyright works they have created. Importantly, moral rights cannot be transferred or sold, so even if copyright is transferred to a third party, moral rights remain with the creator. Moral rights ensure that 1) a creator is attributed for their work, 2) their work is not falsely attributed, and 3) their work is not treated in a derogatory way

NITRILE GLOVES (POWDER FREE) – disposable, chemical and puncture resistant gloves recommended for handling collection items for their protection and for the protection of the item handler

OPTICAL CHARACTER RECOGNITION (OCR) – this is a technology that some scanning software can use to recognise typescript characters in an image. This is useful for scanning documents in order to make the digital image searchable. The advantage of scanning with OCR is that the resulting document is searchable. Bear in mind that currently, OCR can only work with typescript text, not handwritten text

OPTICAL ZOOM – when the barrel of the camera's lens is moving, this is optical zoom. Once it reaches the limit of optical zoom, it will begin to use its digital zoom

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP – a method of cataloguing items that are closely related, in which the group of items is documented as the 'parent' record and the 'child' record or records, and each of the items is recorded separately

PIGMA PEN – a common brand of archival grade pen. Archival ink is specifically designed to be resistant to weathering and fading so that it is permanent and stable

POST EDITS – changes that are applied to digital images after they have been captured by a camera or scanner

PUBLIC DOMAIN (AUSTRALIA) – simply means material for which copyright has expired. The term has varying definitions abroad

RECORD – a unique entry within a collection catalogue documenting all relevant administrative and historical information about an item

RESOLUTION – refers to the detail a digital image holds; the more or finer the detail in the image the higher the resolution and the more grainy an image appears the lower the resolution

GLOSSARY

RISK ASSESSMENT – a methodology for assessing risk. Risk assessments may be undertaken to identify risks to a specific collection item, or to identify the risks associated with a broader process such as cataloguing or digitisation

SHUTTER SPEED – the length of time a shutter is open. A longer shutter speed results in a brighter image that will be more vulnerable to movement, while a shorter shutter speed will result in a darker image but will capture moving objects more clearly

SIGNIFICANCE – the information pertaining to why an item is important, including why the item is significant and which significance criteria apply

STORAGE MEDIUM – the physical item (e.g. hard drive, CD or computer), or web-based server on which digital information is stored

WHITE BALANCE – the adjustment of colours in a photograph to account for different lighting types and more accurately represent natural light

WORKFLOW – a sequence of processes put in place to complete work (cataloguing) with a methodical approach, thereby increasing efficiency

DESCRIPTIVE TERMS

DECORATIVE TECHNIQUE

COIL – to wind or gather rope, hair or the like into loops, or to be formed in such loops

DAPPLE – to mark with spots or patches of a different colour

INTERLACE – join together by crossing, as if woven; intertwine

GILDED – covered with, or as if with, gold

PERFORATED – pierced with a hole or holes

PIPING – a thin strip of covered cord used to edge a hem; strands of icing decorating a cake

PLAIT – strands or strips intertwined in a pattern

TEMPERED – heat treated

WIREWORK – functional or decorative work made of wire; items made of wire, especially netting

SHAPE AND FORM

ARM – resembling an arm in appearance, position or function, especially when branching out from a central support or larger mass; arm of the record player

BASE – bottom or supporting part

BORDER – band or margin around or along the edge of something

BOW – form or cause to form a curve or curves

BULBOUS – shaped like a bulb; swollen, bulging

CANTILEVER – part of a beam or a structure projecting outwards beyond its support

CARTOUCHE – carved or cast ornamental tablet or panel in the form of a scroll, sometimes having an inscription

CASING – protective case or cover

CAVITY – hollow or empty space; hole

CONCAVE – curving inward

CONCENTRIC CIRCLES – circles with a common centre

CONVEX – curving or bulging outwards

CUBOID/CUBIC – shaped like a cube; of three dimensions

DECAGONAL – polygon with ten sides

DISTENDED – expanded as if by pressure from within; swell, inflate, to stretch out or extend

DOME – hemispherical roof or vault

DESCRIPTIVE TERMS

DOVETAIL – wedge-shaped tenon

DRAPE – hung or covered with flexible material or fabric, usually in folds

ELLIPTICAL – shaped like an ellipse

Flange – radically projecting collar or rim on an item for locating or strengthening the item or for attaching it to another item

FOOT – lower part or base of an item

FRAGMENT – pieces broken off or detached

FRINGE – an edging of hanging threads, tassels or the like

GLOBULE/GLOBULAR – spherical or approximately spherical; shaped like a globe

GNARLED – knotty protuberance or swelling on a tree; rough, twisted and weather-beaten in appearance

GRILL – framework, especially of metal bars, arranged to form an ornamental pattern; used as a screen or partition

HEPTAGON – seven-sided object

HEXAGON – six-sided object

INFILL – filled cavity, gap, hole or the like

LOBE – round projection that forms part of a larger structure

LOZENGE – diamond-shaped decorative element in heraldry

LUNATE – shaped like a crescent

NONAGON – nine-sided object

OBLIQUE – at an angle; slanting or sloping, lines neither perpendicular nor parallel to one another or to another line, plane, etc.

OBLONG – elongated, usually from the round or square shape

OCTAGON – eight-sided object

OPENWORK – ornamental work, as of metal or embroidery, having a pattern of openings or holes

OVATE/OVOID – shaped like an egg, or the longitudinal section of an egg with the broader end at the base

PEAR-SHAPED – globular base and tapered towards the apex

PEDESTAL – base that supports a column, statue or similar

PENTAGON – five-sided object

PERIPHERY – outermost boundary of an area, or outside surface

PERPENDICULAR – lines or planes at right angles to one another

DESCRIPTIVE TERMS

POLYGON – closed plane figure consisting of three or more straight sides that connect three or more points, none of the sides intersecting

POROUS – able to absorb air, water or other fluids, or have them pass through pores

PRISM – transparent polygonal solid, often having triangular ends and rectangular sides, for dispersing light into a spectrum or for reflecting and deviating light

QUADRANT – quarter of the circumference of a circle

RHOMBUS – oblique-angled parallelogram, having four equal sides

SCROLL – roll of parchment; decorative carving or moulding shaped like a scroll

SEGMENT – one of several parts into which something is divided; portion

STREAMLINED – contour on a body that offers minimum resistance to a gas or liquid flowing around it

SUPINE – resting on back with face, palms, etc., upwards

TAPERED – becoming narrower towards one end

TAUT – tightly stretched; tense

TENON – the projecting end of a piece of wood to fit into a corresponding mortise in another piece

