

Best Practices for Using LCGFT for Music Resources

Version 1.2 (July 8, 2019)¹

Prepared by the Genre/Form Task Force and Vocabularies Subcommittee, Cataloging and Metadata Committee, Music Library Association²

These best practices were developed to help catalogers apply LCGFT (*Library of Congress Genre/Form Terms for Library and Archival Materials*) music terms in the interim period between the release of the terms in early 2015 and the availability of music-specific content in the Library of Congress draft *Genre/Form Terms Manual*³. This document will be periodically updated, inasmuch as it will continue to provide supplemental guidance beyond the instructions expected to appear in the LC manual.

Contents

Overview of music terms in LCGFT.....	1
Structure of the LCGFT music terms	2
Guidelines	4
General choice of terms.....	4
Specific situations	7
Art music	7
Neither “Art music” nor “Folk music”	8
Chamber music	8
Arrangements	8
Excerpts.....	8
Lead sheets and fakebooks.....	9
Compilations	10
Program music	10
MARC coding.....	11
Use with LCMPT and LCSH	12

Overview of music terms in LCGFT

The *Library of Congress Genre/Form Terms for Library and Archival Materials (LCGFT)* terms for music have been developed jointly by the Music Library Association Bibliographic Control Committee (now the Cataloging and Metadata Committee) and the Library of Congress Policy and Standards Division (now

¹ Revision history: Version 1.0 released on June 8, 2015; Version 1.1 released January 19, 2018. Previous versions of this document are available at: <http://cmc.blog.musiclibraryassoc.org/mla-best-practices/>.

² This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>.

³ Available at <https://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreeLCGFT/freelcgft.html>. Instruction sheet “J 250. Music” is currently a placeholder.

the Policy, Training, and Cooperative Programs Division). The music terms are a fully integrated subset of LCGFT as a whole, which contains genre/form terms from a number of disciplines.⁴

Most of the terms originated from the *Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)*. New terms were added to fill out the thesaurus hierarchy and to correct bias toward Western classical music in LCSH. While aspects of medium of performance can occasionally be gleaned from some genre/form terms, specific details on performing forces should be recorded using the *Library of Congress Medium of Performance Thesaurus (LCMPT)*. Guidelines for the application of those terms are provided in the parallel MLA document *Best Practices for Using LCMPT*.⁵

LCGFT is suitable for both notated music (scores, parts, etc.) and performed music resources (sound recordings, video recordings, etc.).

LCGFT terms are generally plural (except for broad headings such as “Popular music”) and the first letter is capitalized.⁶

Structure of the LCGFT music terms

LCGFT is a true thesaurus, in that every term has at least one broader term (BT), except for the highest-level terms. In the case of music, the top term is “Music,” but many music terms may also be narrower terms to high level terms outside the music part of the hierarchy (e.g., “Teaching pieces (Music)” has BTs of “Music” and “Instructional and educational works,” a term from the general hierarchy; “Librettos” has BT “Drama,” a term in the literature hierarchy; “Remixes (Music)” has BTs of “Dance music,” “Popular music,” and “Sound recordings”).

⁴ LCGFT is searchable via OCLC Connexion and Classification Web, and freely available at <http://id.loc.gov/authorities/genreForms.html> and <https://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreeLCGFT/GENRE.pdf>.

⁵ Available at: <http://cmc.blog.musiclibraryassoc.org/documents/best-practices-for-using-lcmpt/>.

⁶ See the LCGFT Manual, Appendix B: Capitalization: <https://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreeLCGFT/AppendixB.pdf>

Below is a truncated version of the top levels of the **Music** hierarchy:

- Accompaniments (Music)
 - Recorded accompaniments
 - Karaoke
- Arrangements (Music)
 - Hymn concertatos
 - Intabulations
 - Piano scores
 - Simplified editions (Music)
 - Vocal scores
- Art music
 - A'ak
 - Aleatory music
 - Open form music
 - Anthems
 - Ballades (Instrumental music)
 - Barcaroles
 - Cadenzas
 - Canons (Music)
 - ...
- Chants
 - Antiphons (Music)
 - Cantillations
 - Gregorian chants
 - Graduals (Chants)
 - ...
- Dramatic music
 - Ballad operas
 - Jiggs (Ballad operas)
 - Ballets (Music)
 - Bangsawan (Music)
 - ...
- Filk music
- Folk music
 - Aleke
 - Blues (Music)
 - Blues-rock music
 - Boogie woogie (Music)
 - Rockabilly music
 - ...
- Functional music
 - Acclamations (Music)
 - Background music
 - Camp songs
 - ...
 - Dance music
 - Aleke
 - Allemandes (Music)
 - Bachata
 - Ballets (Music)
 - ...
- Event music
 - Advent music
 - All Saints' Day music
 - Ascension Day music
 - ...
 - Carnival music
 - ...
- Glitch music
- Humorous music
 - Humorous songs
 - ...
- Hymn tunes
- Improvisations (Music)
- Instrumental settings
- Medleys (Music)
- Musical settings
- Notated music
 - Musical sketches
 - Part books
 - Parts (Music)
 - Scores
 - Chorus scores
 - Fakebooks (Music)
 - Lead sheets
 - ...
 - Service books (Music)
 - Antiphonaries (Service books)
 - ...
 - Songbooks
 - Tune books
- Popular music
 - Afrobeat
 - Agbadja modern (Music)
 - Arabesk (Popular music)
 - Bachata
 - Bailā (Music)
 - ...
- Sacred music
 - Advent music
 - All Saints' Day music
 - Antiphons (Music)
 - ...
- Sampler albums (Sound recordings)
- Songs
 - Aguinaldos
 - Airs de cour
 - Ayres
 - ...
- Sound art
 - Soundscapes (Music)
- Teaching pieces (Music)
 - Methods (Music)
 - Studies (Music)

Guidelines

Examples that follow illustrate usage in bibliographic records; also see [MARC Coding](#) section.

General choice of terms

- Generally choose the most specific appropriate term available

An LP from a hard rock band

655 #7 \$a Rock music. \$2 lcgft

NOT

655 #7 \$a Popular music. \$2 lcgft

A sonata for piano:

655 #7 \$a Sonatas. \$2 lcgft

NOT

655 #7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

- If the work being cataloged combines aspects of two genres/forms that are in different hierarchies, or exemplifies more than one genre/form, give multiple terms as appropriate

An art song for solo voice

655 #7 \$a Songs. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

An art song for voice and piano

655 #7 \$a Songs. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Chamber music. \$2 lcgft

An album of pop songs

655 #7 \$a Songs. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Popular music. \$2 lcgft

A virelai for solo voice

655 #7 \$a Virelais (Formes fixes) \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Monophonic chansons. \$2 lcgft

A compilation of guitar arrangements of diverse genres; resource represents itself as intended for use at weddings

655 #7 \$a Wedding music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Popular music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Arrangements (Music) \$2 lcgft

An album of traditional Irish drinking songs

655 #7 \$a Drinking songs. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Folk songs. \$2 lcgft

A recording of a rock musical

655 #7 \$a Musicals. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Rock music. \$2 lcgft

An “elevator music” LP of jazz instrumental covers of pop songs

655 #7 \$a Background music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Arrangements (Music) \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Jazz. \$2 lcgft

Songs for women’s chorus (“songs” stated on resource)

655 #7 \$a Songs. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

- For notated music resources, assign one or more terms appropriate to the format of notated music, in addition to any genre/form terms describing the musical work.⁷ Examples illustrate only notated music aspects:

A vocal score

655 #7 \$a Vocal scores. \$2 lcgft

A score and set of parts for a string quartet

655 #7 \$a Scores. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Parts (Music) \$2 lcgft

A solo piano work⁸

655 #7 \$a Scores. \$2 lcgft

- For sound recordings, an analogous hierarchy of terms does not exist which parallels the hierarchy of notated music terms. Assign terms for particular types of sound recordings that are currently available in LCGFT, as applicable. Note that these terms may reside outside the music hierarchy.

A live recording of an opera

655 #7 \$a Operas. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Live sound recordings. \$2 lcgft

⁷ RDA definitions of these formats may serve as supplemental guidance to LCGFT scope notes.

⁸ The scope note for Scores cites the RDA definition (emphasis added): Graphical, symbolic, or word-based musical notation representing the sounds of all the parts of an ensemble **or a work for solo performer** or electronic media.

