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ISBD(ER): International Standard Bibliographic Description for Electronic Resources

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0. Preliminary Notes

0.1 Scope, purpose and use

0.1.1 Scope

The International Standard Bibliographic Description for Electronic Resources - referred to hereinafter as the ISBD(ER) - specifies the requirements for the description and identification of such items, assigns an order to the elements of the description, and specifies a system of punctuation for the description. Its provisions relate first to the bibliographic records produced by national bibliographic agencies (in issues of the printed national bibliography, in other printed records, and associated computer-readable data resources) and second to bibliographic records of other cataloguing agencies, whether in electronic or printed form.

Electronic resources consist of materials that are computer-controlled, including materials that require the use of a peripheral (e.g. a CD-ROM player) attached to a computer; the items may or may not be used in the interactive mode. Included are two types of resources: data (information in the form of numbers, letters, graphics, images, and sound, or a combination thereof) and programs (instructions or routines for performing certain tasks including the processing of data). In addition, they may be combined to include electronic data and programs (e.g. online services, interactive multimedia).

For cataloguing purposes, electronic resources are treated in the ISBD(ER) in two ways depending on whether access is local or remote. Local access is understood to mean that a physical carrier can be described. Such a carrier (e.g. disk/disc, cassette, cartridge) must be inserted by the user into a computer or into a peripheral attached to a computer - typically a microcomputer. Remote access is understood to mean that no physical carrier can be handled by the user - typically, access can only be provided by use of an input-output device (e.g. a terminal) either connected to a computer system (e.g. a resource in a network) or by use of resources stored in a hard disk or other storage device.

This definition is taken as applying for the most part to resources, including interactive multimedia works, that are generally available, and includes those accessed by network or via telecommunications. Resources produced and/or generated for limited distribution, for fee on demand, or on a made-to-order basis are, however, included. A resource residing in permanent memory in a computer (ROM) is understood to be part of the device in which it is stored, and, if catalogued, would be treated as a resource requiring remote access. Programmed toys, calculators, and other programmed objects are considered to be outside the intended scope of the ISBD(ER).

ISBD(ER) is one of several published ISBDs. The others cover non-book materials (ISBD(NBM)), serials (ISBD(S)), monographic publications (ISBD(M)), cartographic materials (ISBD(CM)), pre-1801 monographs (ISBD(A)), and printed music (ISBD(PM)). Each ISBD is intended to embody a coherent set of provisions for its own type of publication, but there has been no attempt to make any ISBD exclusive.

In cases where electronic resources combine the characteristics described in other ISBDs (e.g. an electronic serial, digitised map), it is recommended that the bibliographic agency first make full use of

the stipulations in the ISBD(ER) and apply provisions of other ISBDs as appropriate. Some bibliographic agencies, however, may prefer to describe such resources by applying another ISBD appropriate for the material supplemented with application of the ISBD(ER). All the ISBDs are based on the general ISBD (ISBD(G)).

Electronic resources are also increasingly produced in different editions. A new edition occurs when it has been determined that there are significant differences in the intellectual or artistic content of the item ([see 2.1](#)). In these cases, a separate bibliographic record is created. An item in which the differences are not found to be significant would normally not warrant a separate bibliographic record, although a bibliographic agency may choose to create multiple bibliographic records. In the case of remote access resources (e.g. online services) which are frequently updated, it is recommended that the bibliographic agency omit the edition statement in area 2 and give an appropriate note(s) in area 7 ([see 7.2.2](#) and [7.9](#)).

When an item is available in different types and/or sizes of physical carriers, or in a different output medium or display format, either of two methods of description may be followed:

(1) Each different physical carrier may be described in the same bibliographic record, with each carrier occupying a separate line or else grouped in a single continuous line in the description; or (2) Each different physical carrier may be described in separate bibliographic records ([see area 5](#), Introductory note). However, in the case of an interactive multimedia item which is in two or more different physical carriers, each carrier is described following method (1) in which each carrier occupies a separate line of description in the same bibliographic record.

The ISBD(ER) is primarily concerned with the current needs of national bibliographic agencies, libraries and resource centres. It therefore may require elaboration before being applied to obsolete categories of material.

At the same time, since the resources described in ISBD(ER) are products of volatile technologies, the specific stipulations of this ISBD, particularly in area 3 (Type and extent of resource) and area 5 (Physical description), will need to be amended as appropriate to handle properly the addition(s) of resource characteristics or newly developing forms of material.