TETRAHEDRON – solid figure having four plain faces

TORSO – the trunk of the human body, without arms and legs

TRANSVERSE – crossing from side to side; crossways

TRIANGULAR – shaped like or relating to a triangle; having three corners and sides

TRIM – extra piece used to decorate or complete

TRUNCATED – shortened; having the apex or end removed

TUBULAR – having the form of a tube

TUCK – fold in a garment; a gather

TURNED – a piece such as wood shaped or cut by rotating on a lathe

WAVY – formed into curves or undulations

WEDGE-SHAPED – narrow V-shaped solid form

WHORL – radial arrangement of petals or similar; single turn in a spiral shell

DESCRIPTIVE TERMS

SURFACE APPEARANCE

CHECKED – pattern of small squares

FLECKED – small markings or streaks; speckle

FLORAL DESIGN – decorated with or consisting of flowers or patterns of flowers

FLUTING – design or decoration of flutes on a column or pilaster etc.; grooves or furrows

FRETWORK – decorative interlaced work, the design formed by perforated areas

FURROW – long deep groove

GRAINY – resembling granules; a photo with poor definition due to large grain size

HERRINGBONE – pattern used in textiles, brickwork and the like, consisting of two or more rows of short parallel strokes slanting in alternate directions to form a series of Vs or zigzags

INCISION – cut, gash or notch; lines of a design produced by cutting into a surface with a sharp tool

INCUSE – design stamped or hammered onto a coin

MONOCHROME – coloured in a range of tones of a single colour

MOTTLED – coloured with streaks or blotches of different shades

OPAQUE – not transparent or translucent

PAISLEY – pattern of curving, teardrop-like shapes, with intricate detailing

POLYCHROME – made or decorated with various colours

STRIATIONS – arrangement or pattern of parallel scratches or grooves on the surface

STIPPLED – surface drawn, engraved or painted with dots or flecks

TEXTURED – a surface not smooth or plain

VARIEGATION – displaying differently coloured spots, patches, streaks or the like

SYMBOLS AND INSIGNIA

ACANTHUS STYLED – carved ornament based on the leaves of the acanthus plant, especially as used on the capital of a Corinthian column

CHEVRONS – badge or insignia consisting of one or more v-shaped stripes to indicate a non-commissioned rank or length of service

DESCRIPTIVE TERMS

CORNUCOPIA – representation of a horn in painting, sculpture or the like, overflowing with fruit and vegetables; horn of plenty, a horn-shaped container

VIGNETTE – small illustration placed at the beginning or end of a book or chapter; carved ornamentation that has a design based upon tendrils and leaves, such as a vine motif

MATERIALS

ACID – any substance that dissociates in water to yield a sour corrosive solution containing hydrogen ions; having a pH of less than seven and turning litmus red

ADOBE – clay-like material from which sun-dried bricks are made

ALABASTER – fine-grained usually white, opaque or translucent variety of gypsum used for statues and vases etc; a variety of hard semi-translucent calcite, often banded like marble

ALLOY – metallic material, such as steel, brass or bronze, consisting of two or more metals or metallic elements with non-metallic elements

ALUMINIUM – light, malleable, ductile silvery-white metallic element that resists corrosion

AMBER – hard yellow or yellowish-brown translucent fossil resin derived from extinct coniferous trees

AMMONIA – colourless, pungent, highly soluble gas, mainly used in the manufacture of fertilisers, nitric acid and other nitrogenous compounds and as a refrigerant and solvent

ASBESTOS – any of the fibrous amphibole and serpentine minerals; it is widely used in fabric or board form as a heat-resistant structural material

BAKELITE – any one of a class of thermosetting resins; used as electric insulators and for making plastic ware

BALSA WOOD – very light wood of the bombacaceous tree

BAMBOO – any tall tree-like tropical or semi-tropical fast-growing grass of the genus *Bambusa*, with hollow wooded stems and ringed joints

BARKCLOTH – papery fabric made from the fibrous inner bark of the paper mulberry or a similar tree

BASALT – fine-grained, dark, basic igneous rock

BEECHWOOD – any temperate tree of the genus *Fagus* (family Fagaceae) especially *F. sylvatica* of Europe, with a smooth greyish bark

MATERIALS

BIRCH – hard, close-grained wood of betulaceous trees or shrubs

BLACKING – any preparation, especially one containing lampblack, for giving a black finish to shoes and metals, etc.

BLACKWOOD – a tall Australian *Acacia* tree; a highly valued dark timber

BOXWOOD – the hard, close-grained, yellow wood of the box tree, particularly *Buxus sempervirens*, used to make tool handles and small, turned or carved articles

BRAID – narrow ornamental tape of woven silk, wool or similar

BRASS – alloy of copper and zinc containing more than 50% copper

BRISTLE – any short stiff hair of an animal or plant, such as that on a pig's back

BRITANNIA METAL – alloy of low-melting point, consisting of tin with 5–10% antimony, 1–3% copper and sometimes small quantities of zinc, lead or bismuth; used for decorative purposes and for bearings

BROCADE – rich fabric woven with a raised design, often using gold or silver threads

BRONZE – hard water-resistant alloy consisting of copper and smaller proportions of tin and sometimes zinc and lead

CALICO –white or unbleached cotton fabric, with no printed design

CAMBRIC – fine, white linen or cotton fabric

CANE – the long, jointed pithy or hollow and flexible stem of bamboo, rattan or similar plant

CANVAS – heavy durable cloth made of cotton, hemp or jute, used for sails, tents etc.

CARBON – non-metallic element existing in the three allotropic forms – amorphous carbon, graphite and diamond; e.g. a rod or plate made of carbon, used in some types of battery

CAST IRON – iron containing so much carbon that it must be cast, not wrought, into shape

CEDAR – any old world coniferous tree of the genus *Cedrus*; made of the wood of a cedar tree

CELLOPHANE – thin transparent sheeting made from wood pulp and used as a moisture-proof wrapping

MATERIALS

CELLULOID – transparent sheet on which film is prepared, as in cinema; flammable thermoplastic material of cellulose nitrate and a plasticiser, usually camphor; used in sheets, rods and tubes for making a range of articles

CEMENT – fine, grey powder of calcined limestone and clay, used with water and sand to make mortar, or with water, sand and aggregate to make concrete

CERAMIC – brittle material made by firing clay and similar substances

CHALK – soft, fine-grained, white sedimentary rock, consisting of nearly pure calcium carbonate

CHAMBRAY – light fabric of cotton or gingham, with white weft and a coloured warp

CHAMOIS – soft suede leather, formerly made from the hide of this animal, and now obtained from the skins of sheep and goats

CHEMICAL – any substance used in or resulting from a reaction involving changes to atoms and molecules

CHIFFON – fine, transparent or almost transparent plain-weave fabric of silk, nylon, etc.

