

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS COLLECTIONS POLICY STATEMENTS

Geography and Cartography

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This Collections Policy Statement deals with geography and cartography as subjects rather than formats.

I. Scope

Geographic literature is defined as literature relating to the discipline of geography, including exploration and discovery, general geographic description and analysis, the history of geographic thought, geographic bibliography, historical geography, place-name literature and gazetteers, regional geography, information on geographic education and the various themes encompassed in the subfields of physical and human geography.

Cartographic literature is broadly defined as literature relating to the discipline of cartography, including cartographic processes (data collection, compilation, design, and painting), aerial photography and remote sensing imagery, geographic information systems (GIS), geospatial data analysis, the history of cartography, carto-bibliography, and map librarianship, including map collecting and map conservation. Archival and manuscript material documenting the work of cartographic pioneers is selectively acquired.

The core materials covered by this statement comprise literature in the form of books, serials, and pamphlets relating to geography as general subjects, and fall into Classes G (excluding subclasses G1000-G9980, Atlases, Globes and Maps), GA, GB, GF, and Z6001-Z6028. They are found primarily in the Library's classified collection, supplemented by a selective Reference Book Collection located in the Geography and Map Division.

For treatment of cartographic materials in the narrower sense of maps, atlases, globes, charts, geographic information systems, remote sensing imagery, and other electronic media, etc., see the [Analog Geospatial Materials Collections Policy Statement](#) and the [Digital Geospatial Materials Collections Policy Statement](#).

II. Diverse and Inclusive Collecting Statement

As the nation's de facto national library, the Library of Congress strives to build an expansive, yet selective, collection that records the creativity of the United States and is reflective of the nation's diversity and complexity. The Library's mandate is to have collections that are inclusive and representative of a diversity of creators and ideas. A priority includes acquiring material of underrepresented perspectives and voices in the Library's collections to ensure diverse authorship, points of view, cultural identities, and other historical or cultural factors. The Library also seeks to build a research collection that comprises a globally representative sample of international materials that are diverse in voice and perspective, relative to their places of origin, further supporting the Library's mission to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for Congress and future generations.

Diverse collecting is mentioned within many of the Library's Collections Policy Statements. In addition, the Library has adopted several specific collection policies in an effort to ensure it is building an inclusive and representative collection. For more information, see the Library's Collections Policy Statements on [Ethnic Materials](#), [LGBTQIA+ Studies](#), [Women's and Gender Studies](#), [Independently Published and Self-Published Textual Materials](#), and [Countries and Regions with Acquisitions Challenges](#).

III. Research Strengths

Although the primary concentration of topics related to geographic and cartographic literature is located in Classes G, GA, GB, GF, and Z, material related to geography and cartography is also scattered widely throughout the Library's collections. When considered in its entirety, the Library's body of literature in these two related areas is of sufficient breadth and depth to be placed at the high end of the Research level (Level 4). The Library does not necessarily attempt to acquire every title and edition, but it acquires most works published in the United States and works issued by major publishers in non-U.S. countries. In addition, most of the major, as well as many secondary geographic and cartographic periodicals, are regularly added to the collections. The collection of printed literature on geographic topics is further supplemented by rich documentation on travel, exploration and ethnography in the special format collections.

Geographic coverage is global. Thematically, coverage is very broad, but the greatest emphasis is placed on cartography, the history of cartography, geographic information systems (GIS), geospatial data analysis, and cartographic bibliography.

IV. Collecting Policy

The Library acquires all major current reference works, monographs, and serials published in the fields of geography, cartography, GIS, and physical, human, and regional geography. The Library acquires only basic reference works, monographs, and serials concerning the study and teaching of geography and its subdivisions. The Library acquires important American college-level textbooks in these fields. It also acquires non-U.S. textbooks on the geography of the originating country when such textbooks present important information about the country or its perception. Field manuals

and laboratory manuals in physical geography are not normally acquired.

V. Best Editions and Preferred Formats

For guidance regarding best editions for material acquired via the Copyright Office, see: <http://copyright.gov/circs/circ07b.pdf>.

For guidance regarding recommended formats for material acquired via all other means; e.g., purchase, exchange, gift and transfer, see: <http://www.loc.gov/preservation/resources/rfs>.

For information regarding electronic resources, open digital content, web archiving, and data sets, see the following Supplementary Guidelines: <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/electronicresources.pdf>, <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/opencontent.pdf>, <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/webarchive.pdf>, and <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/datasets.pdf>.

VI. Acquisition Sources

The Library acquires materials in this category in a variety of ways, including copyright deposit, deposit of federally produced materials, approval plan purchases with dealers worldwide (who follow detailed profiles), transfer, gift, other purchases, and exchange. The titles of interest in this category routinely appear in national bibliographies and are readily available to foreign book dealers. New publications are announced in a variety of places, including bibliographies, on web sites, and through online acquisition alert systems in the field. Monitoring of those sources by Recommending Officers ensures continuing development of the collection. Occasionally, special facsimile editions of key historical works in this field are made available, and special funding is often needed to acquire the items for the Library. The increasing presence of digital publications in this category will require the Library to provide adequate digital infrastructure for storage and dissemination.

VII. Collecting Levels

Meeting the Library's Diverse and Inclusive Collecting Statement (see Section II) and the collecting levels outlined below requires continual evaluation of the publishing landscape, sources of expression, current events, and socio-cultural trends to thus maintain effective collecting policies and acquisitions methods. Changes in publishing or in the creation of materials covered by this policy statement may necessitate collecting efforts not explicitly referenced here. Such efforts will be handled on a case-by-case basis while the Library evaluates the need for policy statement updates.

