



UW/SIMM Video Game Metadata Schema

University of Washington Information School
Game Metadata Research (GAMER) Group
and Seattle Interactive Media Museum

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2013

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Element: Title [M] [R] ¹

- Definition:** Proper names that are used to refer to a video game, assigned by the creator. (modified from CIDOC CRM², 2011, p.16)
- Instruction:** Transcribed title: Transcribe the title as it appears on the Chief Source of Information (CSI).³ When different titles are used in the CSI, transcribe the most prominently displayed title. When it is unclear which title is most prominent, transcribe the most frequently occurring iteration of the title used in the CSI. For variant titles, use the "Alternative title" attribute. For commonly used shortened versions of transcribed titles, use the "Abbreviated title" attribute. For titles used commonly in conversation, use the "Colloquial title" attribute.
- When the title is in a language other than English, transcribe it in the original language. When the title is written in multiple languages, transcribe it as it appears in those languages.
- When there is no title, or the title is unknown, specify "Unknown". Do not correct errors, if any, but denote the errors with [sic].
- Attributes:** Type: transcribed [M][R], alternative [R], abbreviated [R], colloquial [R]

Element: Edition

- Definition:** A word or phrase appearing in the game being described that indicates a difference in either content or form between it and a related game (e.g., second edition, greatest hits, collector's edition, limited edition). (modified from FRBR⁴, 2009, p. 41)
- Instruction:** Transcribe the edition information as it appears on the CSI, if applicable.

¹ [M]: Mandatory, [R]: Repeatable

² <http://www.cidoc-crm.org/index.html>

³ See Page 15

⁴ <http://www.ifla.org/publications/functional-requirements-for-bibliographic-records>

Element: Series [R]

- Definition: Proper name(s) of a set of related games, often indicated by consecutive numbering, continuing narrative, or similarities in game play and themes, to which the game being described belongs.
- Instruction: Determine and record the series based on the CSI. Series name is often indicated by the title (e.g., *Final Fantasy VII*; *Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*) or subtitle (e.g., *A Gabriel Knight Mystery*).

Element: Franchise [R]

- Definition: A commonly used name referring to the intellectual property, related data, and content shared among a group of cultural objects to which the game being described belongs.
- Instruction: Determine and record the franchise information by consulting the stipulated secondary sources of information.

Element: Corporate body [M][R]

- Definition: An individual, organization, or group of individuals or organizations responsible for creation, realization, manufacture, marketing, and/or distribution of a game (modified from FRBR⁵, 2009, p.25)
- Instruction: Determine the responsible corporate body by consulting the CSI. If available, record the corporate body information according to the corresponding authority heading. If no authority heading is currently available, transcribe the information as it appears in the CSI and denote as [transcribed]. If the corporate body information is not available for mandatory attributes, record "unknown."
- Specify the role of the corporate body. Note that the distributors may or may not be the same entity as the game creator(s) or publisher(s). In case of distributor(s), record the name of the distributor(s) who have market rights for the North American region (e.g.: Valve Corporation).
- Attributes: Role: developer [M][R], publisher [M][R], distributor [R], licensor [R], licensee [R]

⁵ <http://www.ifla.org/publications/functional-requirements-for-bibliographic-records>

Element: Platform [M][R]

Definition:	The hardware and operating system on which the game was designed to be played.
Instruction:	Transcribe the platform(s) for which the game is made as it appears on the CSI. If no platform information is readily available from CSI, enter the value as "unknown".
Examples:	Playstation 3, XBOX 360, Nintendo 3DS, Android 4.4 KitKat, Apple iOS, PC Windows XP, Mac OS X

Element: Format [M]

Definition:	The distribution medium or method that provides the executable code of a video game.
Instruction:	Determine the media format by examining the physical or digital object. Select the most appropriate format from the following list: cartridge, optical, magnetic, downloadable, streaming, unknown.

Element: System requirements [R]

Definition:	Hardware, firmware, and/or software components that are prerequisites for running the game on a particular platform.
Instruction:	Determine system requirements from CSI. If applicable, describe "minimum" and "recommended" requirements.
Attributes:	Minimum; Recommended
Example:	2GB RAM, 8GB hard disk space, DirectX 9.0C, 256MB ATI HD26000 XT video card, DirectX 9.0c compatible sound card, Quad Core 1.8GHz processor

Element: Special hardware [R]

Definition:	A hardware that is required or recommended for playing the game in addition to the main platform (e.g. motion controller; gaming headset).
Instruction:	Transcribe the required and/or recommended special hardware as it appears in the CSI. In many cases, this information can be identified on the CSI as "compatible" hardware.
Attributes:	Required; Recommended

Element: Networked features [R]

