

# Chapter 7

## Accessioning Archival Materials

### Overview

The **Accessions** functional area is designed for establishing basic intellectual and physical control over a new accession at the time it is received in the repository. The accession record allows for recording information about the accession transaction, about the contents of the accession, and about several basic collection management events related to the accession.

An accession record documents a single accession transaction. The Toolkit requires two data elements for an accession record, though you may enter many more. The required elements are a unique **Accession number** and the **Accession date**. These two elements serve to document the accession transaction only.

The Toolkit provides additional elements for describing the accession more fully and for capturing basic collection management information. It also allows for the addition of creator, source, subject, and location information to an accession record by linking the record to name, subject, and location records.

It is not necessary to use the Accessions module if the sole objective is to create end-user descriptive products, such as finding aids and catalog records for the repository's archival resources. However, one of the benefits of using the Toolkit is the ability to record accession, collection management, and description information within the same system.

### Basic steps for creating an accession record

1. From the **Main Screen**, select **Accessions** and press the  button.
2. Enter a unique **Accession Number**.
3. Enter the date of the accession transaction in the **Accession Date** field.

4. Save the accession record by pressing the  button at the bottom right corner of the

window. If you are entering multiple records, the  button will save the record you are working in and open a new accession record.

**Caution!** The record cannot be saved if the **Accession Number** is not unique. The Toolkit will indicate if this is the case and will prompt you to change it to a unique string.

If the record does not include the two required elements listed above, the Toolkit will indicate that the record cannot be saved because one or more of the required fields is not completed. The incomplete fields are indicated in the error message and those required field(s) must be completed in order to save the record.

## Accession data elements

### Elements Required by the Archivists' Toolkit

1. **Accession Number.** The accession number must be unique. It may consist of up to four individual elements of which only the first is required. This first element, limited to 10 characters, is the only element that is required, though it is best to use more than one element if the accession number is a multi-part number such as year followed by a consecutive number. In all displays and output, the Toolkit inserts a period between each element.

If the accession number is not unique, the Toolkit will alert you that the accession number already exists in the system (“Can’t save, duplicate record”). Enforcing uniqueness ensures that every accession record in the Toolkit represents only one accession.

DACS Reference: 5.2.5

Examples:

One element: G10669

Two elements: 1976.034

Four elements: NYU.Fales.2010.33

2. **Accession Date.** The date of the accession transaction represents the date of receipt of the materials, which is not necessarily the same as the date the accession record is created. In other words, the date stamp that the Toolkit automatically assigns to the accession record documents the record creation, and is not intended to document the accession transaction.

The date must be input according to the format established as the preferred date format in the application. See Chapter 15 for more information on setting the date format.

Examples:

12/03/2004 (mm/dd/yyyy)

### Additional Elements

The minimum accession record can be extended by recording data for any of the following data elements available for the accession record. None of these data elements are required to create an accession record. However, there are requirements associated with some of the data elements if they are utilized. For instance, certain date fields must be expressed by four-digit year format only.

