

Comparing LCSH to AAT

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Comparing (LCSH)
Library of
Congress Subject
Headings to (AAT)
Art and
Architecture
Thesaurus



Art & Architecture Thesaurus® Online

LCSH

Library of
Congress

Subject
Headings



LCSH

Why it was developed

- “The Library of Congress subject headings system was originally designed as a controlled vocabulary for representing the subject and form of the books and serials in the LC collection, with the purpose of providing subject access points to the bibliographic records contained in the LC catalogs.”
- <http://www.loc.gov/today/pr/1997/97-005.html>

LCSH Purpose

As a controlled vocabulary for use in subject cataloging and indexing by other libraries or indexing agencies

- As an increasing number of other libraries have adopted the Library of Congress subject headings system, it has become a tool for subject indexing of library catalogs in general.
- In recent years, it has also been used as a tool in a number of online bibliographic databases outside of the Library of Congress

LCSH History of Development

- On July 1, 1909 J. C Hanson addressed the cataloging section at a ALA conference encouraging “LC catalogers to use the ALA List of Subject Headings for Use in Dictionary Catalogs (1895) which embodies much of Cutter’s theory and originally formed an appendix to his Rules.
 - Originally designed for smaller libraries
 - Plans of LC printed card distribution

Taylor, A. (2000) *Wynar’s Introduction to Cataloging and Classification 9E*. Westport, CN: Libraries Unlimited..

The Layout of LCSH

- In addition to presenting a controlled list of subject headings in alphabetic order, LCSH shows the relationships among those headings and provides other valuable information, such as scope notes that clarify usage and Library of Congress classification numbers that are associated with a particular subject heading. Users are encouraged to consult this list as part of an effective search strategy.

Understanding LCSH

The LCSH assigns subject headings to all items listed in the online catalog. This makes it easy to find books on the same or similar topics.

These subject headings can be found in a five volume manual called the Library of Congress Subject Headings (or the big red books) and is now online.

http://www.lib.duke.edu/libguide/fi_books_sh.htm

Searching the LCSH

A SUBJECT SEARCH SHORTCUT

- **The keyword search mode** of the online catalog provides a short cut to subject searching. Type "**su**" before the word or phrase you believe is part of a subject heading. This will limit the search to words within subjects headings.
- For example, say you're searching for information about **Congress' Ways and Means Committee**, but can't find the official subject heading.
- In the keyword search mode, enter *su ways and su means*
- You can **browse** through the hits, or **select the subject link** from a full record

LCSH (Big Red Book) Example

http://www.lib.duke.edu/libguide/fi_sh_sc.htm

Mental illness (*May Subd Geog*)

Here are entered popular works and works on social aspects of mental disorders. Works on the legal aspects of mental illness are entered under Insanity. Works on clinical aspects of mental disorders, including therapy, are entered under Psychiatry

- UF Diseases, Mental
Madness
Mental disorders
Mental diseases
- BT Diseases
Psychiatry
Psychology, Pathological
- RT Mental health
- NT Dual diagnosis
Genius and mental illness
Insanity
Neurobehavioral disorders
- **Alternative treatment**
- **Diagnosis**
 - BT Psychodiagnostics
 - NT Psychiatric disability evaluation
- **Epidemiology**
 - USE Psychiatric epidemiology
- **Prevention**
- **Surgery**
 - USE Psychosurgery
- **Treatment** (*May Subd Geog*)
- -- **Evaluation**
 - NT Psychiatric rating scales

LCSH Key

- Valid Headings in *LCSH* are in **boldface**
- Browse the shelves under the call number(s) in [brackets].

<http://www.lib.unca.edu/library/lr/lr101/greene/lcsh.html>

LCSH Key



- **May Subd Geog:** may subdivide geographically.
- **BT:** broader topic.
More general headings. If there are too few books under the main heading, try these broader headings.
- **NT:** narrower topic.
More specific topics. If there are too many books under the main heading, consider using these narrower headings.
- **RT:** related topic.
Associated headings that fall outside of the main term's hierarchy.
- **SA:** see also.
Headings that cover similar subjects.
- **UF:** used for.
These are unauthorized headings. In other words, don't use these headings.
- **USE:** refers to the appropriate heading

How LCSH is used

- **“The LCSH is the definitive guide for assigning subject headings and subdivisions in a consistent and standardized method. For reference librarians, it helps develop successful search strategies by illustrating LC subject heading practices; for catalogers, it gives the rationale for assigning subject headings to specific works”**
- **“It contains many terms that are not authorized as headings but are included as lead-in (also called referred-from) terms to help users as well as catalogers find the applicable authorized term for a topic at issue.”**

Chan, L (1994) *Cataloging and Classification: An Introduction*. 2 ED.
New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Evaluating LCSH

- With LCSH now online, the ability to search has become much easier. Thus, proving its stance as a live source.
- LCSH Online provides the researcher with the source, but skips the subject heading, scopes etc. (unless you select a particular link to show this)
- LCSH in the Big Red Books provides the hands on subject heading search but the researcher may go in circles if the subject has too many related topics.
- LCSH is a valued resource for catalogers and any major changes could create difficulties in technical services in many libraries.