- Definition: The ways in which the game can be experienced through connection(s) to other entities, such as game companies, third-party organizations, and other players.
- Instruction: Transcribe the networked features as they appear on CSI. If the game does not offer any networked features, record "none" . If the information cannot be determined with certainty, enter the value as "unknown".
- Example: online multiplayer, content download, leaderboards, voice, spectators

Element: Connectivity [R]

- Definition: The technology through which the online features are realized.
- Instruction: Where applicable, specify connectivity information for the following three attributes: "Method," "Network Type," and "Bandwidth."
- Attributes: Method: wired, wireless, both
Network Type: user-to-user, server-based, hybrid
Bandwidth [R]: required, recommended
- Example: Method: both, Type of Network: server-based, Bandwidth: broadband required

Element: DRM [R]

- Definition: Digital rights management technologies intended to control the use of the game.
- Instruction: Determine the information from the CSI. Select the most appropriate term(s) from the following list: limited install activations, persistent online authentication, software tampering, media requirement, license key, digital resale restriction, other.

Element: Additional content [R]

Definition:	The type and the name of the additional content including DLC, mods, patches, etc.
Instruction:	Record the name and type of any additional content available for the game, as indicated by the CSI.
Attributes:	Name Type: DLC, mod, patch, other

Element: Number of players [M][R]

Definition:	The number or range of the number of players the game can accommodate either separately or concurrently.
Instruction:	Determine the number of players based on the CSI. Indicate in the field the maximum range of concurrent players (e.g. 1, 1-2, 1-8). If the game is a Massively Multiplayer Online game indicate "1-Many" in the field. If the game has additional modes (e.g. local or online competitive/cooperative modes) record the number of players for those modes by repeating the element.

Element: Region code [M][R]

Definition:	The classification code that indicates the video encoding and regional hardware necessary to realize the game.
Instruction:	Transcribe the region code(s) as they appear on the CSI. On physical cases, they may be located on the back or spine of the case. On physical discs or cartridges, they may be located on the front side of the medium. If the secondary sources confirm that the item is not region-specific, record "region-free". If the classification code is unknown, record "unknown" .
Examples:	North America NTSC-U/C, Japan and Asia NTSC-J, Europe, New Zealand and Australia PAL, China NTSC-C

Element: Language [R]

- Definition:** The classification code for the language(s) in which the game conveys information.
- Instruction:** List all the primary language(s) in which the game conveys information. When users can change language settings, provide all the available language options. Use the appropriate language code from ISO 639⁶ . If no language code is available use "OT" for "other."
- Examples:** EN, JA, FR, KO

Element: Retail release date [M][R]

- Definition:** The date of the public/commercial release of the game.
- Instruction:** Determine the release date from the CSI, and record it following the ISO 8601 Standard⁷ (i.e., YYYY-MM-DD) with the source and the date when this information was acquired.
- Example:** 2013-01-18 (allgame.com, 2014-03-19)

Element: Rating [R]

- Definition:** The classification of the content in the video game for informed decision making about the game, provided by organizations such as professional associations, game distributors, or creators. Note that some older games do not have this rating information.
- Instruction:** Transcribe the rating as it appears on the CSI. When the rating is unknown, or the game existed before current rating system(s), specify "unknown". Transcribe all information pertaining to the rating starting with the rating organization (such as ESRB) and including the audience (such as "M= Mature 17+") as well as the reason(s) listed alongside the rating information (for example "Blood and Gore. Nudity. Violence."). When multiple ratings appear for a single game, transcribe all of them by repeating the element.
- Example:** MA-13 Parental Discretion Advised. Mature Audiences; Everyone. E. (ESRB)

⁶ <http://www.oasis-open.org/cover/iso639a.html>

⁷ <http://www.w3.org/TR/NOTE-datetime>

Element: Official website [R]

- Definition: A URL of the website for the game from the companies officially associated with the game.
- Instruction: Transcribe the URL of the official website as it appears in the CSI.

Element: Price/MSRP [R]

- Definition: The manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) at time of initial release in the region where the game was released.
- Instruction: Determine the Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) from the CSI. Record the price with the currency, source, and the date when this information was acquired.
- Example: 59.99 (USD, Amazon.com, 2014-03-25)

Element: Award [R]

- Definition: The name(s) of any awards the game has won and the granting body that awarded them.
- Instruction: Record any notable awards the game has won with the bestowing organization.