CHINA – ceramicware of a type originally from China; any porcelain or similar ware

CHINTZ – printed, patterned cotton fabric, with a glazed finish; painted or stained Indian calico

CHIPBOARD – thin, rigid sheet made of compressed wood particles bound with a synthetic resin; see also particleboard

CHROME – a hard, grey metallic element (chromium) that takes a high polish, occurring principally in chromite; used in steel alloys and electro-plating to increase hardness and corrosion-resistant chromium steel, another name for ‘chrome steel’

CLAY – very fine-grained material consisting of hydrated aluminium silicate, quartz and organic fragments, occurring as sedimentary rock, soil and other deposits

COAL – compact, black or dark brown carbonaceous rock

CONCRETE – building material made of cement, sand, aggregate and water, a mixture that hardens as it dries

COPPER – malleable, ductile, reddish metallic element

CORAL – hard red, pink or white calcareous substance secreted by various marine polyps for support and habitation

MATERIALS

CORDUROY – heavy cotton-pile, ribbed fabric

CORK – thick, light, porous outer bark of the cork oak, used widely as stoppers for bottles, casks and the like

CORRUGATED IRON – a thin sheet made of iron or steel, formed with alternating ridges and troughs

CRAYON – a small stick or pencil of charcoal, wax, clay or chalk mixed with pigment

CREPE – light fabric with a fine ridged or crinkled surface

CREPE DE CHINE – very thick crepe of silk or a similar light fabric

CRYSTAL – solid substance, such as quartz, with a regular shape in which plain faces intersect at definite angles

DAMASK – reversible fabric, usually silk or linen, with a pattern woven into it

DIAMOND – usually colourless, exceptionally hard allotropic form of carbon in cubic crystalline form; precious stone also used for industrial cutting and abrading

DOWN – soft, fine feathers with free barbs that cover the body of a bird and prevent loss of heat

EBONITE – see vulcanite

EBONY – hard, dark wood derived from the tree of the Ebenaceae family

ENAMEL – coloured glassy substance, translucent or opaque, fused to the surfaces of metal, glass etc.; used to ornament or protect

FELT – matted fabric of wool, hair etc, made by working the fibres together under pressure or by heat or chemical action

FIBRE – natural or synthetic filament; can be spun into yarn, such as cotton or nylon

FIBREBOARD – building board made by hot-pressing a mass of wood or other vegetable fibres; woody fibres felted or bonded by natural wood lignin resins, not by cement or adhesives

FIBREGLASS – material of matted fine-glass fibres, used as insulation in buildings, fireproof fabrics etc.

FILM – thin flexible strip of cellulose coated with a photographic emulsion, used to make negatives and transparencies

FOAM – light, cellular solid made by creating bubbles of gas in liquid material and solidifying it

MATERIALS

FOIL – metal in the form of a very thin sheet; gold foil

GAUZE – transparent cloth of loose, plain muslin or similar fabric

GESSO – white ground of plaster, used especially in the Middle Ages and Renaissance to prepare panels or canvas for painting or gilding; plaster of Paris or gypsum

GLASS – hard, brittle, usually transparent non-crystalline solid, consisting of metal silicates or similar compounds

GLAZE – vitreous or glossy coating

GLYCERINE – colourless or pale-yellow, odourless, sweet-tasting syrup; a by-product of soap manufacture, used as a solvent, antifreeze, plasticiser and sweetener

GOLD – dense inert bright yellow element that is the most malleable and ductile metal, occurring in rocks and alluvial deposits

GOLD LEAF – wafer-thin gold sheet with a thickness between about 0.076 and 0.127 micrometre, produced by rolling or hammering gold and used for gilding

GOLD PLATE – a thin coating of gold, usually produced by electro-plating

GRAPHITE – blackish, soft allotropic form of carbon in hexagonal crystalline form

GUM – any of various sticky substances exuded from certain plants, hardening on exposure to air and dissolving or forming a viscous mass in water

HARDBOARD – thin, stiff sheet made of compressed sawdust and wood chips, bound together with plastic adhesive or resin under heat and pressure

HEMP – fibres of hemp plant, used to make canvas, rope etc.

HESSIAN – coarse jute fabric similar to sacking, used for bags and upholstery

HIDE – skin of an animal, especially the tough, thick skin of a large mammal, either tanned or raw

HORN – permanent outgrowths on the heads of animals such as cattle and antelopes, consisting of a central bony core covered with layers of keratin

HORSEHAIR – hair taken chiefly from the tail or mane of a horse, used in upholstery and for fabrics etc.

HUON PINE – large, coniferous tree, *Dacrydium franklinii*, found in Tasmania and valued for its pale-yellow timber

IRON – malleable, ductile, silvery-white ferro-magnetic, metallic element occurring principally in haemalite and magnetite

MATERIALS

IVORY – hard, smooth, creamy-white variety of dentine comprising the major part of elephant tusks

JADE – semi-precious stone consisting of either jadeite or nephrite, varying in colour from white to green and used in making ornaments and jewellery

JAPAN – glossy, durable black lacquer used on wood, metal and similar materials

JARRAH –Australian eucalyptus tree, *Eucalyptus marginata*, that yields a valuable timber

JUTE – herbaceous plant such as *Corchorus capsularis* cultivated for its strong fibre, used in making sacks, rope etc.

KAPOK – silky fibre from the hairs covering the seeds of a tropical bombacaceous tree

LACE – delicate decorative fabric, often made from cotton or silk, woven in an open web of patterns and figures

LACQUER – hard glossy coating made by dissolving cellulose derivatives or natural resins in a volatile solvent

LAMÉ – fabric of silk, cotton or wool interwoven with threads of metal

LAMPAS – ornate damask-like cloth of cotton, or silk and cotton, used in upholstery

LEAD – graphite or a mixture containing graphite, clay etc., used for drawing; a heavy, toxic, bluish-white metallic element in alloys, accumulators, cable sheaths, paints, and used as a radiation shield

LEATHERETTE – trademark product that is an imitation leather, made from paper, cloth etc.

LIGNUM VITAE – heavy resinous wood used in machine bearings, casters etc.