Art & Architecture Thesaurus® Online

Art & Architecture Thesaurus ® (AAT)

- The Art & Architecture Thesaurus ® (AAT), the Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names ® (TGN), and the Union List of Artist Names ® (ULAN) are structured vocabularies that can be used to improve access to information about art, architecture, and material culture.

Art & Architecture Thesaurus ® (AAT) Purpose

- **Cataloging:** They may be used as data value standards at the point of documentation or cataloging. In this context, they may be used as a controlled vocabulary or authority by the cataloger or indexer; they provide preferred names/terms and synonyms for people, places, and things. They also provide structure and classification schemes that can aid in documentation.
- **Retrieval:** They may be used as search assistants in database retrieval systems. They are knowledge bases that include semantic networks that show links and paths between concepts; these relationships can make retrieval more successful.
- **Research tools:** They may be utilized as research tools, valuable because of the rich information and contextual knowledge that they contain.
- http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/aat/about.html

AAT's Target Audience

- The Getty vocabulary is intended to provide terminology and other information about the objects, artists, concepts, and places important to various disciplines that specialize in art, architecture and material culture.
- The primary users of the Getty vocabularies include museums, art libraries, archives, visual resource collection catalogers, bibliographic projects concerned with art, researchers in art and art history, and the information specialists who are dealing with the needs of these users. In addition, a significant number of users of the Getty vocabularies are students or members of the general public.

Accessing AAT Vocabulary

- Catalogers and indexers who use the vocabularies typically access them in two ways: By using them as implemented in a collection management system (either purchased off-the-shelf through a vendor or custom-built for their local requirements), or by using the online databases on the Getty Web site. The databases made available on the Web site are intended to support limited research and cataloging efforts.

Scope and Structure of AAT

- The AAT contains no iconographic subjects and no proper names. That is, each concept is a case of many (a generic thing), not a case of one (a specific thing). For example, the generic term *cathedral* is in the AAT, but the specific proper name *Chartres Cathedral* is out of scope for the AAT.
- Terms in AAT may be used to describe art, architecture, decorative arts, material culture, and archival materials. Terms for any concept may include the plural form of the term, singular form, natural order, inverted order, spelling variants, various forms of speech, and synonyms that have various etymological roots. Among these terms, one is flagged as the preferred term, or *descriptor*.

Scope and Structure of AAT

- The focus of each AAT record is a concept. Currently there are around 34,000 concepts in the AAT. In the database, each concept's record (also called a *subject*) is identified by a unique numeric ID. Linked to each concept record are terms, related concepts, a *parent* (that is, a position in the hierarchy), sources for the data, and notes. The temporal coverage of the AAT ranges from Antiquity to the present and the scope is global.
- The AAT is a hierarchical database; its trees branch from a root called *Top of the AAT hierarchies* (Subject_ID: 300000000). There may be multiple broader contexts, making AAT *polyhierarchical*. In addition to the hierarchical relationships, the AAT has equivalence and associative relationships.

Scope and Structure of AAT

- The conceptual framework of facets and hierarchies in the AAT is designed to allow a general classification scheme for art and architecture. The framework is not subject-specific; for example, there is no defined portion of the AAT that is specific only for *Renaissance painting*. Terms to describe Renaissance paintings will be found in many locations in the AAT hierarchies.

Art & Architecture Thesaurus ® (AAT) Facets

- Facets constitute the major subdivisions of the AAT hierarchical structure. A facet contains a homogeneous class of concepts, the members of which share characteristics that distinguish them from members of other classes.
- The facets are conceptually organized in a scheme that proceeds from abstract concepts to concrete, physical artifacts.
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The Seven Facets of AAT

