Brief MARC record pointers

Please keep this material where you can refer to it easily and often!

Only staff members trained and given permission by CCLS staff to perform Koha Fast cataloging should be working with cataloging records.

CCLS staff need enough brief record information to locate full MARC records for your items. Too little information wastes our time and yours.

If you send material via delivery envelope, make sure your library's name is on each sheet you send.

Please send physical items only if we request them.

Please be patient. There are 37 other locations involved. Accurate catalog records will be provided as quickly as possible.

Please add brief MARC, and do not request cataloging, for single-author fiction, in any format, including audiobooks and board books.

Please do not add nonfiction more than 10 years old. Exceptions may be made for titles of local interest.

Cataloging priority will be given to nonfiction, as it needs classification, and movies, as multiple editions can cause major headaches.

For each title you add, check the online catalog. Open the OPAC in a browser window, and look at how your just-added title looks, before going on to the next one, and correct any errors you find.

Some of the most common errors I find are:

1. **Check for existing records!** Scan the ISBN or UPC first, and then type the title if you don't find a matching code. Make sure your item matches the item type in an existing record before you add your copy.

2. **ASIN numbers are not helpful.** These are Amazon.com stock numbers, and have no value for cataloging purposes.

3. **Do not put multiple authors' names in 100 fields.** Always use a 700 field for a joint author, illustrator, editor, etc.

4. **Missing capitalizations.** Please capitalize the first word in a title, and any proper nouns (personal or company names, names of specific places) you add.

5. **Format errors.** Please make sure the format of your item exactly matches the record you want to add it to.

6. **ISBN errors.** Missing or miscopied ISBNs or UPC codes identified as ISBNs can prevent locating a MARC record, or make it more difficult and time-consuming.

7. **Materials added are out-of-date.** Nonfiction, more than 10 years old, should not be added. Some subjects are past their useful life sooner, especially financial, legal, medical, tax, and travel guides. Local history is an exception.

8. **Missing punctuation.** At the very minimum, there should be a colon after the title, but before the subtitle, and a slash at the end of the title/subtitle, before the author's name. Without these markings, your title may not be easily readable in the catalog.

9. **Series titles in the 245 field.** Series titles belong in the 490 field, and nowhere else.

10. **Spelling errors.** If it isn't spelled correctly, how can you or your patrons find it?

6/25/2025