LINEN – hard-wearing fabric woven from the spun fibres of flax

LINOLEUM – sheet material made of hessian, jute etc., coated under pressure and heat with a mixture of powdered cork, linseed oil, rosin and pigment, used as a floor covering

LUREX – trademark product of thin aluminium thread coated with plastic fabric containing such thread

MAGNETIC tape – long, narrow plastic strip coated with iron oxide, used to record sound or video signals or to store information in computers

MATERIALS

MAHOGANY – chiefly from the tree *Swietenia mahogoni* (family Meliaceae) from the West Indies and Central America, valued for its hard, fine-grained reddish-brown wood often used in furniture; also used more generically when timbers have these qualities

MAPLE – any tree or shrub of the northern temperate genus *Acer*; the hard, close-grained wood of these trees is often used for furniture and flooring

MARBLE – hard, crystalline, metamorphic rock resulting from the re-crystallisation of a limestone; takes a high polish and is used for building and sculpture

MASONITE – fibreboard trade name for tempered hardboard invented by William H. Mason and marketed by Masonite Ltd; tempered hardboards are impregnated with a polymer drying oil and are resistant to hard wear and weather; see also fibreboard

MERCURY – heavy, silvery-white, toxic liquid-metallic element occurring principally in cinnabar; used in thermometers, barometers and mercury-vapour lamps

METHYLATED SPIRITS – alcohol that has been denatured by the addition of methanol, pyridine and a violet dye

MICA – any of a group of lustrous rock-forming minerals, which due to their resistance to electricity and heat are used as dielectrics in heating elements

MICROFILM – strip of film on which books, newspapers, documents etc. can be recorded in miniaturised form

MOIRE – fabric, usually silk, having a watered effect

MOQUETTE – a thick velvety fabric used for carpets, upholstery and the like

MOROCCO – fine, soft leather made from goatskin and used, for example, for bookbinding and shoes

MORTAR – mixture of cement and/or lime with sand and water, used to bond bricks or stones and as a wall covering

MOTHER OF PEARL – hard iridescent substance, mostly calcium carbonate, that forms the inner layer of certain mollusc shells, such as the oyster; it is used for buttons and to inlay furniture and is also called ‘nacre’

MULGA – any of various Australian *Acacia* shrubs

MUSLIN – fine, plain-weave cotton fabric

MATERIALS

NEWSPRINT – inexpensive wood-pulp paper used for newspaper

NICKEL – malleable, ductile, silvery-white metallic element that is strong and corrosion-resistant

NICKEL PLATE – thin layer of nickel deposited on a surface, usually by electrolysis

NICKEL SILVER – any of various white alloys containing copper, zinc and nickel used in making tableware and the like, also called 'German silver'

NYLON – a class of synthetic polyamide materials; yarn or cloth made of nylon

OAK – any deciduous or evergreen tree or shrub of the genus *Quercus*, having acorns as fruit and lobed leaves; the wood of these trees, used especially as building and furniture-making timber

OCHRE – any of various natural earths containing ferric oxide, silica and alumina; used as yellow and red pigments

ONION SKIN – a glazed translucent paper

OPAL – amorphous form of hydrated silicon dioxide that is colourless, or of variable colour, and translucent; found in sedimentary and volcanic rocks and in deposits from hot springs in America and Australia

ORGANZA – thin fabric of silk, cotton, nylon or rayon

ORMOLU – gold-coloured alloy of copper tin or zinc used to decorate, for example, furniture and mouldings; gold prepared for use in gilding

PAMPAS GRASS – any of various larger grasses of the South American genus *Cortaderia* and related genera

PAPIER MÂCHÉ – a hard, strong substance suitable for painting on, made of paper pulp or layers of paper mixed with paste and 'size', and moulded when moist

PAPYRUS – a tall aquatic plant, *Cyperus papyrus* is part of the sedge family

PARCHMENT – skin of certain animals, such as sheep, treated to form a durable material once used for bookbinding and manuscripts

PARTICLE BOARD – panel made of particles, wafers or sawdust, rather than fibres, and combined with a resin binder it can be moulded to shape; see also fibreboard

PASTE – hard shiny glass used for making imitation gems; also known as 'strass'

MATERIALS

PEARL – hard, smooth, lustrous and typically rounded nugget on the inner surface of a clam or oyster shell and much valued as a gem; any artificial gem resembling this

PERSPEX – trademark of any of various clear acrylic resins, used chiefly as a substitute for glass

PETERSHAM – thick corded ribbon used to stiffen belts and skirt/trouser waists; heavy woollen fabric used, for example, for coats

PEWTER – any of various alloys containing tin (80–90%), lead (10–20%) and sometimes small amounts of metals such as copper and antimony

PIGMENT – substance occurring in plant or animal tissue; any substance used to impart colour

PINE – any evergreen resinous coniferous tree of the genus *Pinus*

PIPE CLAY – a fine, white pure clay used in the manufacture of tobacco pipes and pottery and for whitening leather and similar materials

PITCH – any of various heavy dark viscid substances obtained as a residue from the distillation of tars

PLANT FIBRE – fibres from often long-leafed plants, typically used to create fabrics, hats, rope, basketry and other materials

PLASTER – a mixture of lime, sand and water, sometimes stiffened with hair or other fibres, that is applied to a wall or ceiling as a soft paste that hardens when dry

PLASTER OF PARIS – white powder mixed with water that sets hard when it dries; used for sculptures and casts, as an additive for lime plasters

PLASTICINE – trademarked colour modelling compound, especially used by children

PLYWOOD – board comprising an odd number of thin layers of wood glued together under pressure, with the grain of one layer at right angles to the grain of the adjoining layer

POLYESTER – large class of synthetic materials that are polymers; used as plastics, textile fibres and adhesives

POLYSTYRENE – a synthetic thermoplastic material obtained by polymerising styrene; used as white rigid foam for insulating and packing and as glass-like material in light fittings and water tanks

POPLIN – strong fabric, usually of cotton, in plain weave with fine ribbing, used for garments

MATERIALS

PORCELAIN – vitreous, more or less translucent, ceramic material, the principal ingredients being kaolin and petuntse (hard paste) or other clays

PUMICE – light, porous, acid volcanic rock having the composition of rhyolite; used for scouring, and in powdered form as an abrasive and for polishing

PUTTY – stiff paste made of whiting and linseed oil that is used to fix glass panes into frames and to fill cracks and holes in woodwork

QUARTZ – hard, glossy mineral of silicon dioxide in hexagonal crystalline form, present in most rocks, especially granite and sandstone

QUARTZITE – white or grey sandstone composed of quartz

RAFFIA – also called raffia palm, the stalks of its large plume-like leaves yield a useful fibre for weaving etc.

RATTAN – climbing plants of the genus *Calamus* and related genera, having tough stems used for wickerwork and canes

RAYON – textile fibre made from wood pulp or other forms of cellulose, and the fabrics made from such a fibre

REED – any of the tall grasses of the genus *Phragmites*, especially *P. communis*, that grow in swamps and shallow water and have pointed hollow stalks; the stalks of these plants, especially as used for thatching

RESIN – any of a group of solid or semi-solid amorphous compounds obtained directly from certain plants or their exudations; also known as 'rosin'

RIBBON – a narrow strip of fine material, especially silk, used for trimming, tying, etc.