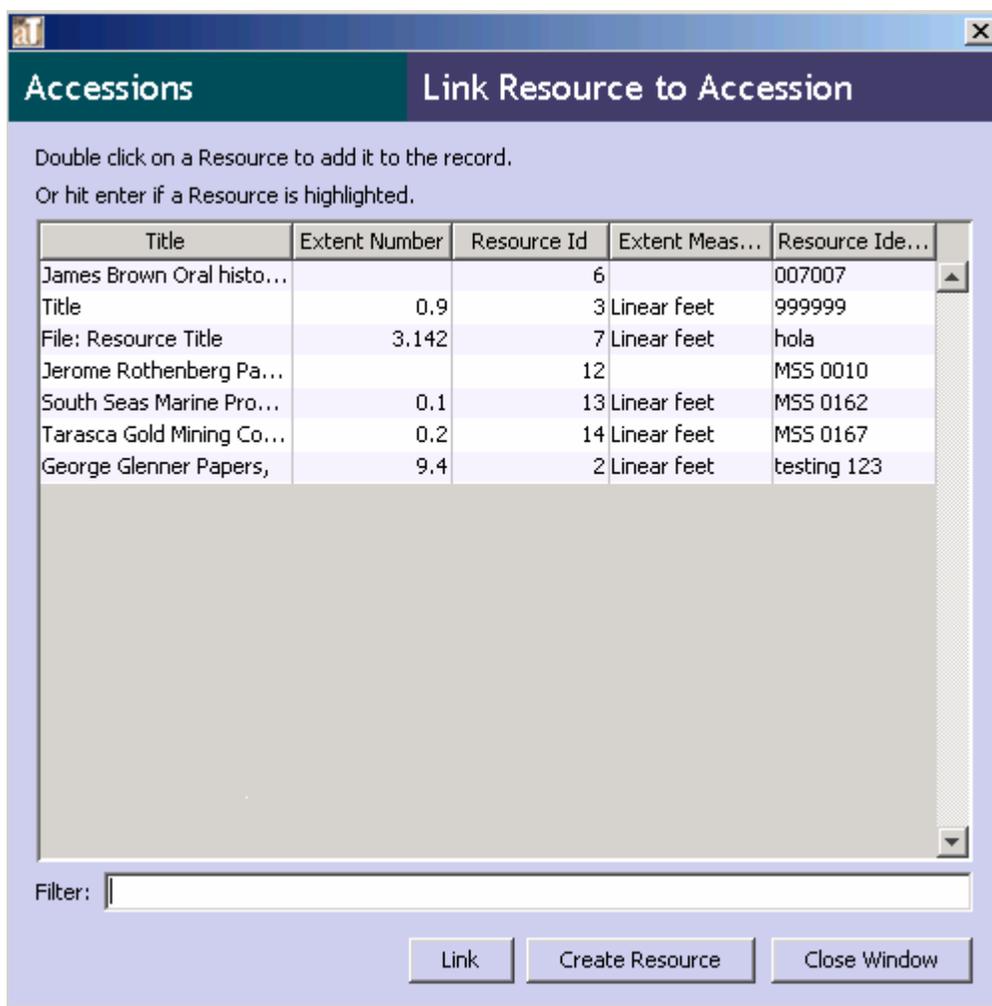
## The Basic Information Tab

The screenshot displays the 'Accessions' software interface, specifically the 'Basic Information' tab. The interface is organized into several sections:

- Title:** Includes 'Accession #:' and a 'Title' field.
- Basic Information:** Contains 'Accession Number' (with a grid of input boxes) and 'Accession Date'.
- Resources Linked to this accession:** A table with columns 'Resource Identifier' and 'Resource Title'. Below the table are 'Link Resource' and 'Remove Link' buttons.
- Resource Type:** A dropdown menu.
- Title:** A large text input field.
- Extent:** Includes 'Extent Number' (with a dropdown) and 'Container Summary' (with a text area).
- Repository AT:** A dropdown menu with a 'Change Repository' button.
- Date Expression:** A text input field.
- Date:** Includes 'Begin' and 'End' input boxes.
- Bulk Dates:** Includes 'Begin' and 'End' input boxes.
- Deaccessions:** A table with columns 'Deaccession Date', 'Extent', and 'Extent Measurement'. Below the table are 'Add Deaccession' and 'Remove Deaccession' buttons.
- Locations:** A table with columns 'Location' and 'Note'. Below the table are 'Add Location' and 'Remove Location' buttons.
- General Accession Note:** A large text area.

At the bottom of the interface, there is a navigation bar with buttons: First, Previous, Next, Last, Reports, Cancel, OK, and OK + 1.

1. **Link Resource.** The accession may be linked to one or more archival resources using the **Link Resource** button. Clicking on this will open a list of resources. To link to the resource, locate the name by scrolling through the list or use the **Filter** box to narrow down the list. Then, either double click on the resource in the list, or select the resource and press **Link**.



Multiple **Resource IDs** may be added to link the accession record to more than one archival description or resource record. This may be necessary if the accession has a mixed provenance and its contents are distributed among multiple archival resources. When this occurs, you may wish to use the **Accession Disposition Note** field (located on the **Accession Notes** tab) to provide more information.

In addition to linking an accession record to an already existing resource record, it is possible to create a new resource record from the accession record. To do so, select the **Create Resource** button. A new resource record will appear. Some fields in this record will already be populated with information from the accession record from which it originated. For example, the **Title** from the accession record will appear in the **Title** field of the new resource record.