A collection of alternate takes of a jazz recording session

655 #7 \$a Jazz. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Alternate takes (Sound recordings) \$2 lcgft

An original Broadway cast album of a heavy-metal musical

655 #7 \$a Musicals. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Heavy metal (Music) \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Original cast recordings. \$2 lcgft

A broadcast recording of a country and popular music radio program

655 #7 \$a Country music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Popular music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Country music radio programs. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Popular music radio programs. \$2 lcgft

Recording of Saint Paul Sunday (classical music show featuring live recordings of chamber music)

655 #7 \$a Live sound recordings. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Classical music radio programs. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Interviews. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Chamber music. \$2 lcgft

A studio recording of a symphony

655 #7 \$a Symphonies. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Sound recordings. \$2 lcgft

Note: The previous LCGFT BPs (v. 1.1) instructed catalogers not to apply “Sound recordings,” based on now-removed instructions in the authority record to apply only to collections where no narrower terms applied. The term “Sound recordings” is effectively a heading of last resort, i.e., it is a broad term that may be used to capture the sound recording aspect of a resource in cases where a narrower term is not available.⁹ MLA is actively exploring SACO proposal options for potential narrower terms.

- For moving images capturing musical works or performances, add appropriate genre terms to cover the musical content. Add additional terms according to the instructions in the LC Genre/Form Term Manual for Moving Images (italicized in examples).¹⁰

⁹ LC Genre/Form Term Manual sheet J110 states: "Assign a term that is broader or more general than the genre or form than it is intended to cover when it is not possible to establish a precise term."

<https://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreelCGFT/J110.pdf>, accessed June 15, 2019

¹⁰ LC Genre/Form Term Manual for Moving Images (J240) specifies the use of top-level terms for length and fiction/non-fiction; these are exceptions to the principle of specificity. See:

<https://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreelCGFT/J240.pdf>.

A recording of a televised live broadcast of a full-length opera, sung in French with English subtitles

655 #7 \$a Operas. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Televised performances. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Nonfiction television programs. \$2 lcgft

An instructional video recording on rock drum set technique, followed by a performance by the instructor's band

655 #7 \$a Instructional films. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Rock music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Filmed performances. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Feature films. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Nonfiction films. \$2 lcgft

Specific situations

Art music

Use "Art music" for works of art music that cannot be described using more specific terms in the Art music hierarchy (e.g., a concert piece for clarinet), and for works of art music otherwise described by terms that are not in the Art music hierarchy (e.g., Songs, Dance music, Dramatic music).

A piece for orchestra

655 #7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

(No more specific term applies)

A gigue for harpsichord

655 #7 \$a Jigs (Dance music) \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

Compare with

A collection of traditional English jigs

655 #7 \$a Jigs (Dance music) \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Folk music. \$2 lcgft

("Jigs (Music)" is NT of "Dance music" which is NT of "Functional music")

A 19th-century German opera

655 #7 \$a Operas. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

("Operas" is NT of "Dramatic music")

Neither “Art music” nor “Folk music”

Do not use the terms “Art music” or “Folk music” for the music of cultures that have no art/folk music division. When in doubt as to whether the culture in question observes such a distinction, do not assign these terms.

A West African griot recording
655 #7 \$a Songs. \$2 lcgft

Chamber music

Use “Chamber music” (or one of its narrower terms) for works of art music for 2 or more performers whose medium is described in terms of individual instruments/voices and/or by unspecified ensemble terms (e.g., “bowed string ensemble”).

A work for a consort of viols
655 #7 \$a Chamber music. \$2 lcgft

A work for flute and bassoon
655 #7 \$a Chamber music. \$2 lcgft

A motet for three voices
655 #7 \$a Motets. \$2 lcgft
 (“Motets” is NT of “Part songs” which is NT of “Chamber music”)

Generally do not use “Chamber music” for:

1. Works for larger ensembles (e.g., orchestra, band, chorus), or
2. Music for unaccompanied solo performers

Arrangements

Use “Arrangements (Music)” for resources embodying one or more arrangements if a narrower term indicating arrangement cannot be applied. In addition to genre/form terms describing the arrangement, assign one or more genre/form terms describing the original work if the arrangement retains the characteristics of that particular genre/form.