0.1.2 Purpose

The primary purpose of the ISBDs is to provide the stipulations for compatible descriptive cataloguing worldwide in order to aid the international exchange of bibliographic records between national bibliographic agencies and throughout the international library and information community. By specifying the elements which comprise a bibliographic description and by prescribing the order in which those elements should be presented and the punctuation by which they should be demarcated, the ISBDs aim to (A) make records from different sources interchangeable, so that records produced in one country can be easily accepted in library catalogues or other bibliographic lists in any other country; (B) assist in the interpretation of records across language barriers, so that records produced for users of one language can be interpreted by users of other languages; and (C) assist in the conversion of bibliographic records to electronic form.

0.1.3 Use

The ISBDs provide stipulations to cover the maximum amount of descriptive information required in a range of different bibliographic activities, and therefore include elements which are essential to one or more of those activities but not necessarily to all.

It is recommended that the national bibliographic agency in each country, in accepting the responsibility of creating the definitive record for each publication issued in that country, prepare the definitive description containing all the mandatory elements set out in the relevant ISBD insofar as the information is applicable to the item being described. Certain elements are designated as optional (expressed throughout the text by the use of the word 'may') and information on these elements can be included or

omitted at the discretion of the agency. Other cataloguing organizations have a wider choice as they are not providing the definitive record for international exchange. They can select ISBD elements, mandatory or optional, for inclusion in their own records, provided that the elements selected are given in the prescribed order and transcribed with the prescribed punctuation according to the relevant ISBD.

The ISBD description forms a part of a complete bibliographic record and is not normally used by itself. The other elements which make up a complete bibliographic record, such as headings, subject information, uniform titles, filing devices and tracings, are not included in the ISBD stipulations. The rules for such elements are normally given in cataloguing codes.

0.2 Definitions

Definitions are given for those terms used in the ISBD(ER) in a special sense, or in one of several senses in general use. Some terms used in the normal bibliographic sense are also defined. Terms recommended as the general material designation, resource designations, and specific material designations are defined in Appendix C.

Access	A method of obtaining data resources and programs. (See also Local access , Remote access .)
Accompanying material	Any material accompanying the main part(s) of the item being described, and intended to be used with it.
Accompanying material statement	A brief description of accompanying material.
Alternative title	The second part of a title proper that consists of two parts (each of which has the form of a title), joined by the word "or" or its equivalent in another language.
Area	A major section of the bibliographic description, comprising data of a particular category or set of categories.
Bibliographic description	A set of bibliographic data recording and identifying an item.
Business computer see Computer	
Catalogue (Electronic) see Directory	
CD-I (Compact Disc-Interactive)	A compact disc format developed by Philips and Sony that stores electronic resources, including sound, text, still images, and full-motion video in optical form, used with a CD-I player.
CD-ROM (Compact Disc Read-Only Memory)	A compact disc format that stores electronic resources, including sound, text, still images, and full-motion video in optical form, used with a CD-ROM player.
Colour	Two or more colours in which a program is encoded or a monitor displays. Programs encoded to display colour require a colour monitor and, in the case of some computers, a colour card or board.
Common title	That part of the title which is carried by a group of related items in addition to their different section titles. The common title serves to indicate this relationship and together with the section title identifies a given item. The common title can also be common to a main item and its supplement(s) and to

	a main series and its sub-series in cases where the supplement(s)/sub-series has (have) dependent title (s).
Compression	A means of compacting information for more efficient transmission or storage, used in such areas as data communication, database management systems, and facsimile transmission.
Computer	A machine that receives, stores, manipulates, and communicates information and/or instructions. Computers can be broadly categorized into three groups: (1) mainframe computers, (2) minicomputers, and (3) microcomputers, also called "home computers", "personal computers", and "business computers".
Container	Any housing for an item, a group of items, or a part of an item, which is physically separable from the material being housed. (A box or folder for a set of disks/discs is a container, a cassette or cartridge is not.)
Data set name see File name	
Dependent title	A title which by itself is insufficient to identify an item and which requires the addition of the common title, or the title of the main item or the title of the main series. Examples are section titles and some titles of sub-series.
Dependent title designation	Word or lettering or numbering, or a combination of these, which alone or in conjunction with a dependent title serves to distinguish one of two or more related serials having a common title. (See also Sub-series designation.)
Directory	A list of files with associated file names that can be viewed and ordered in various ways (e.g. alphabetically or by date, size, or as icons in a graphical user interface). Also called a "catalogue."
Disc see specific optical disc formats: CD-I (Compact Disc-Interactive) , CD-ROM (Compact Disc Read-Only Memory) , Photo CD (Photo Compact Disc)	
Disk see Hard disk	
Documentation	Information issued by the publisher, creator, etc., with the resource, normally in the form of manuals or guides (sometimes electronic) describing how to initiate, operate, and maintain electronic resources

