

## 15 Elements of Dublin Core

This information comes from “Dublin Core Metadata Element Set Reference Description, Version 1.1”  
[http://purl.org/dc/documents/proposed\\_recommendations/pr-dces-19990702.htm](http://purl.org/dc/documents/proposed_recommendations/pr-dces-19990702.htm)

### **Title**

Definition: A name given to the resource.

Comment: Typically, a Title will be a name by which the resource is formally known.

### **Creator**

Definition: An entity primarily responsible for making the content of the resource.

Comment: Examples of a Creator include a person, an organisation, or a service. Typically, the name of a Creator should be used to indicate the entity.

### **Subject**

Definition: The topic of the content of the resource.

Comment: Typically, a Subject will be expressed as keywords, key phrases or classification codes that describe a topic of the resource. Recommended best practice is to select a value from a controlled vocabulary or formal classification scheme.

### **Publisher**

Definition: An entity responsible for making the resource available.

Comment: Examples of a Publisher include a person, an organisation, or a service. Typically, the name of a Publisher should be used to indicate the entity.

### **Description**

Definition: An account of the content of the resource.

Comment: Description may include but is not limited to: an abstract, table of contents, reference to a graphical representation of content or a free-text account of the content.

### **Contributor**

Definition: An entity responsible for making contributions to the content of the resource.

Comment: Examples of a Contributor include a person, an organisation, or a service. Typically, the name of a Contributor should be used to indicate the entity.

### **Date**

Definition: A date associated with an event in the life cycle of the resource.

Comment: Typically, Date will be associated with the creation or availability of the resource.

Recommended best practice for encoding the date value is defined in a profile of ISO 8601  
[[W3CDTF](http://www.w3.org/TR/NOTE-datetime) - <http://www.w3.org/TR/NOTE-datetime>] and follows the YYYY-MM-DD format.

### **Type**

Definition: The nature or genre of the content of the resource.

Comment: Type includes terms describing general categories, functions, genres, or aggregation levels for content. Recommended best practice is to select a value from a controlled vocabulary (for example, the working draft list of Dublin Core Types [[DCT1](http://purl.org/dc/documents/wd-typelist.htm) - <http://purl.org/dc/documents/wd-typelist.htm>]). To describe the physical or digital manifestation of the resource, use the FORMAT element.

## **Format**

Definition: The physical or digital manifestation of the resource.

Comment: Typically, Format may include the media-type or dimensions of the resource. Format may be used to determine the software, hardware or other equipment needed to display or operate the resource. Examples of dimensions include size and duration. Recommended best practice is to select a value from a controlled vocabulary (for example, the list of Internet MediaTypes [[MIME](http://www.isi.edu/in-notes/iana/assignments/media-types/media-types) <http://www.isi.edu/in-notes/iana/assignments/media-types/media-types>] defining computer media formats).

## **Identifier**

Definition: An unambiguous reference to the resource within a given context.

Comment: Recommended best practice is to identify the resource by means of a string or number conforming to a formal identification system. Example formal identification systems include the Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) (including the Uniform Resource Locator (URL)), the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) and the International Standard Book Number (ISBN).

## **Source**

Definition: A Reference to a resource from which the present resource is derived.

Comment: The present resource may be derived from the Source resource in whole or in part. Recommended best practice is to reference the resource by means of a string or number conforming to a formal identification system.

## **Language**

Definition: A language of the intellectual content of the resource.

Comment: Recommended best practice for the values of the Language element is defined by RFC 1766 [[RFC1766](http://info.internet.isi.edu/in-notes/rfc/files/rfc1766.txt) - <http://info.internet.isi.edu/in-notes/rfc/files/rfc1766.txt>] which includes a two-letter Language Code (taken from the ISO 639 standard [[ISO639](http://www.oasis-open.org/cover/iso639a.html) - <http://www.oasis-open.org/cover/iso639a.html>]), followed optionally, by a two-letter Country Code (taken from the ISO 3166 standard [[ISO3166](http://www.oasis-open.org/cover/country3166.html) - <http://www.oasis-open.org/cover/country3166.html>]). For example, 'en' for English, 'fr' for French, or 'en-uk' for English used in the United Kingdom.

## **Relation**

Definition: A reference to a related resource.

Comment: Recommended best practice is to reference the resource by means of a string or number conforming to a formal identification system.

## **Coverage**

Definition: The extent or scope of the content of the resource.

Comment: Coverage will typically include spatial location (a place name or geographic coordinates), temporal period (a period label, date, or date range) or jurisdiction (such as a named administrative entity). Recommended best practice is to select a value from a controlled vocabulary (for example, the Thesaurus of Geographic Names [TGN - [http://shiva.pub.getty.edu/tgn\\_browser/](http://shiva.pub.getty.edu/tgn_browser/)]) and that, where appropriate, named places or time periods be used in preference to numeric identifiers such as sets of coordinates or date ranges.

