

GENERAL INFORMATION:  
Encoding Levels

This page should be used as a guide to understanding the *Encoding Levels* and the requirements expressed in the ANSI/NISO standard [1]. Libraries may choose to omit mandatory information as a local practice when indicated as *optional* under that requirement. However, the Working Group does not recommend this omission.

**DEFINITIONS:**

- **Encoding Level** The *Encoding Level* or *Level of Specificity* is the degree of detail provided in a holdings record.
- **Character Position:** (c/p in this manual) is the location of an alpha or numeric character in a data string. Character positions are numbered beginning with 0, or 00 if the string is greater than ten characters. For example, in the data string *991231*, the first 9 is in the character position 0 and 2 is in the character position 3.
- **Embedded:** This term is used throughout the MARC 21, ANSI/NISO standard, and several pages of this guide. It usually means that the information has been supplied by the system (i.e., Voyager). System supplied information is represented as grayed out areas on this page as some of this data is required by the standards.

The ANSI/NISO standard defines four levels of specificity ([1] 1.2.1). MARC21 allows eight levels of description ([2] Leader, p.4). Voyager does not follow the "definitions" of levels provided by these two standards. Encoding levels are recorded in two places in the holdings record: character position **17** of the **Leader** and in the first indicator (**I1**) of the 863-868 fields. The level of reporting is a local decision and generally follows the type of unit being described. However, MARC21 places restrictions on what level is used to the type of publication (serials, single volume monographs, etc.). The recommendation by GOLD is to report serial holdings at level 3. ([3] p.7). GPO requires "each depository ... maintain a holdings record to the piece level of all depository selections received in tangible format" ([6A] p.11, ch. 3, section A), meaning Level 4 should be used for serial holdings.

**Recommendation:** The Working Group recommends libraries record holdings at level 3 at a minimum. Libraries that wish to provide their patrons with more detailed information should consider recording their holdings at level 4.

- **Level 1** - This level is typically used only for single volume monographs. It records the *Item Identification Data Area* and the *Location Data Area* required by the ANSI/NISO standard. The Item Identification Data Area contains an identifier for a bibliographic item, such as an OCLC number (014) (*optional*) or the local system supplied bib id (004). Voyager automatically records, or *embeds* the *bib id* in the **004** field. Fields in which this information can be recorded are:

- 004 Control Number for Related Bibliographic Record (supplied by Voyager as an embedded field)
- 010 Library of Congress Control Number
- 014 Linkage Number
- 020 ISBN
- 022 ISSN
- 024 Other Standard Identifier
- 027 Standard Technical Report Number
- 030 CODEN designation

**LDR Batch Loading libraries** If the library intends to subscribe to OCLC's Batch Updating of Local Data Records, the OCLC number is required and should be recorded in the 014 or the 035 field. If the library wishes to record the OCLC number in the holdings record, the Working Group recommends recording the number in the 014 field, however, this is local decision.

Tag	I1	I2	Subfield Data
004			428326 (Embedded bib id supplied by Voyager)
014	1		\$a 44783085 \$b OCoLC

or,

Tag	I1	I2	Subfield Data
004			428326 (Embedded bib id supplied by Voyager)
035			\$a (OCoLC) 44783085

The Location Data Area is recorded in subfields \$a-\$c, \$h-\$m, \$t and \$p of the 852, 853/863-855/865 fields. It is composed of the *institution identifier* (\$a) (*\*mandatory*), *sublocation identifier* (\$b and/or \$c), *copy identifier* (\$t and/or \$p), and *call number* respectively (\$h-\$m). All four elements are not required in the holdings statement, nor are they required to be recorded in alphabetic order. Some subfields are also specific to the 852 field only. The GSHWG is recommending the use of the OCLC utility code for the institution identifier.

Note subfield a (\$a) is mandatory according to ANSI/NISO standard, however, libraries may choose to make this subfield optional.