- **Associated Concepts:** This facet contains abstract concepts and phenomena that relate to the study and execution of a wide range of human thought and activity, including architecture and art in all media, as well as related disciplines.
- **Physical Attributes:** This facet concerns the perceptible or measurable characteristics of materials and artifacts as well as features of materials and artifacts that are not separable as components.
- **Styles and Periods:** This facet provides commonly accepted terms for stylistic groupings and distinct chronological periods that are relevant to art, architecture, and the decorative art.
- **Agents:** The Agents facet contains terms for designations of people, groups of people, and organizations identified by occupation or activity, by physical or mental characteristics, or by social role or condition.
- **Activities:** This facet encompasses areas of endeavor, physical and mental actions, discrete occurrences, systematic sequences of actions, methods employed toward a certain end, and processes occurring in materials or objects.
- **Materials:** The Materials facet deals with physical substances, whether naturally or synthetically derived. These range from specific materials to types of materials designed by their function, such as colorants, and from raw materials to those that have been formed or processed into products that are used in fabricating structures or objects.
- **Objects:** The Objects facet is the largest of all the AAT facets. It encompasses those discrete tangible or visible things that are inanimate and produced by human endeavor; that is, that are either fabricated or given form by human activity.



Art & Architecture Thesaurus® Online Full Record Display


[New Search](#)

[Help](#)

Click the  icon to view the hierarchy.

ID: 300015613

Record Type: [concept](#)

 **graffiti** (<visual works by location or context>, <visual works>, ... Visual and Verbal Communication)


Note: In archaeology and art history, refers to casual scribbles or pictographs on walls, stones, or other surfaces. In the context of ancient Greek vase painting, graffiti refers to marks incised or cut into the ceramic, usually on the underside of the foot of the vase; they were generally trademarks. In recent times the term is applied to humorous, satiric, obscene, or gang-related writings or drawings executed anonymously in public places.

Terms:

- graffiti** (preferred, C,U,D,American English-P)
- graffito** (C,U,AD)

Facet/Hierarchy Code: [VVC](#)

Hierarchical Position:

-  [Objects Facet](#)
-  [Visual and Verbal Communication](#)
-  [Visual Works](#)
-  [<visual works>](#)
-  [<visual works by location or context>](#)
-  [graffiti](#)

Example of AAT Facets and Hierarchies

■ http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/aat/about.html#sample

AAT Record Fields

- **Language:** Most fields in AAT records are written in American English. However, the AAT has the structure of a multi-lingual thesaurus; therefore, the Terms themselves may be expressed in many languages. All Terms are written in the Roman alphabet; where terms have been transliterated from other alphabets, the transliteration using the appropriate ISO standard for that language will be flagged as the preferred term for that language whenever possible.
- **Diacritics:** The AAT terms and other fields contain dozens of different diacritics, expressed as codes (e.g., \$00) in the data files. The AAT diacritical codes are mapped to Unicode. The mapping is distributed with the licensed data files. These codes should be translated into the proper diacritical mark for end-users. In Web displays, it may be impossible to display all diacritics; therefore, some diacritics are suppressed (e.g., in the example below, a macron, superior dot, and dot below—which should appear with various letters in the terms below—do not display on the Web, so they are suppressed; this unfortunately may be confusing to end-users, because it will appear as if two homographs are included in a single AAT record, which is contrary to AAT editorial and technical rules).
- **Fields:** The AAT fields (i.e., discrete pieces of data) are described below. Data dictionaries for the licensed files are available at http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/download.html.
- **Subject ID:** Unique numeric identification for the AAT record. Each concept in the AAT database is uniquely identified by a numeric ID that serves to link the terms and all other pertinent information to the concept record. The ID is generally permanent. Occasionally an ID may change due to the record being merged with another record; in such cases, the new IDs are included in the licensed files, and a mapping between defunct and new IDs is provided to licensees.
- **Record Type:** *Type* designation that characterizes the AAT record: *concept, guide, term, .*
- **Label**
Brief text identification of the concept, concatenated from the preferred term (*descriptor*), qualifier (if applicable; *Christmas* in the example below), and the parent string (in parentheses in the example below, abbreviated as indicated with an elipsis).

Evaluation of AAT

- As online source this has become a valuable resource for museums, art institutes and scholars across the globe, especially because it offers its records in a variety of languages.
- AAT builds its vocabulary from a variety of resources and even welcomes new vocabulary globally.
- AAT will not send you to particular sources like LCSH online will, it shows the record display and will link the searcher through the hierarchical links provided.

LCSH & AAT Resources

LCSH:

<http://www.loc.gov/today/pr/1997/97-005.html>

http://www.lib.duke.edu/libguide/fi_books_sh.htm

<http://www.lib.unca.edu/library/lr/lr101/greene/lcsh.html>

AAT:

http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/aat/about.html

http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/

<http://www.groveart.com/LOGIN?sessionid=214f32311dedf0094682415064be13d8&authstatuscode=400>