The screenshot shows the 'Resources' application window with the 'Basic Description' tab selected. The window is divided into several sections:
 

- Title:** 'Title of the Collection' (with a dropdown for 'Level' and 'Other Level').
- Date Expression:** Includes 'Inclusive Dates' (Begin: 1600, End: 1908) and 'Bulk Dates' (Begin, End).
- Extent:** 'Extent Number' (0.4) and 'Extent Measurement' (Linear feet).
- Container Summary:** A text input field.
- Instances:** A table with columns for 'Instance Type' and 'Instance Label', and buttons for 'Add Instance' and 'Remove Instance'.
- Repository:** 'Repository AT' field and a 'Change Repository' button.
- Bottom Panel:** A toolbar with buttons for 'Add Child', 'Add Sibling', 'Rapid Data Entry', 'Delete Component', 'Manage Locations', 'Export EAD', 'Export MARC', and 'Export Container Labels'. Below this are navigation buttons: 'First', 'Previous', 'Next', 'Last', 'Reports', 'Cancel', and 'OK'.

The following table lists all of the elements that are mapped from the accession record to a resource record created in this manner.

<b><u>Accession Record to Resource Record Mapped Elements</u></b>	
<b><u>Directly Mapped Fields</u></b>	
<b><u>Accession Table Elements</u></b>	<b><u>Resource Table Elements</u></b>
<b><u>Field Label</u></b>	<b><u>Field Label</u></b>
Title	Title
Extent Number	Extent Number
[Extent Measurement]	[Extent Measurement]
Container Summary	Container Summary
Date Expression	Date Expression
Date Begin	Date Begin
Date End	Date End
Bulk Date Begin	Bulk Date Begin
Bulk Date End	Bulk Date End
Restrictions Apply	Restrictions Apply
Repository	Repository
<b><u>Indirectly Mapped Fields</u></b>	

<u>Accession Table Elements</u>	<u>Resource Table Elements</u>
<u>Field Label</u>	<u>Field Label</u>
Description	Scope and Contents Note
Condition Note	General Physical Description Note
Access Restriction Note	Conditions Governing Access Note
Use Restriction Note	Conditions Governing Use Note
Accession Number	Accession Number Linked
Title	Accession Linked
Name Linked	Name (Linked)
Subject Linked	Subject (Linked)

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Note: The Toolkit will not validate a unique **Resource Id** until all of the required fields are completed and the **OK** button is clicked. If the **Resource Id** is not unique, all the information previously entered will be lost. Thus it is a good idea to filter through the existing Resource records in the **Link Resource to Accession** screen to determine whether the new **Resource Id** is unique.

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Once all of the desired resources are linked, press **Close Window** to return to the accession record. The linked resources will appear in the **Resources linked to this accession** area. To delete links between accessions and resources, highlight the resource ID you wish to remove under the **Resources Linked to this accession** area and click on **Remove Link**.

DACS Reference: 2.1.3

2. **Resource Type.** Each resource can be classified into a subdivision of the repository's holdings. For example, a College and University Archives may wish to distinguish manuscript collections from archival records for the purpose of generating statistics. A manuscript repository may have multiple collecting areas to track, such as literary collections, business collections, etc. The Toolkit provides a list of default options for the field (Collection, Papers, Records), but the list may be customized by the repository (see Chapter 15).

DACS Reference: 2.3.18

Examples:

Organizational records

Personal papers

History of science and technology collection

3. **Title.** The title is usually a concatenation of the creator name and a term describing the form of materials, whether general (papers, records) or specific (correspondence, diaries). The title of the accession will typically, but need not always, match the title of the resource to which the accession belongs. For example, the accession title may be John Smith Diaries, which is to become part of the Smith Family Papers.

DACS Reference: 2.3.18-2.3.22

Examples:

John Smith Diaries

Office of the President Correspondence

Marie Dolores Jones Papers

4. **Extent.** First, enter the number of units as a whole or decimal number. Then select the type of measurement (cubic feet or linear feet).

DACS Reference: 2.5.4-2.5.9

Examples:

10 cubic feet

148.5 linear feet

5. **Container Summary.** Enter an enumeration of the number and type of containers that house the accession.