	and computer systems.
Edition	All the copies of a resource produced from substantially the same master copy and published or issued by a particular agency or group of agencies. An edition may be identified by an edition statement in the resource or may be inferred by the cataloguer by the presence of significant differences in the content or by information provided by the publisher. (See also Version.)
Edition statement	A word or phrase, or a group of characters, indicating that an item belongs to an edition.
Element	A word or phrase, or a group of characters representing a distinct unit of bibliographic information and forming part of an area of the bibliographic description.
File name	A name, usually consisting of a maximum number of alphanumeric characters that are used to identify either a data resource or a program to the computer. Also known as data set name.
General material designation	A term indicating broadly the class of material to which an item belongs (see Appendix C).
Hard disk	A non-flexible magnetic disk, in a solid container, used to read and write electronic resources; hard disks can be either fixed or removable.
Hardware	The physical components of a computer, including electronic or mechanical equipment used in the operation of a computer system.
Home computer see Computer	
Home page	The main or opening screen of a hypertext document for a World Wide Web site. Home pages are a subset of "Web pages" that present information on systems, services, and products, and, in addition, provide links in the form of words, URLs, etc., to other related documents and Web sites. (See also URL , Web page , World Wide Web site.)
Interactive videodisc	A videodisc controlled by computer.
Internet	A large network made up of a number of smaller networks that are connected to each other, using the Internet Protocol (IP) and other similar protocols. The Internet provides such services as file transfer, electronic mail, remote login, and news, among others. (See also World Wide Web.)
ISBN (International Standard Book Number)	A ten-digit number including a check digit and preceded by the alphabetic prefix ISBN. The ISBN identifies an edition of a work issued by one specific publisher and is unique to that edition. It is assigned by the national ISBN agency and is based on the ISO standard ISO 2108-1978 (E) <i>Documentation -</i>

	<i>International Standard Book Numbering (ISBN).</i>
ISSN (International Standard Serial Number)	An eight-digit number including a check digit and preceded by the alphabetic prefix ISSN. The ISSN together with the key title uniquely identifies a particular title (see <i>ISDS Manual</i> , Part 1). It is assigned by the ISSN Network and is based on the ISO Standard ISO 3297-1986.
Key title	The unique name assigned to a serial by the ISSN Network and inseparably linked with its International Standard Serial Number (ISSN).
Listing	A printout or display of the text of a program or the contents of a resource.
Local access	A method of obtaining an electronic resource by use of a physical carrier, such as a disk/disc, cassette, or cartridge, designed to be inserted by the user into a peripheral attached to a computer - typically a microcomputer.
Logical record see Record	
Magnetic disk see Hard disk	
Main series	A numbered series which contains one or more sub-series.
Menu	A list of available options that are built into a file.
Monographic item	An item either complete in one part or complete, or intended to be completed, in a finite number of separate parts.
Multi-level description	A method of bibliographic description based on the division of descriptive information into two or more levels. The first level contains information common to the whole or main item. The second and subsequent levels contain information relating to the individual unit.
Multi-part resource	A monographic resource in a finite number of physically separate parts known to have been conceived or published as an entity; the separate parts may have their own titles and statements of responsibility.
Other title information	A word or phrase, or a group of characters, appearing in conjunction with, and subordinate to, the title proper of the item. Other title information also occurs in conjunction with, and subordinate to, other titles (e.g. parallel titles, titles of individual works contained in the item, and titles in series/sub-series statements). Other title information qualifies, explains or completes the title to which it applies, or is indicative of the character, contents, etc., of the item or the works contained in it, or is indicative of the motive for, or the occasion of, the item's production. The term includes sub-titles, but does not include variant titles (e.g. spine titles, sleeve titles) found in the item but not on the prescribed source of

