

# Maps and Cartographic Materials Cataloging

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## What are Maps Good For?

1. Maps show slices of history in all fields and topics imaginable. One can gain knowledge of the culture, politics, history, and other data by examining maps (maps are not just for finding your way). Maps also can show how others have viewed the world around them.
2. Maps contain a wealth of data that would be hard to show in other ways.
3. Maps provide aesthetic enjoyment and visual representations of data.
4. Maps provide random access to specific types of data.

## Why Catalog Maps?

1. Increase access and use of maps.
2. Determine what locations and topics you have in your collection
3. Determine what locations and topics you need to add to your collection
4. Assists in supporting users through development of specific areas and topics.
5. Maps are unique and valuable in any collection.
6. Maps are just as important as any other format and should be treated as valid collections.

## What is Different About the Map Format?

1. Maps are large and need a large area to use
2. Maps convey massive quantities of data (though this is not apparent to some users)
3. Maps show this data visually, with captions and text where needed
4. Maps can demonstrate themes or issues quickly, often without much training
5. Maps can be folded, rolled, or stored flat (each with advantage/disadvantage)
6. Portions of a map may be reproduced for use on demand
7. Maps of different regions can be compared easily side-by-side
8. Maps of the same region can be compared easily side-by-side
9. No language skills are needed to use a map at the basic level.

## Key Elements of a Map (Cataloger's Concerns)

1. Coverage of the map
  - Subject or theme
  - Geographic location(s)
  - Spatial coordinates
  - Special features
2. Dates on Map
  - Date of situation (representation of a point in time)
  - Data gathering dates
  - Creation (Cartography) date
  - Date of compilation of data
  - Revision and inspection (of data) dates
3. Access points:
  - Title(s)
  - Author(s) or Authoring agents
  - Subject(s) covered or Theme (type) of the map
  - Geographical features.

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4. Scale of the map. How much detail is shown, and how can it be measured and expressed during use.
5. Physical description of the map. How big is it (to determine how much space is needed to use it, or how much space it will take for displaying or presenting it).

### Problems For Catalogers

1. Dating a map when you have no date to go on. Determine what countries and boundaries would be on the map at different time periods to determine the decade or probable date of the item in hand.
2. Storage and retrieval systems.
  - Filing order (Call numbers, accession numbers)
  - Storage units (map drawers, file cabinets, etc.)
3. Lack of publishing details or obscure data on the map. Some maps require research to adequately catalog. Finding dates, authors, involved parties, accuracy of spatial data, accuracy of drawn data (cartography).
4. Finding help from other catalogers, from publishers and cartographers (see next section).

### Finding Help

Starting page:

#### **Map Cataloger's Tool Box**

[http://library.buffalo.edu/maps/mapresources/map\\_cat\\_tools.php](http://library.buffalo.edu/maps/mapresources/map_cat_tools.php)

Page devoted to map cataloging. Links to LC, OCLC, various map cataloging resources, MARC field guides, and other materials. Also has links to general cataloging resources, samples of maps by type, and brief a bibliography of relevant publications. The following pages are integrated into this:

#### **Map Format Field Guide**

<http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~dbertuca/maps/cat/fields.html>

Field by field help on inputting fields for maps.

#### **Sample Map Format Record**

[http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~dbertuca/maps/cat/sample\\_record.html](http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~dbertuca/maps/cat/sample_record.html)

Sample screen showing fields with a record in place. Links back to the Format page or Tool Box pages above.

#### **Maps, Geography, Cartography, and Gazetteers**

<http://library.buffalo.edu/libraries/asl/guides/geography.html>

More resources and help finding geographical names for features and places.

These pages link to map cataloging pages from MAGERT, WAML, and other leaders in the map librarianship world. Another page for examples of maps, terminology, and links to organizations and collections is the UB Map Collection page: <http://library.buffalo.edu/maps/>

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URL this page: <http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~dbertuca/maps/cat/map-cataloging-outline2010.pdf>