ROCK – any aggregate of minerals that makes up part of the Earth's crust; it may be consolidated, such as granite, or unconsolidated, such as sand, clay or mud

ROLLED GOLD – a metal such as brass coated with a thin layer of gold, usually more than nine carat purity; used in inexpensive jewellery; also known as filled gold

ROSEWOOD – hard, dark wood of various tropical and sub-tropical leguminous trees, especially of the genus *Dalbergia*; has a rose-like scent and is used in cabinet work

RUBBER – a cream to dark brown elastic material obtained by coagulating and drying the latex of certain plants, especially *Hevea brasiliensis*; also known as India rubber, gum elastic and caoutchouc

MATERIALS

RUBY – a deep-red, transparent, precious variety of corundum; occurs naturally in Burma and Sri Lanka, but is also synthesised; used as a gemstone, in lasers and for bearings and rollers in watch-making

RUSH – any annual or perennial plant (family Jancaceae) of the genus *Juncus* growing in wet places and typically having grass-like cylindrical leaves and small green or brown flowers; used to make baskets

SALT-GLAZE – glaze giving a slightly rough, pitted surface applied to stoneware by throwing salt onto the kiln fire when the temperature is at its highest

SANDALWOOD – evergreen trees of the genus *Sartalum* (family Santalaceae), especially *S. album* (white sandalwood) of South Asia and Australia, having a hard, light-coloured heartwood; used for carving, burned as incense and for its aromatic oil used in perfume

SANDSTONE – any of a group of common sedimentary rocks consisting of sand grains consolidated with materials such as quartz, haematite and clay minerals, used widely in building

SAPPHIRE – any precious corundum gemstone that is not red, especially the highly valued transparent blue variety

SATIN – a fabric closely woven to show much of the warp, giving a smooth, glossy appearance

SATINWOOD – the tree *Chloroxylon swieteria* (family Flindersiaceae), occurring in Asia; hardwood with a satiny texture used in cabinetwork, parquetry and veneering

SENNIT – flat, braided cordage used on ships; plaited straw, grass, palm leaves etc., used for making hats

SEQUIN – small disk of shiny, coloured metal foil or plastic used to decorate garments and other textiles

SERGE – twill-weave woollen or worsted fabric used for clothing

SHEEPSKIN – the skin of a sheep, especially when used for clothing etc., or with the fleece removed and used for parchment

SHEFFIELD PLATE – silverware made at Sheffield, England; wares made of copper rolled between and fused with films of silver; a cheap substitute for solid silver

SHELL – the protective calcareous or membranous outer layer of an egg, especially a bird's egg; hard outer covering of many molluscs, secreted by the mantle; any hard outer layer, such as the exoskeleton of many anthropoids; the hard outer layer of some fruits, especially of nuts

MATERIALS

SHELLAC – yellowish resin secreted by the lac insect; a commercial preparation of this is used in varnishes, polishes and leather dressings

SILK – very fine, soft, lustrous and strong fibre produced by a silk worm to make its cocoon; a thread or fabric made from this fibre

SILVER – very ductile, malleable, brilliant greyish-white element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal, used in jewellery, tableware, coinage, electrical contacts and in electro-plating

SILVER PLATE – thin layer of silver deposited on a base metal

SIZE – glutinous or viscous wash used in many papers and which imparts water-resistant qualities to the paper

SLATE – smooth, fine-grained metamorphic rock that can be split into thin layers and is used as a roofing and paving material

SLIP – clay mixed with water to a creamy consistency and used for decorating or patching ceramics

SOAPSTONE – massive compact variety of talc, used for making, for example, tabletops, hearths and ornaments

SOLDER – alloy for joining two metal surfaces by melting the alloy to form a thin layer between the surfaces

STAIN – solution used to penetrate the surface of a material, especially wood, and impart a rich colour without covering the surface or grain

STAINLESS STEEL – type of steel resistant to corrosion due to the presence of large amounts of chromium

STEEL – any of various alloys based on iron containing carbon (usually 1–17%) and often small quantities of other elements

STRAW – stalks of threshed grain, especially wheat, rye, oats and barley, used plaited in hats, baskets etc., or as fodder; single, dry or ripened stalk, especially of a grass

STRING – thin length of cord, twine, fibre or similar material used for tying, hanging and binding

SUEDE – leather finished with a fine, velvet-like nap, usually on the flesh side of the skin or hide; produced by abrasive action

TAFFETA – thin, crisp, lustrous plain-weave fabric of silk, rayon etc., especially used for women's clothing

MATERIALS

TAPA – the inner bark of the paper mulberry tree; a paper-like cloth made from this in the Pacific Islands; see also barkcloth

TAPESTRY – heavy ornamental fabric, often representing a picture, used for wall hangings, furnishings and the like

TEAK – large verbenaceous tree, *Tectona grandis*, of India and South-East Asia; the hard, resinous, yellow-brown wood of this tree, often used for furniture making

TERRACOTTA – a hard, unglazed brownish-red earthenware; the clay from which it is made

TIN – malleable, silvery-white metallic element used extensively in alloys, especially bronze pewter

TOPAZ – hard, glassy material consisting of a silicate of aluminium and fluorine in crystalline form; yellow, yellowish-brown or colourless and a valuable gemstone

TORTOISESHELL – horny translucent yellow and brown mottled substance obtained from the outer-layer of the shell of the Hawksbill Turtle; used for making ornaments, jewellery etc.

TOWELLING – absorbent fabric, especially with a nap, used for making towels and bathrobes

TULLE – fine net fabric of silk, rayon or similar used for evening dresses, ballet dresses and as a trimming for hats

TUNGSTEN – hard, malleable, ductile greyish-white element occurring principally in wolf ramite and scheelite; used in lamp filaments, electrical contact points, X-ray targets and (alloyed with steel) in high-speed cutting tools

TURQUOISE – greenish-blue, fine-grained secondary mineral consisting of hydrated copper aluminium phosphate; used as a gemstone

TUSK – pointed, elongated and usually paired tooth in the elephant, walrus and some other mammals that is specialised for fighting; see also ivory

TWEED – thick, woollen, often-knobbly cloth produced originally in Scotland

TWILL – weave in which the weft yarns are worked around two or more warp yarns to produce an effect of parallel diagonal lines or ribs

TWINE – string made by twisting together fibres of hemp, cotton etc.