A sonata originally for violin and piano arranged for flute and piano
655 #7 \$a Sonatas. \$2 lcgft
655 #7 \$a Arrangements (Music) \$2 lcgft

Excerpts

Use “Excerpts” for resources embodying one or more excerpts of one or more musical works. In addition to genre/form terms describing the excerpt, assign one or more genre/form terms describing the complete work if the excerpt retains the characteristics of that particular genre/form.

An album of selections from a motion picture soundtrack

655 #7 \$a Motion picture music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Excerpts. \$2 lcgft

A collection of cadenzas for solo instrument excerpted from various concertos

655 #7 \$a Cadenzas \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Excerpts. \$2 lcgft

A chaconne excerpted from a suite with each movement of a different form

655 #7 \$a Chaconnes. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Excerpts. \$2 lcgft

A collection of arias and duets from various operas, original accompaniment¹¹

655 #7 \$a Operas. \$2 lcgft [Optionally: 655 #7 \$a Dramatic music. \$2 lcgft]

655 #7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Excerpts. \$2 lcgft

A collection of arias and duets from various operas, performed by singer(s)
with piano

655 #7 \$a Operas. \$2 lcgft [Optionally: 655 #7 \$a Dramatic music. \$2 lcgft]

655 #7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Arrangements (Music) \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Excerpts. \$2 lcgft

Lead sheets and fakebooks

1) Lead sheets. *Grove Music Online* defines a lead sheet as a “score, in manuscript or printed form, that contains a melody or tune, the basic harmonic structure as tune accompaniment, and the lyrics (if any) of the composition. Many jazz performances are realized from lead sheets, which may be collected and bound together to form a Fake book.” Use “Lead sheets” for a single composition. Also use for multiple lead sheets not intended for use as a fakebook.

A single notated jazz tune consisting of melody line and chord symbols

655 #7 \$a Jazz. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Lead sheets. \$2 lcgft

¹¹ We wish to acknowledge the wide range of opinions on applying a genre for the larger work to excerpts and the complicated and varied scenarios requiring cataloger's judgment. Most MARC-based systems are not set up to link terms (e.g. "Excerpts" linked to "Operas"); applying the genre of the whole is an imperfect solution that provides information that may be important to users. Informal student polling also supports the application in particular of "Operas" for excerpts. We hope catalogers will respect the judgment of their colleagues.

Transcriptions of a jazz album consisting of fully notated saxophone line and chord symbols

655 #7 \$a Jazz. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Lead sheets. \$2 lcgft

2) Fakebooks (Music). Use when indicated on resource or when a publication is clearly intended to function as a fakebook.

A fakebook of jazz and pop standards

655 #7 \$a Popular music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Jazz. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Fakebooks (Music) \$2 lcgft

“The real book” for bass clef instruments

655 #7 \$a Jazz. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Fakebooks (Music) \$2 lcgft

Compilations

It is **NOT** redundant to use a mixture of broader and narrower terms from the same hierarchy for a compilation of individual works if some of them lack a more specific term:

An LP of solo flamenco guitar music, including saetas, seguidillas, sevillanas, and bulerias

655#7 \$a Saetas. \$2 lcgft

655#7 \$a Seguidillas (Music) \$2 lcgft

655#7 \$a Sevillanas (Music) \$2 lcgft

655#7 \$a Flamenco music. \$2 lcgft

(Every form on the LP has an equivalent corresponding term except bulerias, so Flamenco music is used to describe that form, even though it is a broader term for the other forms.)

A notated music anthology of solo violin music, containing sonatas, partitas, concert etudes, and contemporary compositions not of a particular form

655#7 \$a Sonatas. \$2 lcgft

655#7 \$a Suites. \$2 lcgft

655#7 \$a Concert etudes. \$2 lcgft

655#7 \$a Art music. \$2 lcgft

655#7 \$a Scores. \$2 lcgft

(Every form has an equivalent corresponding term, and Art music is used to describe the works not of a particular form or genre.)

Program music

Generally do not apply “Program music” to vocal music with words (text set to music).