Element: Customization options

- Definition: The in-game options for difficulty level and characters which can be modified by the player for personalized experience.
- Instruction: Determine the options for customizing the "Difficulty level" and "Character" from the CSI. Transcribe the different options for the "Difficulty level." Select "yes" or "no" to indicate the possibility of "Character" customization.
- Attributes: Difficulty level
Character: Y/N

Element: Packaging

- Definition: All items included in the original packaging of the game.
- Instruction: Applicable only to physical games. Refer to CSI to determine all the physical items included. If the game is digitally distributed with no physical components, record "N/A" .
- Example: 2 game discs, soundtrack, manual, action figures

Element: Genre [M][R]

- Definition: The overall nature of a game based on its objectives, types of rules, distinctive characteristics, modes of action, manners of gameplay, and how a player interacts with it.
- Instruction: Determine genre from the primary and secondary CSI. Select the most appropriate terms from the controlled vocabulary⁸.

Element: Plot [R]

- Definition: The underlying events that make up the story of the game.
- Instruction: Determine plot from the primary and secondary CSI. Represent this information in verb-object structure as determined in the controlled vocabulary⁹. Up to three verb-object pairs can be recorded for each game.
- For games that do not have discernable plot (e.g., *Bejeweled*, *Tetris*), record "N/A" .
- Examples: *Uncharted 2*: discover-artifacts
Final Fantasy VI: save-world

Element: Summary

- Definition: A brief statement or account of the main points of the game.
- Instruction: Write a brief summary of the game's narrative and/or main features in a free text form.

⁸ CV in development

⁹ CV available at: http://gamer.ischool.uw.edu/official_release/

Element: Theme [R]

- Definition: A common thread, motif, subject, or idea that recurs in the game. (modified from Getty Art & Architecture Thesaurus¹⁰)
- Instruction: Determine the theme from the primary and secondary CSI. Select the most appropriate terms from the controlled vocabulary¹¹.
- Examples: fantasy-princess, supernatural-zombies

Element: Setting [R]

- Definition: The location, time frame, and/or cultural context in which the game takes place.
- Instruction: Determine the location, time frame, and/or cultural setting from the primary and secondary CSI.
- For the "spatial" attribute, determine whether the value is generic (e.g., natural, built), specific (e.g., Tokyo Tower, San Andreas) or unspecified. Record the value under the appropriate attribute with the qualifier "imagined" or "real."
- For the "temporal" attribute, determine whether the value is generic (e.g., historical, present-day, futuristic), specific (e.g., 1976, stardate 2373), or unspecified. Record the value under the appropriate attribute. If specific, record the type of calendar from which the date is taken. Also record the value with the qualifier "imagined" or "real."
- For the "cultural" attribute, select the most appropriate term(s) from the controlled vocabulary¹².
- Attributes: Spatial; Temporal; Cultural
- Examples: *Persona 3*: specific temporal - 2009 (Gregorian, Imagined); specific spatial - Iwatodai, Japan (Imagined).
Bioshock: specific temporal - 1960 (Gregorian, Imagined); specific spatial - Rapture (Imagined); cultural - Steampunk.

¹⁰ <http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/aat/>

¹¹ CV in development

¹² CV in development

Element: Mood [R]

- Definition: The pervading atmosphere or tone of the video game which evokes or recalls a certain emotion or state of mind.
- Instruction: Identify the prevailing mood(s) of the game according to the CSI; for most games, the experience of playing the game or watching the gameplay video may be the most reliable source of this information. Select the most appropriate term(s) from the CV for this element¹³.

Element: Pacing

- Definition: The methods by which time passes in the game and/or manner in which events take place.
- Instruction: Determine the pacing information from the CSI. This information will most likely come from firsthand experience of gameplay. If firsthand experience is not possible, consult secondary sources. When applicable, determine the pacing information for each of the following three attributes: "battle system (i.e., how time flows during in-game battles)," "in-game clock (i.e., how time flows in the game world)," and "time manipulation (i.e., the ability to stop and/or alter time or the flow of time in any way)."
- Attributes: Battle system: turn-based, real-time, other
In-game clock: calendar-based, multiple game clocks, timed action, other
Time manipulation: Y/N
- Example: *Final Fantasy: Lightning Returns*: battle system - real-time, in-game clock - continuous, time manipulation - Y.

¹³ CV available at: http://gamer.ischool.uw.edu/official_release/

Element: Estimated time of completion

Definition:	The estimated average time to complete the game.
Instruction:	Determine the information from the CSI. GameFaqs.com and/or howlongtobeat.com may be particularly useful for sourcing this information. Use the attribute "main" to record the estimated amount of time needed to complete the main gameplay. Use the attribute "complete" to record the estimated amount of time for completing everything. If the game does not end, record "N/A" . If the information cannot be determined, record "unknown". Record the time following the ISO 8601 Standard ¹⁴ (i.e., 02:30:00).
Attributes:	Main; Complete

Element: Type of ending

Definition:	The characteristics describing how the game ends and/or post-game content.
Instruction:	Determine and specify the ending information from the CSI ("Over 80 possible endings," "New Game+ feature," etc.). Record values for the following three attributes: does it end? (Y/N); does it have multiple endings? (Y/N); is there any post-game content or options? (Y/N)
Attributes:	End: Y/N Multiple endings: Y/N Post-game content: Y/N

Element: Visual style [R]

Definition:	The predominant and recognizable visual appearance of a video game as originally intended by its creator, and/or determined in the context of creation.
Instruction:	Determine the visual style from the CSI, and select the most appropriate term(s) from the controlled vocabulary ¹⁵ . When multiple styles are used, only record the predominant style(s).