MATERIALS

VARNISH – preparation consisting of a solvent, drying oil and usually resin, rubber or bitumen that polymerises to a hard, glossy, usually transparent surface when it dries; a similar preparation consisting of shellac or cellulose ester dissolved in a volatile solvent, such as alcohol, which hardens to a film on evaporation of the solvent; also known as 'oil varnish'

VEGETABLE IVORY – hard whitish material obtained from the endosperm of the ivory nut

VELCRO – trademark fastening comprising two strips of nylon fabric, one having tiny hooked threads and the other a coarse surface, that form a strong bond when pressed together

VELLUM – a fine parchment prepared from the skin of a calf, kid or lamb

VELOUR – any of various fabrics with a velvet-like finish, used for upholstery, coats, hats and the like

VELVET – fabric of silk, cotton, nylon etc, with a thick, close, soft, usually lustrous pile

VENEER – thin layer of wood, plastic or similar, with a decorative or fine finish that is bonded to the surface of a less-expensive material, often wood

VINYL – consisting of or containing the univalent group of atoms CH2CH–; a vinyl polymer; vinyl chloride; consisting or made of a vinyl resin

VOILE – light, semi-transparent fabric of silk, rayon, cotton etc., used for garments

VULCANITE – hard, usually black rubber produced by vulcanising natural rubber with a large amount of sulphur; resistant to chemical attack and used in chemical containers and electrical insulators

WALLPAPER – paper usually printed or embossed with designs for pasting onto walls and ceilings

WALNUT – any juglandaceous deciduous tree of the genus *Juglans*, occurring in America, south-eastern Europe and Asia, especially *J. regia*; the nut of these trees, having a wrinkled two-lobed seed and a hard, wrinkled shell; the light yellowish-brown wood of these trees, often used in making furniture and for panelling

WAX – any of various viscous or solid materials of natural origin; characteristically lustrous, insoluble in water and sensitive to heat, and consisting largely of esters of fatty acids

MATERIALS

WHALE BONE – horny, elastic material forming a series of thin plates hanging from the upper jaw on either side of the palate of the toothless (baleen) whales and used to strain plankton from water; a thin strip of this substance once used to stiffen corsets and bodices; also known as 'baleen'

WHITE METAL – see Britannia metal

WOOL – outer coat of sheep, yaks etc., consisting of short curly hairs; yarn spun from the coat of sheep etc. and used in weaving, spinning, knitting, carpets etc.

WORSTED – a closely twisted thread made from combed, long staple wool; a fabric made from this, with a hard, smooth close-textured surface and no nap

WROUGHT IRON – pure form of iron having a low carbon content and a fibrous micro-structure; made by various processes and often used for decorative work

ZINC – brittle, bluish-white metallic element that becomes coated with a corrosion-resistant layer in moist air and occurs chiefly in sphalerite and smithsonite; used in die-casting, galvanising metals and in battery electrodes

PRODUCTION METHODS

ALLOY – to add one metal or element to another to obtain a substance with a desired property

AMBROTYPE – thin collodion negative on glass with a black backing of paper, cloth or paint to make it look positive; usually in a velvet-lined presentation case

APPLIQUÉ – decorate or trim one material by sewing or fixing onto another

BAKE – cook or harden by dry heat, as in an oven

BASKETRY – containers made of a mesh of plant fibers using a technique similar to weaving

BATIK – fabric-printing method in which wax is used to stop parts of the fabric being dyed

BEAD – small, usually spherical beads of glass, wood or plastic sewn to fabric

BEAT – to shape or make thin by hammering

BEVEL – to cut an oblique face on a piece of timber, or the like

BLACKING – a preparation for producing a black coating, as in shoes

PRODUCTION METHODS

BLIND-TOOL – decorative technique used in leatherwork, especially in bookbinding; the design or lettering stamped, embossed or otherwise impressed on the surface of the leather and left blind, i.e. without the addition of gold leaf or colouring

BLOW – to shape glass and ornaments by forcing air or gas through the material when still molten

BOUND – in bonds; with, or as if with, a rope; secured within a cover or binding, i.e. a book

BRAID – to decorate with an ornamental trim or border

BURNISH – make shiny or smooth by friction; polish

CARVE – to cut or chip to form a shape; decorate by cutting or chipping

CAST – to give shape to molten metal, glass or the like; given shape by pouring into a mould

CHALK – to draw or make something with chalk; mark, rub, or whiten with, or as if with, chalk

CHASE – ornament metal by engraving or embossing; to form or finish a screw thread with a chaser

CHROME-PLATE – to plate with chromium, usually by electro-plating

CLOISONNÉ – design made by an outline of flattened wire filled in with coloured enamel; also made by Cloisonné

DAGUERREOTYPE –photograph taken using silver-plated (rarely solid silver) or copper-sheet plate, usually found in a velvet-lined leather case; introduced in 1839 and popular for around twenty years

DOVETAIL – two pieces of wood joined at right angles by means of wedge-shaped tenons and mortices, carved out of each piece

DRAW – depict or sketch in lines, with a pencil or pen

DRAWN THREADWORK – some threads drawn out from a panel of linen, the rest grouped and whipped together to form geometrical and other patterns

DYE – to colour or stain something, such as fabric or hair, with the application of a dye

EBONISE – to stain or otherwise finish in imitation of ebony

ELECTRO-PLATE – to plate an item by electrolysis

PRODUCTION METHODS

EMBOSS – to mould or carve a decoration or design on a surface, so that it is raised above the surface in low relief

EMBROIDER – to do decorative needlework upon cloth or similar

ENAMEL – to inlay, coat or otherwise decorate with enamel

ENGRAVE – to inscribe a design or writing onto a block, plate, or other surface by carving, etching, or other process

ETCH – to wear away the surface of metal, glass or similar with an acid; to cut or corrode a design on a metal or other printing plate by acid, on parts not covered by wax or acid-resistant coating

FABRICATE – to make, build or construct

FACET – to cut faces, such as in a gemstone

FILE – to shape or smooth a surface with a file

FILIGREE – openwork decorations of slender threads and usually tiny balls of gold or silver

FIRE – to bake a ceramic in a kiln to harden the clay and fix the glaze

FLAKE – to peel or cause to peel off in flakes; to cover or become covered with flakes

FORGE – to shape metal by heating and hammering

FRAME – to enclose a picture, window, door, etc.