	information.
Parallel edition statement	The edition statement in another language and/or script.
Parallel title	The title proper (or the title of an individual work given in an item with no collective title proper) in another language and/or script; or a title in another language and/or script presented as an equivalent of the title proper. Parallel titles also occur in conjunction with the title(s) proper in series/sub-series statements.
Peripheral	An accessory connected to a computer system that is usually used to conduct input-output operations (e.g. a printer, joystick).
Personal computer see Computer	
Photo CD (Photo Compact Disc)	A compact disc format developed by Kodak that stores digitised 35 mm slides or negatives. A multi-session CD-ROM drive is required to read images that are added after the original set.
Physical carrier	The physical medium on or in which data, sound, images, programs, etc., may be stored. For certain categories of material, the physical carrier consists of a storage medium (e.g. tape, film) sometimes encased in a plastic, metal, etc., housing (e.g. cassette, cartridge) that is an integral part of the item.
Prescribed punctuation	Punctuation supplied by the bibliographic agency to precede or enclose the information in each element (except the first element of area 1) or area of the bibliographic description.
Prescribed source of information	The source or sources from which information is taken for entry in each element or area of the bibliographic description.
Producer	The person or corporate body with the financial and/or administrative responsibility for the physical processes whereby an electronic resource is brought into existence. Specific responsibilities may relate in varying degrees to the creative and technical aspects of a particular work, including collecting data and converting data into a computerized form.
Publication (Remote electronic resource)	In the context of applying the ISBD(ER), all remote electronic resources are considered to be published. A formal statement of publication that includes place, publisher, and date is given in the bibliographic record when such information is available. If no place or publisher information is available in the item, the abbreviations "s.l." and "s.n." are given as appropriate (see 4.1 and 4.2).
Record	A group of words, numbers, or symbols, or a combination thereof, identified as a unit from the standpoint of content or use (e.g. a bibliographic entry in a library catalogue, a case in a survey, a student test score).

Remote access	A method of using an electronic resource when there is no physical carrier to be handled by the user. The resources are stored on large storage devices maintained mechanically or by a computer technician, including hard disks on microcomputers.
Section title	The title specific to a section which serves to distinguish one part of a group of related series having a common title. The section title is dependent on the common title for identification of a series whether distinctive or not.
Series	A group of separate items related to one another by the fact that each item bears, in addition to its own title proper, a collective title applying to the group as a whole, i.e. the title proper of the series. The separate items may or may not be numbered.
Series statement	The main elements identifying a series, including any numbering of the separate items within the series. Also includes a statement that an item forms part of a multi-part resource. (See also Sub-series statement.)
Specific material designation	The term indicating the specific class of material to which the item belongs (see Appendix C).
Statement of responsibility	Name(s), phrase(s), or groups(s) of characters relating to the identification and/or function of any persons or corporate bodies responsible for or contributing to the creation or realization of the intellectual or artistic content of a work. Statements of responsibility may occur in conjunction with titles (e.g. the title proper, parallel title, titles of individual works contained in the item, titles in series/sub-series statements) or in conjunction with edition statements.
Sub-series	A series which appears as part of a numbered series (main series). The sub-series may or may not have a title dependent on that of the main series. (See also Common title , Dependent title .)
Sub-series designation	Word or lettering or numbering, or a combination of these, following the title of the main series, which can stand alone or in conjunction with the title of the sub-series.
Sub-series statement	The main elements identifying a sub-series, including any numbering of the separate items within the sub-series. In the case of a sub-series the title of which is dependent on the title of the main series, the sub-series statement includes both the title of the series and the sub-series, and may include a sub-series designation. (See also Series statement .)
TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) header	Descriptive and declarative information making up an "electronic title page" that is attached to a TEI-conformant electronic text. The header consists of four principal components: a file description, encoding description, profile description and revision