The following list is arranged according to the major subclasses of Classes G, GA, GB, GF, and Z6001-Z6028 of the Library of Congress Classification. The collecting levels are numbered; for a description, see Collecting Levels (<http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/cpc.html>).

Geography and Cartography (General)

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
G1-G64	Periodicals, serials, societies, congresses, collected works, dictionaries, directories	4	4
G65-G69	Bibliographies of geographers	4	4
G70-71	Philosophy, methodology, Geographic Information Systems	4	4
G72-G77	Study and teaching research	3	3
G78	Museums. Exhibitions	4	4
G80-G99	History of geography	5	4
G100.5-110	Toponymy (gazetteers, geographic names and terms, distances, geographical positions) Gazetteers and place name literature are listed as subcategories for each geographical region defined in classes D and F. Gazetteers and place name literature pertaining to the United States and its individual states are collected at the highest end of level	4	4
G113-138.5	General Works. Includes U.S. college level textbooks.	3	3
G141	Historical Geography. Literature pertaining to the historical geography of individual localities has not been classed consistently, although it is often classed as a subcategory for each geographical region defined in classes D and F as well as various themes within class H.	5	4
G142	Aerial geography. Related literature pertaining to the use of aerial photography in the process of mapping is classed under TR696 (Photogrammetry), TR810 (Aerial Photography. Photographic Interpretation), and TR713 (Space Photography).	4	4

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
G149-G180	Travel, voyages and travels Travel guides of national scope, level 4. Regional and local guides may be acquired when the information provided cannot be found in national guides.	4	4
G200-G336	History of discoveries, explorations and travels Literature pertaining to discovery, exploration and travel of individual localities are classed as sub-categories for each geographical region defined in classes D and F, and for the U.S. as a whole under E101- E135. Literature pertaining to the U.S. and individual states is collected at the highest end of level 4.	5	4
G369-G503	Historic voyages and travels	4	4
G521-G539	Adventures, shipwrecks, buried treasure, etc.	4	3
G540-G570	Seafaring life, ocean, travel, etc.	4	3
G575-G890	Arctic and Antarctic regions	4	4
G905-G910	Tropics (general)	4	4
G912-G922	Northern and Southern hemispheres	4	4
[G1000-G9980]	Atlases, globes, maps - see the Analog Geospatial Materials Collections Policy Statement .		

Mathematical Geography

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
GA1-GA2.5	Periodicals, societies, serials, collections	4	4
GA3-GA23	History and general works	4	4

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
GA51-GA87	Surveys (general) Related materials pertaining to surveying and mapping in specialized disciplines are classed as QB224-QB237 (Latitude and Longitude), QB301-QB328 (Geodetic Surveying), TA501- TA616 (Surveying), and UG470- UG474 (Military Surveying, Topography, and Mapping), and VK588-VK597 (Marine Hydrography. Hydrographic Surveying).	4	4

Cartography (Map Creation and Works about Maps)

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
GA101-GA102	Periodicals, societies, serials, collections, dictionaries, directories, philosophy, methodology	4	4
GA103-GA108	General works, treatises, and advanced textbooks	4	4
GA109	Aerial cartography see G142 above	4	4
GA110-GA118	Projection, map scales	4	4
GA125-GA155	Digital mapping, Map drawing, modeling, printing, reading, etc. Related material pertaining to specialized mapping is classed as CC76 (Archaeology. Surveying and Mapping. Aerial Photography), QB65-QB66 (Celestial Atlases and Charts. Astronomical Globes), QB595-QB605 (Lunar and Planetary Maps), QC822 (Geometric Maps), QC878 (Weather Maps), QE36 (Geological Maps), QK63 (Vegetation Mapping), S494 (Agriculture Mapping), SD387 (Forestry Mapping), TL587 (Aeronautical Charts), TN273 (Mining Maps), VK (nautical mapping), U (military mapping)	4	4
GA190	Museums. Exhibitions	5	4
GA192-GA197.3	Collections of maps, globes, etc.	5	4
GA197.5-GA198	Cartographers	5	4

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
GA201-GA288	History. General by period, globe-making, globes	5	4
GA300-GA325	History. World maps, general atlases, etc. Works on the history and description of atlases and maps.	5	4
GA341-GA1776	History. Maps. By region and country For the atlases and maps themselves, see the Analog Geospatial Materials Collections Policy Statement .	5	4

Physical Geography

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
GB3-GB5	Congresses, collected works	4	4
GB11-GB21	History and philosophy	4	4
GB23-GB26.2	Study and teaching	3	3
GB51-GB54.5	General works, treatises and advanced textbooks	4	3
GB111-GB398.7	By region or country	4	3
GB400-GB649	Geomorphology, landform, terrain	4	4
GB651-GB2998	Hydrology, water	4	4
GB5000-GB5030	Natural disasters	5	4

Human Geography (Human Ecology, Anthropogeography)

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
GF1-GF9	Periodicals, congresses, collections	4	4
GF13-GF23	History and philosophy	4	4
GF26-GF28	Study and teaching	4	3
GF31-GF50	General works, treatises, and advanced textbooks	4	4
GF51-GF95	Environmental influences on man	5	4
GF500-GF895	By region and country	4	4

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
GF101-GF127	Settlements Urban geography of individual cities is classed under respective cities in Classes D and F. Literature pertaining to U.S. cities is collected at the highest end of level 4	4	4

Bibliography

LC Classification	Subject	U.S. Levels	Non-U.S. Levels
Z286.M3	Maps: bookselling and publishing	5	4
Z692.M3	Maps in libraries	5	4
Z697.M17	Classification of literature on maps	5	4
Z6001-Z6020	Geography and travels	5	4
Z6021-Z6028	Maps and cartography	5	4

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