FROST – to cover with icing, as in a cake; a surface roughened, as if to cover with frost and preventing transparency

GALVANISE – to cover iron or steel with a protective zinc coating by dipping into molten zinc or by electro-deposition

GILD – to cover with, or as if with, gold

GLAZE – to fit or cover with glass; to cover with a vitreous solution to make impervious to liquid and smooth to touch; to cover (a painting) with a layer of semitransparent colour to modify tones; to make glossy or shiny; a smooth lustrous finish or a fabric produced by various chemicals

GOLD-PLATE – to coat other metal with gold, usually by electro-plating

GOLD-TOOL – a decorative technique used in leatherwork, especially bookbinding; the design or lettering is stamped, embossed or otherwise impressed on the surface and gold leaf applied with heated tools

PRODUCTION METHODS

GOUACHE – also known as 'body colour'; a painting technique using opaque watercolour in which the pigments are bound with glue and the lighter tones contain white

GROUND – a surface finished, thickness reduced or edge sharpened by grinding, such as with a stone axe

HANDMADE – made by hand, not machine, usually with great care and craftsmanship

HEWN – something struck, especially wood, with cutting blows, as with an axe; to carve from a substance or sever from a larger portion

HONE – to sharpen or polish with or as if with a hone (stone)

INLAY – to decorate an item, especially furniture, or a surface, by inserting pieces of wood, ivory or another material into prepared slots in the surface

INTAGLIO – incised relief carving, the opposite of cameo, especially on gems, hard stones or glass; also an old printing method

JAPAN – lacquered with Japan or any similar varnish

KNIT – to make a garment or textile by looping and entwining wool by hand, using long, eyeless needles

KNOT – to tie or fasten a knot

LACQUER – decorative items coated with lacquer, often inlaid

LAMINATE – to make material in sheet form by bonding together two or more thin sheets; to cover or overlay with laminae

LASH – to bind or secure with rope, string or similar

LUTE – the process used for joining separate pieces of clay together with liquid slip, such as when applying clay decoration to a vessel

MACHINE – to shape, cut or remove excess material using a machine tool

MAGNETISE – to make a substance or item magnetic

MARBLE – colouring sheets of paper or edges of books through their contact with patterns of colour floating on water

MASS PRODUCE – identical products made by machine in very large numbers

METALLIC – of, concerned with or consisting of metal

MINT – to make coins by stamping metal

PRODUCTION METHODS

MOULD – to shape or form, as with a mould

NATURAL PROCESS – produced by nature

NEGATIVE – developed photographic image in which the lights and shades are reversed (i.e. in negative), usually then transferred to positive through printing

OIL – to lubricate, smear or polish with oil or an oily substance

OPAQUE – to reduce transparency so light is not transmitted

PHOTOGRAPH – recording of an image on a sensitised surface by the chemical action of light or radiation; see also print

PLAIT – intertwine strands or strips in a braid

PLATE – coat with a layer of metal

POLISH – to make or become smooth or shiny by rubbing, especially with wax or an abrasive

PRESS – to make items from soft material by pressing with a mould; to squeeze or compress to alter in shape

PRINT – to reproduce text or pictures, often in large numbers, by applying inks to paper or other materials; to mark or indent a surface by pressing something onto it; to produce a photographic print from a negative, using light and chemicals

PULP – to reduce a material to pulp

PUNCH – to pierce, cut, stamp, shape or drive with a punch

QUILT – to stitch together two pieces of fabric with a padding or lining between them

RECORD – the act or process of recording, especially a sound recording but also documenting through transcription

SCULPT – to carve, cast, or fashion a material in three dimensions, e.g. the art of making figures or designs in relief

SEW – to join or decorate pieces of fabric or other material by means of needle and thread

SILVER – to coat with silver or a silvery substance, as in silvering a spoon

SILVER-PLATE – to coat a metal or item with silver through electro-plating

SKIN – to strip off the skin

PRODUCTION METHODS

SMOKE – to darken glass or similar material by exposure to smoke

SOLDER – to join or mend with solder; joining metal surfaces by melting an alloy so that it forms a thin layer between the surfaces

SPIN – to form or manufacture by spinning, e.g. spun glass, spun gold

STAIN – a solution of liquid used to penetrate a material's surface, especially wood, to colour the surface without fully covering its surface texture or grain

STAMP – to impress or mark a device or sign on something

STENCIL – to mark a surface with a stencil

STIPPLE ENGRAVING – to decorate glass with incised dots of varying density, giving an appearance of light and shade

STUD – to ornament or make with studs

TAN – to change to brown through exposure to ultraviolet rays; to convert a skin or hide into leather by treating it with a tanning agent

TAXIDERMY – the art of preparing, stuffing and mounting animal skins so that they have a life-like appearance

THROW – to shape material on a potter's wheel

TIE-DYE – to dye textiles with patterns produced by tying sections of cloth together so they don't absorb the dye

TIN – to plate, coat or treat with tin

TINT – to colour or tinge with colour

TINTYPE – photograph, usually portrait, produced in the second half of the 19th century by the collodion process directly on japanned iron; it contains no tin, but is grey or tinny in appearance

TOOL – to decorate a book cover with a bookbinder's tool

TRANSPARENCY – lantern slide or other positive image designed to be viewed by looking through it; the colour film for making modern transparencies was introduced in 1935

TURN – to shape or cut a thread in an item by rotating it on a lathe against a cutting tool

TYPE – to write copy using a keyboard

UPHOLSTER – to fit with padding, springs, webbing and covering, e.g. chair, sofa, car seat

PRODUCTION METHODS

VARNISH – to cover with varnish (resinous matter dissolved in volatile liquid) or varnish-like substance

VENEER – to face a material with a thin layer of wood or another material; to conceal something under a pleasing surface

VIDEOTAPE/RECORD – recording designed for television playback on which sound and images have been registered electronically

WATERED – to produce a wavy, lustrous finish on fabric

WAX – to coat or polish with wax

WELD – to join pieces of metal or plastic by softening with heat and hammering, or by fusion

WEAVE – to construct something by interlacing elements, especially fabric produced by yarn woven on a loom

WOOD-GRAIN – to apply a pattern to a wood surface that looks like wood grain

CONDITION REPORTING TERMINOLOGY

ABRASION – surface area that has been worn away by friction or contact

ACCRETION – a solid piece of matter cause by the gradual expansion of a material, often caused by chemical reactions

BIT ROT – slow deterioration in the performance and integrity of data stored on storage media. Also known as data degradation and bit decay

BLANCHING – localised, slightly opaque, white haze on or in a paint or a varnish layer, often caused by chemical damage

BLEEDING – the spreading of a coloured substance into a surrounding area, usually caused by liquid damage

BLISTERING – damage to a material which creates a void between a surface layer and an underlying layer or substrate

BLOOMING – when used in relation to paint or varnish; a slightly yellow, white or blue/white haze within the material, often caused by moisture damage. When used in relation to metals; a loose, white corrosion product caused by exposure of certain metal types to moisture. When used in relation to mould; a descriptive term for the appearance of mould spores