DACS Reference: 2.5.4-2.5.9

Examples:

5 cartons, 3 boxes, 1 flat box

10 record cartons, 3 archives boxes, 4 map folders

6. **Change Repository.** Press the Change Repository button to open the list of repositories and change the repository to which the accession is assigned.

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Note: This option is only available to users with class 5 permissions.

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7. **Dates.** A number of elements are available for recording the dates of creation of the materials. Dates can be entered in integer form (**Date Begin, Date End, Bulk Date Begin, Bulk Date End**), and/or as a free-text string (**Date Expression**). Integer dates are used to support computer processing of date information (e.g., searching). The date expression is designed for human readability and allows for the use of qualifiers, such as circa or before. It is the date expression that typically displays to end-users.
  - a. If you wish, you may only enter a **Date Expression** rather than using the fields for integer dates. However, doing so may limit your ability to support searching by date in exported objects such as MARCXML records and EAD documents.

DACS Reference: 2.4

Examples:

Between 1925 and 1953

ca. 1911

1913-1998, bulk 1950-1972

- b. **Integer Dates. (Date Begin, Date End, Bulk Date Begin, Bulk Date End).** Integer dates must be entered in years only, with no days or months.

Enter inclusive dates using the **Date Begin** and **Date End** fields. Enter bulk dates in the **Bulk Date Begin** and **Bulk Date End** fields. A value must be entered in both **Date Begin** and **Date End**. For single dates, the values are identical, whereas for ranges, they differ. In addition, bulk dates can only be expressed when inclusive dates are specified, and the bulk dates must be contained within the inclusive dates.

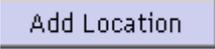
DACS Reference: 2.4

Examples:

1922--1922 (Single date)

1900--1930 (Inclusive dates)

1910--1918 (Bulk dates)

8. **Deaccessions.** A deaccession record may be linked to an accession or resource record. See Chapter 8 for instructions.
9. **Locations.** Use the  button to assign locations to the accession. See Chapter 13 for specific instructions on assigning locations.
10. **General Accession Note.** Use this field to note any information that does not fit in any of the more defined fields. This is a catch-all note for use by repository staff.

## The Accessions Notes Tab

1. **Acquisition Type.** Indicate the type of accession transaction. This refers to the way in which the accession was acquired. Options include: deposit, gift, purchase, or transfer. These options may be customized by repository. See Chapter 15 for instructions.
2. **Retention Rule.** Indicate any statute, regulation, or rule establishing the minimum period for maintaining the records.
3. **Description.** This field serves as a preliminary scope and contents note, and might include description of document types and topical contents represented in the accession

DACS Reference: 3.1.4-3.1.7

Examples:

Contains correspondence and financial records for Smith's clothing business, as well as personal diaries.

Provost's correspondence, subject files, and program files. Includes information about diversity protests and formation of ALANA scholarships.

4. **Condition Note.** Enter notes about the physical condition of the materials, preservation actions that may be necessary, and any special handling requirements.

Examples:

Rolled drawings in tubes 10-17 are brittle and in need of humidification.

Collection is filled with mold and silverfish. Deep freeze treatment is scheduled. Materials should not be unpacked in the department and persons processing the materials should wear inhalation guards.

Nitrate negatives in box 12 are in poor condition and should not be filed with other negatives. Schedule for reproduction and subsequent destruction.

5. **Inventory.** You may enter or paste a container list or other form of preliminary inventory in this field. As an alternative, you may provide a reference to the existence and location of an external paper or electronic document that contains the inventory.

Examples:

Box list from office of origin filed in archives.

`c:/transfers/provost/20061213contentslist.doc`

or

Box 1 Correspondence, ca. 1970-1983

Boxes 2-3 Subject files, 1972-1984

Box 4 Program files, 1980s

6. **Accession Disposition Note.** Note documenting the eventual disposition of the accession. May include information about materials weeded, the archival resource(s) into which the accession was integrated, any materials returned to the source, etc.