Terminal	<p>description.</p> <p>An input-output device consisting of a keyboard and a monitor or screen, which is used to send or receive information or instructions.</p>
Title	<p>A word or phrase, or a group of characters, usually appearing in an item, naming the item or the work (or any one of a group of individual works) contained in it. An item will usually contain several titles (e.g. on the item itself or on the front or the spine of the container), and these titles may be identical or may differ from one another.</p>
Title proper	<p>The chief title of an item, i.e. the title of an item in the form in which it appears in the prescribed sources of information for the title and statement of responsibility area. The title proper includes any alternative title but excludes parallel titles and other title information.</p> <p>For items containing several individual works, the title proper is the collective title. Items containing several individual works and lacking a collective title are considered not to have a title proper. A series or sub-series also has its own title proper. Certain titles proper are made up of multiple titles, called common title and dependent title(s).</p>
Title screen	<p>Title information appearing on a monitor or screen, usually displayed in the first or opening frame(s) of a resource.</p>
URL (Uniform Resource Locator)	<p>An address system for locating an electronic resource on a computer network. A URL consists of a service identifier followed by a specified protocol that is used to obtain a desired resource (e.g. http://www.ieee.org/).</p>
<p>Version</p> <p>Videodisc, Interactive see Interactive videodisc</p> <p>Web page</p>	<p>A related term for edition. Versions may indicate major or minor changes and, as such, may not constitute a reliable guide to indicate a new edition. (See also Edition.)</p> <p>One of the pages of a hypertext document in a World Wide Web site. Web pages, including the subset "home pages", refer to the huge collection of documents that make up the World Wide Web. (See also Home page, World Wide Web.)</p>
<p>Web site see World Wide Web site</p> <p>World Wide Web</p>	<p>An Internet service that links documents through the use of hypertext technology. Links in the form of words, URLs, etc., serve to find and access documents stored on the Internet. (See also URL, Internet.)</p>

World Wide Web site	A location, identified in the form of a URL, on the World Wide Web that stores Web pages for access and use. (See also URL , Web page , World Wide Web .)
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0.3 Comparative outline of the ISBD(G) and the ISBD(ER)

0.3.1 Outline of the ISBD(G)

Note: Each area, other than the first, is preceded by a point, space, dash, space (. -).

Area	Prescribed preceding (or enclosing) punctuation for elements	Element
1. Title and statement of responsibility area		1.1 Title proper
	[]	1.2 General material designation
	=	1.3 Parallel title
	:	1.4 Other title information
	/	1.5 Statements of responsibility First statement
2. Edition area	;	Subsequent statement
		2.1 Edition statement
	=	2.2 Parallel edition statement
	/	2.3 Statements of responsibility relating to the edition First statement
	;	Subsequent statement
	,	2.4 Additional edition statement
	/	2.5 Statements of responsibility following an additional edition statement First statement
;	Subsequent statement	
3. Material (or type of publication) specific area		
4. Publication, distribution, etc., area		4.1 Place of publication, distribution, etc. First place
	;	Subsequent place
	:	4.2 Name of publisher, distributor, etc.
	[]	4.3 Statement of function of distributor
	,	4.4 Date of publication, distribution, etc.
	(4.5 Place of manufacture
	:	4.6 Name of manufacturer
,)	4.7 Date of manufacture	
5. Physical description area	:	5.1 Specific material designation and extent of item

	;	5.2 Other physical details
	+	5.3 Dimensions of item
		5.4 Accompanying material
6. Series area	=	6.1 Title proper of series or sub-series
<i>Note :</i>	:	6.2 Parallel title of series or sub-series
<i>A series statement is enclosed by</i>		6.3 Other title information of series or sub-series
<i>parentheses. When there are two or</i>	/	6.4 Statements of responsibility relating to the series or sub-series
<i>more series statements, each is</i>	;	First statement
<i>enclosed by parentheses.</i>	,	Subsequent statement
	;	6.5 International Standard Serial Number of series or sub-series
	;	6.6 Numbering within series or sub-series
7. Note area		
8. Standard number (or alternative) and terms of availability	=	8.1 Standard number (or alternative)
	:	8.2 Key title
	()	8.3 Terms of availability and/or price
		8.4 Qualification (in varying positions)

0.3.2 Outline of the ISBD(ER)

Note: Each area, other than the first, is preceded by a point, space, dash, space (. -).

Area	Prescribed preceding (or enclosing) punctuation for elements	Element
1. Title and statement of responsibility area		1.1 Title proper
	[]	1.2 General material designation (optional)
	=	*1.3 Parallel title
	:	*1.4 Other title information
		1.5 Statements of responsibility
	/	First statement
	;	* Subsequent statement
2. Edition area		2.1 Edition statement
	=	*2.2 Parallel edition statement (optional)
		2.3 Statements of responsibility relating to the edition
	/	First statement
	;	* Subsequent statement
	,	*2.4 Additional edition statement
2. Edition area		2.5 Statements of responsibility following an additional edition statement

