

## Home Page

The Library of Congress >> Standards

**METS** Metadata Encoding & Transmission Standard  
Official Web Site

Home

The METS schema is a standard for encoding descriptive, administrative, and structural metadata regarding objects within a digital library, expressed using the [XML schema language](#) of the [World Wide Web Consortium](#). The standard is maintained in the [Network Development and MARC Standards Office](#) of the Library of Congress, and is being developed as an initiative of the Digital Library Federation.

**TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION**

- [METS Schema & Documentation](#)
- [METS External Schemas](#)
- [METS Example Documents](#)
- [METS Profiles](#)
- [METS Implementation Registry](#)

**COMMUNITY BUILDING**

- [METS Presentations](#)
- [METS Suggested Reading List](#)
- [METS Tools & METS Compatible Software](#)
- [METS Events](#)
- [METS Editorial Board](#)
- [Join METS Listserv](#)
- [METS Listserv Archive](#)

**METS NEWS**

**Latest METS Editorial Board Meeting Minutes:** The minutes are now available from the 2015-12-03 Board meeting.  
-- [See Minutes](#)

**New METS Schema Revision Available:** The METS Editorial Board has a new revision to the METS 1 XML Schema, bringing the revision number to 1.11  
-- [See Announcement](#)

**New METS Profile Available:** The University of North Texas Libraries has registered a new METS profile for general digital objects.  
-- [See Announcement](#)

**New Monograph METS Profile:** The Spanish Virtual Library of Bibliographical Heritage has registered a new [profile](#) aimed at the creation of a METS service to represent, preserve, and ingest digital objects that are archived and available to the public at the Virtual Library Heritage Bibliográfico of the Ministry of Education.

**New Digital Object and Metadata METS Profile:** The National Digital Library of the Czech Republic has registered a new METS [profile](#) for monographs, used for determination of rules of description for digitized documents (these are transferred to validation and archiving in the Long Term Preservation System). These records are supplied by external institutions with intention to store in the repository of National Digital Library of the Czech Republic.

**New Version of Rosetta METS Profile:** Ex Libris has registered a new version of their [Rosetta METS Profile](#). This version supersedes the previous version. This profile describes a Rosetta Intellectual Entity (IE), stored in the permanent repository as an Archival Information Package (AIP).

## Logo



## URL

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/mets/>

## Subject

Metadata -- Standards.

## Accessibility

Free

## Language

English

## Publisher

The Library of Congress

## Brief History

As early as 1996 the University of California, Berkeley began working toward the development of a system that combined encoding for an outline of a digital object's structure with metadata for that object. In 1998 this work was expanded upon by the Making of America II project (MoAII). An important objective of this project was the creation of a standard for digital objects that would include defined metadata for the descriptive, administrative, and structural aspects of a digital object. A type of structural and metadata encoding system using an XML Document Type Definition (DTD) was the result of these efforts. The MoAII DTD was limited in that it did not provide

flexibility in which metadata terms could be used for the elements in the descriptive, administrative, and structural metadata portions of the object. In 2001, a new version of the DTD was developed that used namespaces separate from the system rather than the vocabulary of the previous DTD. This revision was the foundation for the current METS schema, officially named in April of that year.

### *Scope and Coverage*

METS is an XML document format intended for the encoding of complex objects within digital libraries. It provides the means to record all of the descriptive, administrative, structural and behavioral metadata needed to manage and provide access to complex digital content. METS standards may be used for Musical Score (may be a score, score and parts, or a set of parts only), Print Material (books, pamphlets, etc.), Music Manuscript (score or sketches), Recorded Event (audio or video), PDF Document, Bibliographic Record, Photograph, Compact Disc, Collection.

### *Kind of Information*

METS has 7 sections. **Namely METS header** metsHdr: the METS document itself, such as its creator, editor, etc.; **Descriptive Metadata** dmdSec: it may contain internally embedded metadata or point to metadata external to the METS document. Multiple instances of both internal and external descriptive metadata may be included. **Administrative Metadata** amdSec: it provides information regarding how files were created and stored, intellectual property rights, metadata regarding the original source object from which the digital library object derives, and information regarding the provenance of files comprising the digital library object (such as master/derivative relationships, migrations, and transformations). As with descriptive metadata, administrative metadata may be internally encoded or external to the METS document. **File Section** fileSec: it lists all files containing content which comprise the electronic versions of the digital object. Although this section is not required, it is typically included in most METS documents as it adds a level of functionality to the structure of the document. **Structural Map** structMap: Outlines a hierarchical structure for the digital library object, and links the elements of that structure to associated content files and metadata. The Structural Map is the only section required for all METS documents. **Structural Links** structLink: Allows METS creators to record the existence of hyperlinks between nodes in the Structural Map. This is of particular value in using METS to archive Websites. **Behavioral** behaviorSec: Used to associate executable behaviors with content in the METS object. Each behavior has a mechanism element identifying a module of executable code that implements behaviors defined abstractly by its interface definition.

### *Special Features*

- The METS document has some special features. It is a non-proprietary or open standard; developed by the library community; METS standard is relatively simple; it is extensible and modular.
- METS is intended to promote the preservation of, and interoperability between digital libraries.
- The open flexibility of METS means that there is not a prescribed vocabulary

which allows many different types of institutions, with many different document types, to utilize METS. The customization of METS makes it highly functional internally, but creates limitations for interoperability.

***Remarks***

METS is an XML Schema designed for the purpose of Creating XML document instances that express the hierarchical structure of digital library objects. It makes possible recording the names and locations of the files that comprise those objects and recording associated metadata. METS can, therefore, be used as a tool for modeling real world objects, such as particular document types.

***Comparable Tools***

- MARCXML (<http://www.loc.gov/standards/marcxml/>)
- MODS (<http://www.loc.gov/standards/mods/>)
- MARC (<https://www.loc.gov/marc/>)
- Metadata Authority Description Standards (<https://www.loc.gov/standards/mads/>)

***Date of Access***

March 3, 2017