BUCKLING – cracks in a paint layer that are caused by compression and result in raised ridges

BRITTLE – loss of flexibility causing the item to be easily cracked or broken e.g. paper, leather, parchment

CHALKING – degradation of a paint layer which causes the formation of a powdery deposit, usually caused by exposure of the paint to outdoor elements or an insufficient binding medium

CRAZING – fine surface cracks through a glaze, varnish or paint layer

CREASE – lines produced by folding and handling sheets e.g. paper

DENT – surface indentations caused by impact

DISCOLOURATION – colour change to all or a part of an item e.g. stains

DIRT – undesirable material (e.g. dust, frass or soot) resting on or ingrained in the surface of another material

DISTORTION – change from original shape and form e.g., twisting, cockling, warping

FADING - loss of intensity of colour

CONDITION REPORTING TERMINOLOGY

FLAKING – thin pieces or layers of the surface are detached or are at risk of detachment

FOXING – brown spotting on paper caused by fungus, impurities, dampness, acids

FRAYING – loose and/or separating threads

FRIABLE – loose and powdery surface e.g. ochre

HAIRLINE FRACTURES – fine cracks in an item

INSECT DAMAGE/ACTIVITY – signs of insect activity include small holes, grazing (loss in the surface), and deposits of fine, sawdust-like material

LOSS – areas or parts that are missing from the item

MOULD DAMAGE/ACTIVITY – a sometimes powdery growth on a surface that can cause staining, discolouration and compromise structural integrity

PUNCTURE – a small hole through a material

TARNISH – discolouration of a metal surface due to the formation of a thin film of oxide, sulphide or some other corrosion product. Used most often to describe the black corrosion product that forms on silver

TEAR – separation or split in a material often in areas of weakness following physical damage e.g. paper

TIDEMARK – discolouration that forms at the edges of liquid stains

YELLOWING – yellow discolouration that affects the whole surface of an item, e.g. plastic, varnish, newspaper

WARPING – a change in the original alignment of a material, usually caused by temperature or humidity damage

WRINKLE – ridges or furrows in a flexible material, such as paint or varnish, which usually occurs during the drying process

WATER DAMAGE – discolouration and staining caused by liquid spills

RESOURCES

CATALOGUING

GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/index.html

MUSEUM OF APPLIED ARTS & SCIENCE
https://www.maas.museum/research/object-name-thesaurus/

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES OF NSW, HOW TO: COLLECTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS
https://mgnsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/how-to_collection-management-systems.pdf

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

AMAGA VICTORIA, ASSESSING RISK IN YOUR COLLECTION
https://amagavic.org.au/assets/resources/10055/Assessing_Risk_in_Your_Collection.pdf

This resource relates to using the Victorian Collections CMS to record the details of risk assessments, however the assessment process and the risk types included are broadly applicable.

AMAGA VICTORIA, SIGNIFICANCE IN A NUTSHELL
https://amagavic.org.au/assets/resources/undefined/significance-in-a-nutshell.pdf

This resource relates to using the Victorian Collections CMS to record the details of significance, however the significance criteria and assessment process are broadly applicable.

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE FOR THE CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL MATERIAL, VISUAL GLOSSARY
https://aiccm.org.au/conservation/visual-glossary/

COLLECTIONS COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA, SIGNIFICANCE 2.0: A GUIDE TO ASSESSING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COLLECTIONS
https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/significance-2.0.pdf?acsf_files_redirect

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR AUSTRALIAN MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES
https://amagavic.org.au/resources/view/national-standards-for-australian-museums-and-galleries

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, RECOLLECTIONS: CARING FOR COLLECTIONS ACROSS AUSTRALIA
http://culturalmaterials.net/wp/

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM, STORAGE MATERIALS
https://manual.museum.wa.gov.au/storage-materials

DIGITISATION

AUSTRALIAN COPYRIGHT COUNCIL, GALLERIES & MUSEUMS: INTRODUCTION TO COPYRIGHT
https://www.copyright.org.au/browse/book/ACC-Galleries-and-Museums:-Introduction-to-Copyright-INFO068

RESOURCES

AUSTRALIAN COPYRIGHT COUNCIL, DURATION OF COPYRIGHT
https://www.copyright.org.au/browse/book/ACC-Duration-of-Copyright-INFO023

SHARE MUSEUMS EAST UK, A GUIDE TO DIGITISATION
http://sharemuseumseast.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/digitisation-FINAL-FULL.pdf

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE VICTORIA, JUST DIGITISE IT
https://prov.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/Just-Digitise-It%20booklet.pdf

STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND, SCANNING AND CAPTURING IMAGE-BASED MATERIAL
https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/Scanning%20and%20capturing%20image-based%20material.pdf

FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES, COLLECTING AND PRESERVING DIGITAL MATERIALS
https://www.history.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Collecting-and-Preserving-Digital-Materials.pdf

DIGITAL PRESERVATION COALITION, DIGITAL PRESERVATION HANDBOOK
https://www.dpconline.org/handbook/digital-preservation/preservation-issues

GLAM PEAK, DIGITAL ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS TOOLKIT
http://www.digitalcollections.org.au/toolkit

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES OF NSW, CRYSTAL CLEAR: STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR DIGITISING REGIONAL COLLECTIONS
https://mgnsw.org.au/sector/resources/online-resources/digital/crystal-clear-standards-and-guidance-for-digitising-regional-collections/

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA, BORN-DIGITAL FILE FORMAT STANDARDS
https://www.naa.gov.au/information-management/storing-and-preserving-information/preserving-information/born-digital-file-format-standards

RESEARCH

AUSTRALIAN DRESS REGISTER
https://australiandressregister.org/

MUSEUM OF APPLIED ARTS AND SCIENCE RESEARCH LIBRARY
http://www.maas.museum/research/research-library/

TROVE
https://www.trove.nla.gov.au

VICTORIAN COLLECTIONS
http://www.victoriancollections.net.au

SUPPLIERS

ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

ARCHIVAL SURVIVAL
http://www.archivalsurvival.com.au

CONSERVATION SUPPLIES AUSTRALIA
http://www.conservationsuppliesaus.com.au

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

AXIELL
https://www.axiell.com/

INFORMATION SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY (MOSAiC)
http://www.istechnology.com.au/

LUCIDEA (INMAGIC DB/TEXTWORKS)
https://lucidea.com/

PASTPERFECT
https://museumsoftware.com/

VERNON (EHIVE/VERNON CMS)
https://vernonsystems.com/

VICTORIAN COLLECTIONS
https://victoriancollections.net.au/