Tag	I1	I2	Subfield Data
004			428326 (Embedded bib id supplied by Voyager)
852	0		\$a GYG \$b MAIN \$h LB1623 \$i .M5 \$t Copy 2

Serials titles, which do not rely on a classification scheme for retrieval (i.e., periodicals shelved by title) use only subfield a (\$a) and subfield b (\$b).

- **Level 2** - This level is typically used for single volume monographs when specific characteristics of the title need to be recorded (i.e., depository or gift items). This level records, in addition to level 1 data, the *Date of Report Area*. The Date of Report area is the date in which the holdings record *policy* (e.g., purchased v. gift, will lend, etc.) was last updated and is recorded in character positions 26-31 of the 008 field. Optional information can also be recorded: General Holdings Area data: physical form of publication (007 c/p 1), completeness of holdings (008 c/p 16), acquisition policy (008 c/p 6), retention policy (008 c/p 12), and local notes (852 \$x and \$z).

Information regarding when the holdings record was last updated is also recorded in the 005 field and in the History, both of which are automatically embedded by Voyager.

Tag	I1	I2	Subfield Data
004			428326 (Embedded bib id supplied by Voyager)
005			20010614125615.0 (Supplied by Voyager)
007			he bmb024baca
008			0106144u----8---1001uu----0011028
852	0		\$a GYG \$b MAIN \$h HA202 \$p 0200141624573

- **Level 3** - Level three is used for multivolume monographs and serials recorded at the summary level. This level records the Level 2 required data and the *Extent of Holdings Data Area* for basic bibliographic units, supplements, and/or indexes. Level 3 may also include General Holdings Area data. Level 3 includes summary holdings information at the first level of enumeration and chronology in one or more of the 853/863, 866, 854/864, 867, 855/865, 868 fields.

Tag	I1	I2	Subfield Data
004			428326 (Embedded bib id supplied by Voyager)
005			20010614125615.0 (Supplied by Voyager)
007			he bmb024baca
008			0106144u----8---1001uu----0011028
852	0		\$a GYG
866	3	1	\$a v.36-v.49 (1961-1974) \$z Some issues missing

- **Level 4** - Level 4 typically is only used for serials, but may also be used for multivolume monographs. This level records the same data as Level 3, but at the detailed level. Level 4 records the detailed holdings in the same fields as Level 3. Depository libraries should record holdings at this level as required by GPO.

Tag	I1	I2	Subfield Data
004			428326 (Embedded bib id supplied by Voyager)
005			20010614125615.0 (Supplied by Voyager)
007			he bmb024baca
008			0106144u----8---1001uu----0011028
852	0		\$a GYG \$b PER
866	4	1	\$a v.36:no.1-v.38:no.5 (1961-1963)

- **Level 5** - This levels records the detail of Level 4 but includes the *piece designation* in subfield p (\$p) of the 852, 863-865, or 876-878, or subfield a (\$a) 866-868 fields.

Tag	I1	I2	Subfield Data
004			428326 (Embedded bib id supplied by Voyager)
005			20010614125615.0 (Supplied by Voyager)
007			he bmb024baca
008			0106144u----8---1001uu----0011028
852	0		\$a GYG \$b MAIN \$h HA202 \$p 0200141624573

- **Level m** - This level is used when the holdings are recorded a multiple levels of specificity. For example, the retrospective holdings are recorded at a different level than current holdings.
- **Level u** - Used when the level of specificity is unknown.
- **Level z** - Used when the other levels listed above do not apply.

This example shows a summary of the required content areas of a holdings statement for levels 3 and 4 as indicated in table 3.2 of the ANSI/NISO standard [1].

Tag	I1	I2	Subfield Data
004			428326 (Embedded Bib id supplied by Voyager)
007			ta (usually omitted if print format only ([1] 5.4.2))
008			-----4-----8---1-----011028 (c/p: 06,12, 16, 26-31)
852	0		\$a GYG
866	3	1	\$a v.1- (1976- )