	/	First statement
	;	* Subsequent statement
3. Type and extent of resource		3.1 Designation of resource
	()	3.2 Extent of resource (optional)
4. Publication, distribution, etc.		4.1 Place of publication, production and/or distribution, etc. First place
	;	* Subsequent place
	:	*4.2 Name of publisher, producer and/or distributor, etc.
	[]	*4.3 Statement of function of distributor (optional)
	,	4.4 Date of publication, production and/or distribution, etc.
	(*4.5 Place of manufacture (optional)
	:	*4.6 Name of manufacturer (optional)
	,	4.7 Date of manufacture (optional)
5. Physical description area		5.1 Specific material designation and extent of item
		5.2 Other physical details
	:	5.3 Dimensions
	;	*5.4 Accompanying material statement (optional)
	+	
6. Series area		6.1 Title proper of series or sub-series
Note: A series statement is enclosed =		*6.2 Parallel title of series or sub-series
by parentheses. When there are		*6.3 Other title information (optional)
two or more series statements, each :		6.4 Statements of responsibility relating to the series or sub-series First statement
is enclosed by parentheses.	/	* Subsequent statement
	;	6.5 International Standard Serial Number of series or sub-series
	;	6.6 Numbering within series or sub-series
7. Note area		
8. Standard number (or alternative) and terms of availability area		8.1 Standard number (or alternative)
		8.2 Key title
	=	8.3 Terms of availability and/or price (optional)

General notes on the outline of the ISBD(ER)

- A. Optional elements are indicated as such ([see 0.1.3](#)).
- B. Elements preceded by an asterisk can be repeated when necessary.
- C. Areas 6 (Series), 7 (Note) and 8 (Standard number, etc.) can be repeated when

necessary. In addition, area 5 (Physical description) can be repeated under certain circumstances ([see area 5](#), Introductory note).

- D. In the above outline, the terms "first statement ...", "subsequent statement ..." and the like denote the order in which these statements are given and have no other connotation.
- E. No provisions are included in the ISBD(ER) for element 8.2 of the ISBD(G) outline (Key title). Provisions regarding qualifications to standard number (or alternative) or to a statement of terms of availability and/or price (element 8.4 of the ISBD(G)) are included in elements 8.1 and 8.3 respectively, rather than as a separate element.
- F. Whenever information normally associated with one area or element appears in the item linked linguistically as an integral part of another area or element, it is transcribed as such.

0.4 Punctuation

0.4.1 Each element of the description, except the first element of area 1, is either preceded or enclosed by prescribed punctuation ([see 0.4.3 for other exceptions](#)). Prescribed punctuation is preceded and followed by a space (a single space on a typewriter or an em space in printing) with the exception of the comma (,) and point (.) which are only followed by a space. The inclusion of other punctuation is at the discretion of the national bibliographic agency or cataloguing organization, as is the spacing before and after such punctuation. ISBD punctuation is retained even when this results in double punctuation (but [see 0.4.7](#)). For the punctuation of scripts written from right to left, see [0.4.11](#).

0.4.2 Parentheses, i.e. curved brackets (()) and square brackets ([]) ([see 0.4.8](#)), are each to be treated as a single punctuation symbol, and the preceding space comes before the first (opening) parenthesis or square bracket and the following space comes after the second (closing) parenthesis or square bracket (but see [0.10](#)). If the parentheses or square brackets are preceded or followed by prescribed punctuation that ends or begins with a space, only one space is given.

0.4.3 Each area of the ISBDs other than area 1 is preceded by a point, space, dash, space (. -), unless that area is clearly separated from the preceding area by paragraphing, typography or indentation, in which case the point, space, dash, space may be omitted or replaced by a point (.) given at the end of the preceding area.

0.4.4 When the first element of an area is not present in a description, the prescribed punctuation of the first element that is present is replaced by a point, space, dash, space (. -) preceding the area.

0.4.5 When an area is repeated, each repetition is preceded by a point, space, dash, space (. -), except (a) in the condition described in 0.4.3, and (b) as provided by area 6, Punctuation pattern B-C, for multiple series statements.

0.4.6 When an element is repeated, each repetition is preceded by the prescribed punctuation appropriate to the element.

0.4.7 When an element ends with a point and the prescribed punctuation for the element which follows begins with a point, only one of the two points is given.

e.g. 3rd ed. -

not 3rd ed.. -

And then ... - 4th ed.

not And then - 4th ed.