DACS Reference: 5.3, 6.3

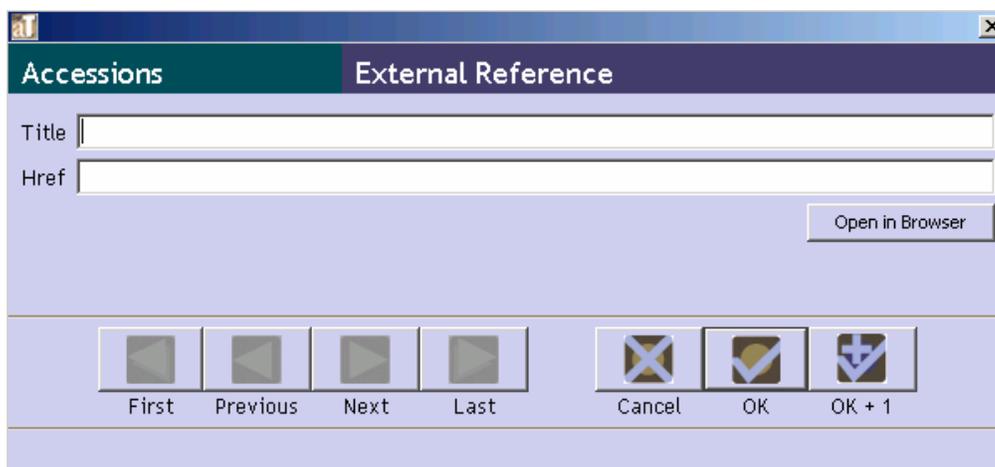
Examples:

During processing, it was determined that the accession included materials created by both John Smith and his cousin and business partner, Zachariah Smith. The accession was separated into the John Smith papers and the Zachariah Smith diaries.

Duplicates weeded and returned to the donor.

7. **External Documents.** Link to related external documents that are stored outside of the Toolkit. For example, you may wish to link to transfer documents, deeds of gift, or preliminary descriptions made available online.

To link to a document, press the **Add Document** button.



You will be asked for the **Title** and the **HREF** for the document.

- a. **Title.** Enter the document title. This will be used as the linked text in any outputs.

Examples:

Deed of Gift

Office of Admissions Transfer Sheet

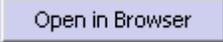
- b. **HREF.** A Universal Resource Identifier (URI) for the document. A persistent identifier is preferable if the links are to remain viable over time, though there is nothing to preclude you from using a local directory path and filename.

Examples:

`ftp://ftp.is.co.za/rfc/rfc1808.txt`

`http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc2396.txt`

`file:///etc/hosts`

Once you have entered the **Title** and **HREF**, press **OK** to save the link. You may also preview the document by pressing the  button.

### The User-defined fields Tab

The **User-defined fields tab** is an area in which repositories can create and define custom fields to capture any information not otherwise captured by standard AT fields. See Chapter 15 for instructions on how to configure these fields to the needs of your repository.

### The Names & Subjects Tab

Use the **Names & Subjects tab** to add names as creator, source, or subject, and to add topical subject terms. See Chapter 12 for instructions.

### The Acknowledgements, Restrictions & Processing Tasks Tab

1. **Acknowledgement Sent/ Acknowledgement Date.** Check the **Acknowledgement Sent** box if a letter acknowledging the accession has been sent. Record the date of this acknowledgment in the **Acknowledgement Date** box. These fields will assist you in tracking the status of accessioning activities, and can be used to output a report of accessions that need to be acknowledged.

The date must be formatted according to the preferred date format established for the application. See Chapter 15 for information on establishing date format preferences.

Examples:

2005/10/3

06-12-6

2. **Agreement Sent/Agreement Sent Date.** Check the box and/or record the date that the repository mailed a deed of gift, purchase agreement, transfer agreement, deposit agreement, etc., to the source of the accession. These fields will assist you in tracking the status of accessioning activities, and can be used to output a report of acquisition agreements to be mailed.

The date must be formatted according to the preferred date format established for the application by the repository. See Chapter 15 for information on establishing date format preferences.

Examples:

2005/6/8

05-6-8

3. **Agreement Received/Agreement Received Date.** Check the box and/or enter the date that the repository received a signed acquisition agreement. These fields assist in tracking the status of accessioning activities, and can be used to output a report of acquisition agreements that have not yet been received.

