

MARC & RDA



This page has been moved over to <https://support.goalexandria.com/knowledge-base/best-practices-for-marc-rda/>

MAchine-Readable Cataloging (**MARC**) is a format that allows computers to exchange and interpret bibliographic information. It makes it easy to store and transfer book or other library resource information between systems.

Resource Description & Access (**RDA**) is a "package of data elements, guidelines, and instructions for creating library and cultural heritage resource metadata that are well-formed according to international models for user-focused linked data applications." MARC format is commonly used to encode RDA data.

Why was RDA created? With the advancement of technology and more information being accessible on the internet, catalogers needed to rethink practices when it came to describing resources. So, RDA was introduced as a replacement to AACR2 in 2010. It's based on international standards, designed with the user in mind, compatible with existing records, and flexible.

See these resources for more information:

- [MARC 21 Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [RDA Frequently Asked Questions](#)

The screenshot shows the 'MARC View' interface. At the top, there's a header with 'MARC View' and a description: 'Leader - A fixed field that comprises the first 24 character positions (00-23) of each record and provides information for the processing of the record.' Below this is a table of MARC fields. The table has columns for tag, indicator, subfield, and value. The fields shown are:

Tag	Indicator	Subfield	Value
082	04	2	21
		a	398.2/0951
100	1-	a	Louie, Ai-Ling
245	10	a	Yeh-Shen
		b	a Cinderella story from China
		c	retold by Ai-Ling Louie ; illustrated by Ed Young
		h	[book]
264	--	a	New York, NY
		b	Puffin Books
		c	1999
300	--	a	[31] p.
		b	col. ill.
		c	27 cm.
520	--	a	This version of the Cinderella story, in which a young girl overcomes the wickedness of her stepsister and...
521	--	9	0
		a	AD840

At the bottom of the table, there are three buttons: 'EDIT', 'REMOVE', and 'ADD'.

Important Changes

Not every library needs to change all of their MARC records to meet RDA standards. But here are a few changes you may want to be aware of if you use Alexandria:

Series

Series information has moved from the 490 tag to the 830 tag. Alexandria uses the 830 tag for series searches in Researcher, so it's important for your series information to be in that tag.

To make sure all of your series information is in the right place, run the [Fix Series utility](#). You can also run this utility anytime you import new MARC records and notice series information is in the 490 tag.

Publisher

Publisher information has moved from the 260 tag to the 264 tag. You won't need to move publisher information to properly use Alexandria, but it's a difference you may notice in some records.

Medium

Medium information has moved from the 245_h tag to the 336, 337, and 338 tags. That's right—medium is contained in three separate fields in RDA format. Again, you won't need to move medium information to the new format to properly use Alexandria.

Take a look at the [Mediums in Alexandria](#) page for more information on this change, including how to switch formats and how Items Management and Authority Control handle mediums.



If you're interested in quickly converting your library's MARC records to RDA format, save time by using [Alexandria's EnhanceMARC powered by Mitinet!](#)