0.4.8 Three punctuation symbols can be used in all or most areas:

- A. Square brackets ([]) are prescribed punctuation to enclose particular elements in area 1 ([see 1.2](#)) and area 4 ([see 4.3](#)). Square brackets also enclose information found outside the prescribed sources of information ([see 0.5.2](#)) and interpolations in the description ([see 0.6](#), [0.10](#), [0.11](#)).

When successive elements within the same area are obtained from outside the prescribed source of information, they are enclosed in a single pair of square brackets unless one element is the general material designation, which is always enclosed in its own pair of square brackets. When successive elements are in different areas, each element is enclosed in a separate pair of square brackets.

- B. Marks of omission, i.e. three points (...), indicate the omission of some part of an element ([see 0.7.1](#)).
- C. Parentheses (()) are prescribed punctuation to enclose each series statement in area 6, to enclose certain elements in area 4 and to enclose information within particular elements in areas 3, 5 and 8.

One punctuation symbol, the plus symbol (+) preceded and followed by a space, is prescribed punctuation in area 5 ([see 5.4](#)).

0.4.9 When in an area or an element the same information appears in two or more languages and/or scripts, the following provisions apply:

When one element is recorded in two or more languages and/or scripts, the information in each language and/or script after the first is preceded by a space, equals sign, space (=).

When, in a single area, two or more elements are recorded in two or more languages and/or scripts, the elements in each language and/or script are given together with the appropriate preceding punctuation for each element. The whole group of elements for the first language and/or script recorded is preceded by punctuation appropriate to the first element and each group after the first is preceded by a space, equals sign, space (=).

0.4.10 An area or element that does not apply to the publication is not included in the description. The preceding or enclosing prescribed punctuation of such an area or element is also omitted.

0.4.11 When information is given in scripts written from right to left, commas and semi-colons used as prescribed punctuation are reversed when that is the style of the script. Similarly, the point, space, dash, space combination of prescribed punctuation reads from right to left and the meanings of open and closed parentheses and square brackets are reversed. The diagonal slash and groups of western arabic numerals which are not reversed in such scripts are not reversed when given.

[See Appendix B](#) for the treatment of information given both in scripts written from left to right and in scripts written from right to left.

0.5 Sources of information

The information used in the description of an electronic resource is taken from certain sources in a prescribed order of preference.

0.5.1 Order of preference of sources

Sources internal to the electronic resource shall be preferred to all other sources. Such information must be formally presented (e.g. in the title screen, main menu, program statements, first display of information, the header to the file including "Subject:" lines, home page, TEI (Text Encoding Initiative)

header, or other identifying information prominently displayed).

When the resource is unreadable without processing (e.g. it is compressed or printer-formatted), the information should be taken from the resource when it is not compressed, or when it has been printed out, or otherwise processed for use.

When the information varies in degree of fullness in these sources, prefer the source which provides the fullest or most complete information.

When the information in the internal sources is insufficient or is not available (either because the sources are lacking or because the equipment to mount the resource is lacking), other sources may be selected according to the following order of preference.

- A. Labels permanently affixed to or imprinted on the physical carrier of the resource;
- B. Documentation, containers, or other accompanying material (e.g. publisher's letter). In using accompanying documentation, caution is to be exercised in distinguishing between information that applies to the documentation and that which pertains to the resource itself. When there are several items in the container and only the container has a collective title, the container is used rather than the labels of the individual items.

When the electronic resource consists of two or more separate physical parts (e.g. an interactive multimedia item made up of an electronic optical disc and videodisc), each with its own sources of information, prefer the source which provides information that applies to the resource as a whole and that includes a collective title.

When the information varies in degree of fullness in these sources, prefer the source which provides the fullest or most complete information.

In cases where the necessary information is not provided in any of the above sources, preference should be given to the following sources in this order:

other published descriptions of the resource (e.g. bibliographic databases, reviews)

other sources

0.5.2 Prescribed sources of information

The term "prescribed source" is used to characterize a source of information selected in accordance with the order of preference given above (0.5.1). The prescribed source(s) of information for each area of the description is set out below. Information taken from outside the prescribed source(s) is enclosed in square brackets.