The date must be formatted according to the preferred date format established for the application by the repository. See Chapter 15 for information on establishing date format preferences.

Examples:

2005/8/17

05-8-17

4. **Rights Transferred/Rights Transferred Date.** Indicate if intellectual property rights have been transferred to the repository. If the source of the accession has transferred intellectual rights to the custodial repository, check this box and record the date of transfer in the Rights Transferred Date field.

Because this is a simple yes/no field, repositories that wish to track this information should establish a documented policy on its use. For example, whether or not to indicate “yes” if rights have been transferred for only a portion of the materials.

The date must be formatted according to the preferred date format established for the application. See Chapter 15 for information on establishing date format preferences.

DACS Reference: 4.4

Examples:

2004/7/21

06-9-22

5. **Rights Transferred Note.** Record if there are any notable aspects concerning the transfer of intellectual property rights from the source of the accession to the repository. For example, this field can be used to record if rights have only been transferred for a portion of the materials.
6. **Restrictions Apply.** Indicate if restrictions apply to the accession. This is a simple yes/no field. Click to put a check mark in the box if there are restrictions, and use the next four fields to characterize the restrictions.

DACS Reference: 4.1.5-4.1.6; 4.2.6-4.2.7; 4.3.5-4.3.6

7. **Access Restrictions.** Indicate if the restrictions are access restrictions.
8. **Access Restrictions Note.** Include here any useful statements indicating what materials in the accession have restricted access, what the authority of the restriction is, and for how long the restriction is to be in effect.

DACS Reference: 4.1.5-4.1.6; 4.2.6-4.2.7; 4.3.5-4.3.6

Examples:

Diaries in box 12 have been restricted by the donor until 10 years after her death.

Medical records in cartons 42 and 66 are restricted by legal statute until 75 years after the date of their creation.

Manuscripts in box 33 are fragile and restricted from use.

9. **Use Restrictions.** Indicate if the restriction is a use restriction.
10. **Use Restriction Note.** Indicate which materials have use restrictions, how the materials can be used, what the authority of the restriction is, and for how long the restriction is to be in effect.

DACS Reference: 4.4

Examples:

Material is in the public domain.

Diary is fragile. User photocopy must be used in its place.

11. **Processing Priority.** Indicate the priority the repository assigns to completing processing of the accession. The values in the lookup list can be configured by the repository. See Chapter 15 for details on such customization.

12. **Processors.** Enter here the names of the staff members responsible for processing the collection.
13. **Processing Plan.** Type or paste a complete processing plan here, or, if a processing plan exists in print or electronic form externally, its existence and location may be referenced here.

Examples:

Processing plan available in control file.

14. **Processing Started Date.** Record the date on which the processing of the accession began. The date must be formatted according to the preferred date format established for the application. See Chapter 15 for information on establishing date format preferences.
15. **Processing Status.** Describe here at which stage the processing project is, i.e., just begun, near completion, completed, etc. The values in the lookup list can be configured by the repository. See Chapter 15 for details on such customization.
16. **Accession Processed/Accession Processed Date.** Indicate the date when arrangement and description of the accession is completed. This will likely be added later, rather than at the time of accessioning. This field will assist in tracking processing activities, and can be used to produce a report of processed accessions.

The date must be formatted according to the preferred date format established for the application. See Chapter 15 for information on establishing date format preferences.

Examples:

1997-10-13

10/13/97

17. **Cataloged/Cataloged Date.** Indicate if the accession is represented in a completed catalog record (e.g., MARC) record. If the accession has been cataloged, check this box. This field can be used to generate a report of all cataloged or un-cataloged accessions. Use the **Cataloged Date** field to record the date the accession was cataloged. The date must be formatted according to the preferred date format established for the application by the repository. See Chapter 15 for information on establishing date format preferences.
18. **Cataloged Note.** Record notes related to the catalog record, for example the record control number of the MARC record documenting the accession.

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Note: To produce a MARCXML record from the Toolkit, you must complete a preliminary description record. MARCXML records cannot be output from an accession record.

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## Relationships with other records

Adding creator, source, subject, and location information to the accession record involves establishing relationships with records from other functional areas.

