

SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force for the Development of Standardized Holdings Counts and Measures for Archival Repositories and Special Collections Libraries

Categories/Types of Collection Material: Definitions

Archives and Manuscripts (managed as collections)

Definition: Materials created, assembled, or received by a person, family, or organization (including the holding institution itself), published or unpublished, in any format or formats, described and managed at the collection level as opposed to at the item level.

Books and Other Printed Material

Definition: Materials produced for distribution, reproduced mechanically, and intended to be read.

Scope: Materials included in this category are frequently printed on paper but may be printed on other substances, such as vellum or cloth. Most materials in this category are textual, but the category also includes works that present non-textual content in book form.

Examples: Monographs, serials, music, pamphlets, broadsides, ephemera, graphic novels, artists' books, color-plate books, atlases, and materials embossed for the use of the visually impaired.

Cartographic Material

Definition: Two- and three-dimensional representations of the whole or part of the Earth or another celestial body.

Scope: Cartographic materials include maps (graphic or photogrammetric representations on a flat medium, such as paper) and globes (representations in the form of a [ball or sphere]).

Digital Material

Definition: Items created, managed, or stored in binary format requiring a computer or other electronic device to render it intelligible by a person.

Scope: Digital material can be counted in bytes. This category includes born-digital materials, digital derivatives, and digital surrogates.

Examples: Born-digital material may include documents, images, sound and video, data sets, web sites, and email created in electronic form and saved as digital data, having had no initial or interstitial state as an analog or physical product. Digital derivatives include reformatted, enhanced, or access copies of physical or digital material. Digital surrogates include digitized documents and/or transcripts of such documents created via OCR, whether the digital forms were produced by the record creator or for access by the holding institution.

Graphic/Visual Material

Definition: Materials that communicate primarily visually, rather than textually.

Scope: Includes originals or reproductions. Includes opaque and transparent material. Separate categories exist for counting moving images and objects.

Examples: Architectural materials, charts, drawings, ephemera, paintings, postcards, posters, prints, photographs/still images (positives or negatives), slides, transparencies, and filmstrips.

Manuscripts (managed as items)

Definition: Unpublished textual material [handwritten, typed, or printed] described and managed as items [at the item level] as opposed to as collections [at the collection level]. Manuscripts include letters, diaries, ledgers, wills, minutes, speeches, theses, dissertations, creative works (both drafts and marked or corrected proofs), and legal and financial documents, and may take the form of codices, scrolls, or single or multiple sheets.

Microforms

Definition: Any medium, transparent or opaque, that holds highly reduced photographic reproductions (microreproductions).

Scope: Microforms include microfilm, microfiche, ultrafiche, aperture cards, and microcards.

Moving Image Material

Definition: Any sequence of visual images recorded or registered, by whatever means and on whatever medium, that create the illusion of movement when projected, broadcast, or played back, whether or not accompanied by sound.

Scope: It encompasses both live action and animation meant to be viewed as two or three dimensional works and includes all analog and digital formats.

Examples: Includes moving images of all types, e.g., features, shorts, news footage, trailers, outtakes, screen tests, experimental or independent productions, study films or video, home movies, unedited materials, television broadcasts, commercials, spot announcements, ephemeral film (films produced for educational, industrial, training, or promotional purposes), cartographic images intended to be perceived as moving in two dimensions (such as satellite images of the Earth or other celestial bodies in motion), recorded performances of concerts, ballets, plays, etc., and cartridge/disk ("video") and interactive online games that are predominantly comprised of moving images.

Objects and Artifacts

Definition: Material things that can be seen and touched.

Scope: Natural objects, artifacts (objects intentionally made or produced for a certain purpose), and three-dimensional works of art.

Sound Recordings

Definition: Materials onto which sound has been recorded via analog or digital methods.

Scope: Sound recordings encompass a wide range of formats, including phonograph records, magnetic tape, compact discs, and digital audio files. These contain spoken words, sound, and/or performed music.

Examples: Cylinders, 78 rpm discs, wire recordings, reel-to-reel tape recordings, cassette tapes, vinyl records, compact discs, mini discs, 8-tracks, digital audio tapes, etc.