MARC coding

For bibliographic records, apply LCGFT terms in the 655 field. If electing to record genre(s) in field 380 (Form of Work) in bibliographic records, prefer LCGFT as the source vocabulary. For authority records, terms may be input in the 380 field. Additional instructions on coding these fields may be found in the [MARC Formats](#) (Authority Format and Bibliographic Format). Specific guidance pertaining to the use of 380 fields in authority records is available in the Library of Congress [Descriptive Cataloging Manual, Z1](#).¹²

655 field (Index term-genre/form) (R)

First indicator (Type of heading)

- Use # - Basic

Second indicator (Thesaurus)

- Use 7 – Source specified in subfield \$2

\$a Genre/form data or focus term (NR)

\$b - (not for use with 1st indicator=#)

\$c - (not for use with 1st indicator=#)

\$2 (Source of term) (NR)

- Use: \$2 lcft

\$3 (Materials specified) (NR)

Use of this subfield is optional.

[245 10 Symphony no. 6 : \\$b Pathétique ; Hamlet : overture-fantasia / \\$c Tchaikovsky.](#)

[655 #7 \\$3 Symphony \\$a Symphonies. \\$2 lcft](#)

[655 #7 \\$3 Hamlet \\$a Overtures. \\$2 lcft](#)

[655 #7 \\$3 Hamlet \\$a Fantasias \(Music\) \\$2 lcft](#)

Subdivisions (\$v, \$x, \$y, \$z)

Do *not* use any subdivisions with LCGFT terms.

The following subfields may be used when appropriate:

- \$0 - Authority record control number or standard number (R)
- \$1 - Real World Object URI (R)¹³
- \$6 - Linkage (NR)
- \$8 - Field link and sequence number (R)

¹² <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsoc/dcmz1.pdf>

¹³ Subfield \$1, RWO URI, is defined for MARC field 655 but is not currently applicable for LCGFT.

Use with LCMPT and LCSH

Until LCGFT terms are fully implemented, and a method for generating genre and medium of performance terms--as well as terms for geographic region, time period, and creator, contributor and audience characteristics¹⁴--from headings currently coded as LCSH has been developed and deployed:

- Use LCMPT terms in 382¹⁵
- Use LCGFT terms in 655
- Continue to use LCSH headings (Genre/form, medium of performance & mixed headings) in 650 fields according to the guidelines in the *Subject Headings Manual*

382 01 \$b bassoon \$n 1 \$a orchestra \$e 1 \$r 1 \$t 1 \$2 lcmpt

650 #0 \$a Concertos (Bassoon)

655 #7 \$a Concertos. \$2 lcgft

382 01 \$a bassoon \$n 1 \$a piano \$n 1 \$s 2 \$2 lcmpt

650 #0 \$a Concertos (Bassoon) \$v Solo with piano.

655 #7 \$a Concertos. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Arrangements (Music) \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Scores. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Parts (Music) \$2 lcgft

382 01 \$a violin \$n 2 \$a viola \$n 1 \$a cello \$n 1 \$s 4 \$2 lcmpt

650 #0 \$a String quartets.

655 #7 \$a Chamber music. \$2 lcgft

382 01 \$a cello \$n 1 \$a piano \$n 1 \$s 2 \$2 lcmpt

650 #0 \$a Sonatas (Cello and piano) \$v Scores and parts.

655 #7 \$a Sonatas. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Chamber music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Scores. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Parts (Music) \$2 lcgft

382 01 \$a bass clarinet \$n 1 \$a violin \$n 1 \$a percussion \$n 1 \$a computer \$n 1 \$s 4 \$2 lcmpt

650 #0 \$a Quartets (Clarinet¹⁶, percussion, computer, violin) \$v Scores.

655 #7 \$a Chamber music. \$2 lcgft

655 #7 \$a Scores. \$2 lcgft

¹⁴ Terms for creator, contributor, and audience characteristics reside in the thesaurus *Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms* (LCDGT). Methods for assigning terms for geographic and temporal facets are in development.

¹⁵ Guidelines for the application of LCMPT are described in the parallel MLA document *Best Practices for Using LCMPT*, available at: <http://cmc.blog.musiclibraryassoc.org/documents/best-practices-for-using-lcmpt/>.

¹⁶ Currently, SHM H 1917.5 does not permit the use of "bass clarinet" in this pattern heading, though the term is available in LCMPT.