1. **Description.** Accession records may be linked to one or more resource description records. Linking accessions to their eventual archival resource records requires linking to the **Resource ID** for the appropriate archival resource. A resource record may also be generated from the accession record using the **Create Resource** function on the **Link Resource to Accession** record picker. See above for a list of resource record fields that can be derived from the accession record.
2. **Creator(s).** Adding creator information to the record involves linking the accession record to one or more name records. See Chapter 12.
3. **Source(s).** The source refers to the individual or organization from which the repository acquired the materials. As with creators, adding a source to the accession record involves linking to a name record. See Chapter 12.
4. **Subject Name(s).** As with creators and sources, adding a name as subject to the accession record involves linking to a name record. See Chapter 12.
5. **Subject(s).** Adding topical, geographic, and genre headings to the accession record requires linking to one or more subject records. See Chapter 12.
6. **Location(s).** To assign a shelf location for the accession, a location record linked to the accession must be created. See Chapter 13.

## Accession reports

Many descriptive, administrative, and statistical reports can be generated from the data stored in accession records. Chapter 14 provides instructions for generating reports. Examples of the following reports are available in the appendices:

1. **Print Screen.** Prints the list of accessions as displayed in the accessions list screen. This report is only available through the list view.
2. **Accession intellectual property status.** Displays the intellectual property status of listed accession(s). Report contains accession number, linked resources, title, extent, cataloged, date processed, rights transferred and a count of the number of records selected with rights transferred.
3. **Accession inventory.** Displays the inventory of an accession record or records. Report contains accession number, linked resources, title, extent, accession date, container summary, and inventory.
4. **Accession processing plan.** Displays accessions that have a processing plan. Report contains accession number, linked resources, title, date range, extent, container summary, and processing plan.
5. **Accession production report.** Displays accessions that have been accessioned, processed, and cataloged during a specified time period. Produces a summary statement of the total number of accessions, the total extent, total extent processed, and extent cataloged within the specified date range.
6. **Accession receipt.** Displays a receipt indicating accessioning of materials. Report contains accession number, title, extent, accession date, and repository.

7. **Accession record(s).** Displays key fields for selected accession record(s).
8. **Accessions acquired.** Displays a list of all accessions acquired in a specified time period. Report contains accession number, title, extent, accession date, container summary, cataloged, date processed, rights transferred and the total number and physical extent.
9. **Accessions cataloged.** Displays a list of all accessions that have been cataloged. Report contains accession number, linked resources, title, extent, cataloged, date processed, a count of the number of records selected that are checked as cataloged, and the total extent number for those records cataloged.
10. **Accessions not cataloged.** Displays accession(s) that have not been checked as cataloged. Report contains accession number, linked resources, title, extent, cataloged, date processed, a count of the number of records selected that are not checked as cataloged, and the total extent number for those records not cataloged.
11. **Accessions processed.** Displays accession(s) that have been processed based on the date processed field. Report contains accession number, linked resources, title, extent, cataloged, date processed, a count of the number of records selected with a date processed, and the total extent number for those records with date processed.
12. **Accessions unprocessed.** Displays accession(s) that have not been processed. Report contains accession number, linked resources, title, extent, cataloged, date processed, a count of the number of records selected with date processed, and the total extent number for those records without a completed date processed field.
13. **Accessions with deaccessions.** Displays a list of accession record(s) with linked deaccession record(s). Report contains accession number, title, extent, accession date, container summary, cataloged, date processed, rights transferred, linked deaccessions and total extent of all deaccessions.
14. **Accessions with linked names and subjects list.** Displays accessions with their linked names and subjects. Report contains accession number, linked resources, accession date, title, extent, linked names, and linked subjects.
15. **Accessions with rights transferred.** Displays list of accession(s) for which rights have been transferred. Report contains accession number, linked resources, title, extent, cataloged, date processed, access restrictions, use restrictions, rights transferred and a count of the number of records selected with rights transferred.

User defined fields are not figured into the default accession reports. Repositories implementing user-defined fields in the accession record and wanting to include those fields in reports will need to use JasperReports or some similar report writer to modify the default reports or create new reports. The method for importing these custom reports is described in Chapter 15. Repositories doing so are encouraged to share the reports they create with the rest of the AT community.