¹⁴ <http://www.w3.org/TR/NOTE-datetime>

¹⁵ CV available at: http://gamer.ischool.uw.edu/official_release/

Element: Dimension

Definition: The intended perception of the depth of the represented entities inside the game.

Instruction: Determine how the depth is perceived in the game and select the most appropriate term from the following list: 2D; 3D; Stereoscopic 3D; Multiple.

Element: Point of view

Definition: Perspective from which the player experiences the gameplay.

Instruction: Determine the perspective from which the player experiences the game. Record the appropriate term from the following list: first person; third person; overhead; multiple; other.

Element: Representative art [R]

Definition: The officially released image that is representative of the game, prominently featured in a physical or digital distribution package.

Instruction: If available, record a representative image of the game that is licensed for use by your organization or in the public domain. Create and preserve a copy of the image according to your organization's standards. Upload or indicate the location of the image according to your organization's system design.

Element: Screenshots [R]

Definition:	Still images taken during the gameplay.
Instruction:	<p>Obtain screenshots from the CSI that represent the visual experience of the game, focusing on the main gameplay. Gameplay screenshots should include the game's user interface; if more than one user interface is typically encountered by the player (e.g., a combat HUD and an inventory screen), include a shot of each configuration.</p> <p>In order of preference, screenshots should represent the following: 1) main gameplay, ideally from sequences which represent significant phases of the game; 2) title screens; 3) significant cutscenes; 4) stills that capture other notable aspects of the work (e.g., "Easter eggs", unique credits sequences, storytelling "hooks", well-known graphics glitches, or examples of the overall art/visual style). When possible during gameplay or cutscenes, include subtitles in screenshots.</p> <p>At a minimum, one to two screenshots should be taken during main gameplay, ideally from sequences which reflect the majority of situations.</p> <p>Create and preserve the images according to your organization's standards. Upload or indicate the location of the image(s) according to your organization's system design.</p>

Element: Trailers [R]

Definition:	Video footage released and/or endorsed by the developer/publisher of the game for promotional purposes.
Instruction:	<p>Transcribe the URLs to trailers as found on the CSI. Include the retrieved date information. If possible, provide links to official trailers on YouTube channels, etc. This element provides only trailers, not actual, in-game play video information.</p> <p>If available, record the video, if licensed to use by your organization. Create and preserve the videos according to your organization's standards. Upload or indicate the location of the video(s) according to your organization's system design.</p>
Example:	For the trailer for <i>Shin Megami Tensei IV: E3</i> record the following: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WiDDXCNoR2g (www.youtube.com; 2013-03-05)

Element: Gameplay videos [R]

Definition:	Video footage of the gameplay excluding such things as introductions, cutscenes, or trailers.
Instruction:	<p>Transcribe the URLs to gameplay videos as found on the CSI. Include the retrieved date information. If possible, provide links to official gameplay videos on YouTube channels, etc. This element provides actual, in-game video information, not trailers or openings of video games. Indicate when there is potential spoiling of video games in those videos through the spoiler attribute (Y/N).</p> <p>If available, record the video, if licensed to use by your organization. Create and preserve the videos according to your organization's standards. Upload or indicate the location of the video(s) according to your organization's system design.</p>
Attribute:	Spoiler: Y/N
Example:	For the gameplay video for <i>Final Fantasy</i> Last Boss: Ultimecia http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RMsxNT2A-jg (www.youtube.com; 2013-10-05; spoiler - Y)

Element: Note

Definition:	Any other notable characteristics of the game
Instruction:	Record any other notable or unique characteristics of the game.

Chief Source of Information

Primary sources

Physical games

1. Box
2. Manual
3. Disc/Cartridge
4. Game title screen/credits
5. Experience of playing the game

Digitally distributed games

1. Informational page available on the official website or the app store
2. Game title screen/credits
3. Experience of playing the game

Secondary sources (preferred, but not limited to)

1. Official Website
2. Official YouTube videos
3. Magazine articles, Strategy guides, Ad materials
4. Game-related Wiki/Fan websites
5. Allgame.com
6. Wikipedia
7. GameFaqS