## **Rights**

Definition: Information about rights held in and over the resource.

Comment: Typically, a Rights element will contain a rights service providing such information. Rights information often encompasses Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Copyright, and various

Property Rights. If the Rights element is absent, no assumptions can be made about the status of these and other rights with respect to the resource.

## Dublin Core in HTML

This information comes from “A User Guide for Simple Dublin Core, Draft Version 5.1”

[http://purl.org/dc/documents/working\\_drafts/wd-guide-current.htm](http://purl.org/dc/documents/working_drafts/wd-guide-current.htm)

and from “Encoding Dublin Core Metadata in HTML”

<ftp://ftp.ietf.org/internet-drafts/draft-kunze-dchtml-02.txt>

The sequence of LINK and META tags describes the information in the surrounding HTML file itself. All embedded DC goes into META tags in the HEAD section of HTML. A sequence of META tags describing a resource is incomplete without an element name prefix with the reference definition of the element set that it identifies for each different prefix appearing in the sequence. Dublin Core records should all have this in the HEAD section of HTML:

```
<link rel = "schema.DC" href = "http://purl.org/DC/elements/1.0/">
```

Each of the 15 elements has a NAME attribute and a CONTENT attribute. The values of the attributes should appear in double quotation marks. The NAME attribute gives the name of the Dublin Core element, following DC [period]. For increased readability the prefix "DC" should be written in upper case letters and element names should be capitalized. It is also recommended to start no more than 1 META element on a line. The words “meta,” “name” and “content” may appear in all capitals, all lower case, or with the first letter capitalized.

All elements are optional and repeatable. They may appear in any order. When repeating elements, it is recommended best practice to list each element definition separately.

If non-ASCII characters are required, use the same conventions as in the body of the document. Ex.: é = Jos&eacute;

Qualifiers are often used to make the element content more specific. There are three ways in which the optional qualifier syntax is currently used to supplement the META tag, which may be summarized as follows:

```
<meta lang = "LANGUAGE_OF_METADATA_CONTENT" ... >
```

```
Ex.: <meta name = "DC.Title" lang = "es" content = "La Mesa Verde y la Silla Roja">
```

```
<meta scheme = "CONTROLLED_FORMAT_OR_VOCABULARY_OF_METADATA" ... >
```

```
Ex.: <meta name = "DC.Subject" scheme = "LCSH" content = "Vietnamese Conflict, 1961-1975">
```

```
<meta name = "PREFIX.ELEMENT_NAME.SUBELEMENT_NAME" ... >
```

```
Ex.: <meta name = "DC.Date.Created" content = "1998-05-14">
```

Qualifiers and subelements are not yet stable and use is not yet part of standards. The DC community is working on developing complete standards

Note: Dublin Core elements can be encoded in a variety of methods, including embedded in HTML meta tags (above) and RDF (Resource Description Framework) using XML (Extensible Markup Language). RDF will probably be used more commonly in the future because it will make developing good search engines more possible.

## Example:

```
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>The University of Iowa Libraries: Gateway to Online Resources</TITLE>
<link rel = "schema.DC" href = "http://purl.org/DC/elements/1.0/">
<META NAME = "DC.Title" CONTENT = "The University of Iowa Libraries: Gateway to Online
  Resources">
<META NAME = "DC.Title" CONTENT = "Gateway to Online Resources">
<META NAME = "DC.Creator" CONTENT = "University of Iowa. Libraries">
<META NAME = "DC.Subject" scheme = "LCSH" CONTENT = "Computer network resources--
  Directories">
<META NAME = "DC.Subject" scheme = "LCSH" CONTENT = "Web sites">
<META NAME = "DC.Description" CONTENT = "Searchable database of selected web sites, sorted also
  by reference category and subject category. Items are selected based on their usefulness to all
  members of the University of Iowa community.">
<META NAME = "DC.Date.Modified" CONTENT = "1999-01-19">
<META NAME = "DC.Type" CONTENT = "dataset">
<META NAME = "DC.Format" CONTENT = "text/html">
<META NAME = "DC.Identifier" CONTENT = "http://gateway.lib.uiowa.edu/index.htm">
<META NAME = "DC.Language" CONTENT = "en">
<META NAME = "DC.Rights" CONTENT = "Copyright (c) 1996-1999. The University of Iowa. All rights
  reserved.">
</HEAD>
```

## Additional Information

Dublin Core Metadata Initiative. (9/27/99) URL <http://purl.org/dc/> [10/7/99]  
Clement, Gail and Pete Winn. (5/12/99) [Glossary for A User Guide for Simple Dublin Core](http://webster.effem.com/dublin/glossary.htm). URL  
<http://webster.effem.com/dublin/glossary.htm> [10/7/99]  
Weibel, Stuart. (1999) "The State of the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative April 1999". *D-Lib Magazine*,  
5(4). URL <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/april99/04weibel.html> [10/7/99]

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