Area	Prescribed sources of information
1. Title and statement of responsibility	Internal sources; labels on the physical carrier; documentation, containers, or other accompanying material
2. Edition	Internal sources; labels on the physical carrier; documentation, containers, or other accompanying material
3. Type and extent of resource	Any source
4. Publication, distribution, etc.	Internal sources; labels on the physical carrier; documentation, containers, or other accompanying material
5. Physical description	Any source

6. Series	Internal sources; labels on the physical carrier; documentation, containers, or other accompanying material
7. Note	Any source
9. Standard number (or alternative) and terms of availability	Any source

The source of the title proper shall be recorded in all cases ([see 7.1.1.2](#)). The source of the edition statement shall be recorded whenever it differs from the source of the title ([see 7.2.1](#)).

0.6 Language and script of the description

Elements in areas 1, 2, 4 and 6 are normally transcribed from the item and are, therefore, wherever practicable, in the language(s) and/or script(s) in which they appear there. Interpolations in these areas are enclosed in square brackets and are given in the language and/or script of the context of that part of the description, except:

- ┆ prescribed abbreviations ([see 0.7](#)) and prescribed interpolations ([see 0.10, 0.11](#));
- ┆ general material designation ([see 1.2](#)) and statement of function of distributor ([see 4.3](#)) which, when supplied, are given in the language and/or script chosen by the national bibliographic agency.

Terms used in areas 3, 5, 7 and 8 are given in the language and/or script chosen by the national bibliographic agency, except:

- ┆ when an original title or variant title is provided in area 7;
- ┆ when quotations are provided in area 7;
- ┆ when key title is given in area 8.

The description of items appearing in scripts other than that used by the national bibliographic agency may, if necessary, be transliterated or transcribed without brackets into the script used by the agency.

0.7 Abridgements and abbreviations

0.7.1 In exceptional cases the abridgement of certain elements in the description is permitted (e.g. a lengthy title proper, [see 1.1.4.1](#)). In such cases, the omission is indicated by marks of omission.

0.7.2 Certain abbreviations are prescribed in specific stipulations (e.g. 0.10, 1.5, 4.1, 4.2). Additional abbreviations are prescribed in the specialized ISBDs.

0.7.3 In various stipulations in the ISBDs, provision is made for the use of "standard abbreviations" (e.g. 2.1) without specifying the forms of the abbreviations to be followed. These abbreviations are not prescribed, but it is recommended that ISO 832-1994, *Bibliographic Description and References - Rules for the Abbreviation of Bibliographic Terms*, or similar national standards, be used.

The abbreviations used throughout the ISBDs in the examples, other than those prescribed above in 0.7.2, are illustrative and not prescriptive.

0.7.4 Except for specifically prescribed or permitted abridgements and abbreviations, the transcription of data in areas 1, 2 and 6 does not show abbreviations unless they appear in the source.

0.8 Capitalization

Generally, the first element of each area should be a capital; the first letter of the first word of some

elements (e.g. general material designation, parallel title, alternative title, section title) should also be a capital. Other capitalization should follow the appropriate usage for the language(s) and/or script(s) used in the description ([see 0.6](#)). When more than one language and/or script appears in the description, each should be capitalized in accordance with the usage of that language and/or script even when this produces an inconsistent pattern of capitalization for the description as a whole.

0.9 Examples

The examples given throughout the ISBD(ER) are illustrative and not prescriptive except when the stipulations specify that the form found in the example(s) is to be followed. Most examples are based on the description of existing items, but some fictitious examples have been included.

In the English text of the ISBD(ER), the terms used and the words or short phrases added to the examples in areas 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 are in English. It is anticipated that in translations of the ISBD(ER), such terms and words and phrases will be given in the language of the translation.

0.10 Misprints

Inaccuracies or misspelled words are transcribed as they appear in the item. They may be followed by "sic" or "!", enclosed in square brackets ([sic] or [!]). Alternatively, the correct version may be added, enclosed in square brackets, the correction being preceded by "i.e." (*id est*), or its equivalent in another language and/or script. Letters or numbers which have been omitted from misspelled words or dates may be inserted, enclosed in square brackets (in this case not preceded or followed by a space).

e.g.

Small busines [sic] encyclopedias
Virtual lib[r]ary

0.11 Symbols, etc.

A symbol or other matter that cannot be reproduced by the typographic facilities available (normally, characters that are neither numeric nor alphabetic) is replaced by its description or its equivalency in letters or words, as appropriate. The substitution is placed in square brackets and an explanatory note is made if necessary. e.g.

/ by [E.B.C]

Note: Author's initials represented on item by musical notes.

[3rd] ed.

Note: Number of edition represented on item by three asterisks.

I [love] Paris

Note: The word 'love' in the title is represented on item by a heart symbol.