

Curationist Taxonomy Guidelines

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About This Document

This document provides guidelines for using [Wikidata](#) as a source for descriptive terms used on the [Curationist](#) Website. These terms are used primarily to describe Works, but may also be applied to Features, Collections, Hubs, and Series. (See the Curationist Metadata Content Standard for definitions of these record types and for general guidelines on entering and editing data on Curationist.)

Using Wikidata as a central, publicly available source for these terms streamlines searching and prevents the proliferation of terms that have the same or overlapping meanings, a situation that can be confusing for users. It will also help ensure that Curationist terms remain in line with common usage on the Web.

This document is meant to guide Curationist archivists in selecting, creating, and editing descriptive terms according to Curationist's values and editorial policies. It is intended for Curationist staff who are performing manual updates to the site. It should not be construed as a policy to overwrite or edit data from Source Institutions.

The document also includes basic information on how to search Wikidata, how to select terms for use in various categories and contexts, and how to create and edit terms on Wikidata. It provides general guidelines for these activities, but is not a comprehensive guide to using Wikidata, nor can it anticipate all of the complex decisions that may arise in term selection.

Glossary

Here are some definitions of terms used in this document.

Aliases

Aliases are synonyms for Wikidata Labels. These are other, alternative terms that represent the same concept as the Item. A search for an Alias will bring up the Label and Item with which it's associated.

Controlled Vocabulary

A controlled vocabulary is a list of pre-determined words or phrases from which a data value must be selected. Wikidata is the predominant controlled vocabulary for Curationist.

Free Text

Free text is a data value that is not constrained by a controlled vocabulary or a formatting rule.

Identifiers

Identifiers are the unique numbers assigned to Items. Each Wikidata Item has an Identifier that differentiates it absolutely from every other Item. Identifiers for Items always begin with a "Q."

Items

Items are individual Wikidata pages. Each page represents a discrete term and includes information about that term and its relationships to other terms and outside references.

Labels

Labels are the terms themselves, or the titles of the Item pages. These are the terms that will appear to visitors to Curationist.

References

References are links to or information about outside sources that support and justify the identity of a Wikidata Item as a discrete and verifiable term.

Statements

A Statement is a piece of information about a Wikidata Item. It can establish a relationship between that Item and another Item, provide additional contextual information, or link to outside references that support identification and justify the Item.

About Wikidata

Wikidata is a free, open source database of terminology that anyone can edit and use. It is a project of Wikimedia Foundation and its content is created and maintained by volunteers. For more information, see this [Introduction](#).

Known Issues

A couple of things to remember about Wikidata:

Formatting

Because it is edited by volunteers and bots from all over the world, the format of the data is not always consistent and is subject to change. For example, the term “African Americans” has an “s” at the end while the term “Asian American” does not, even though they are both examples of “ethnic groups.”

Hierarchy

Wikidata is deeply hierarchical, meaning that terms may be nested as subclasses of other terms in hierarchies that are quite extensive. These hierarchies are not always consistent or comprehensive.

For example, the term “dog” is in this hierarchy:

animal > mammal > domesticated mammal > dog

While “wolf” is in this one:

entity > object > concrete object > physical object > natural physical object > organism > consumer > zoophage > carnivore > carnivora > canidae > wolf

Although “dog” and “wolf” are related species, you would never know it based on their hierarchical relationships on Wikidata! Obviously, different editors have different ideas about how hierarchies should be constructed.

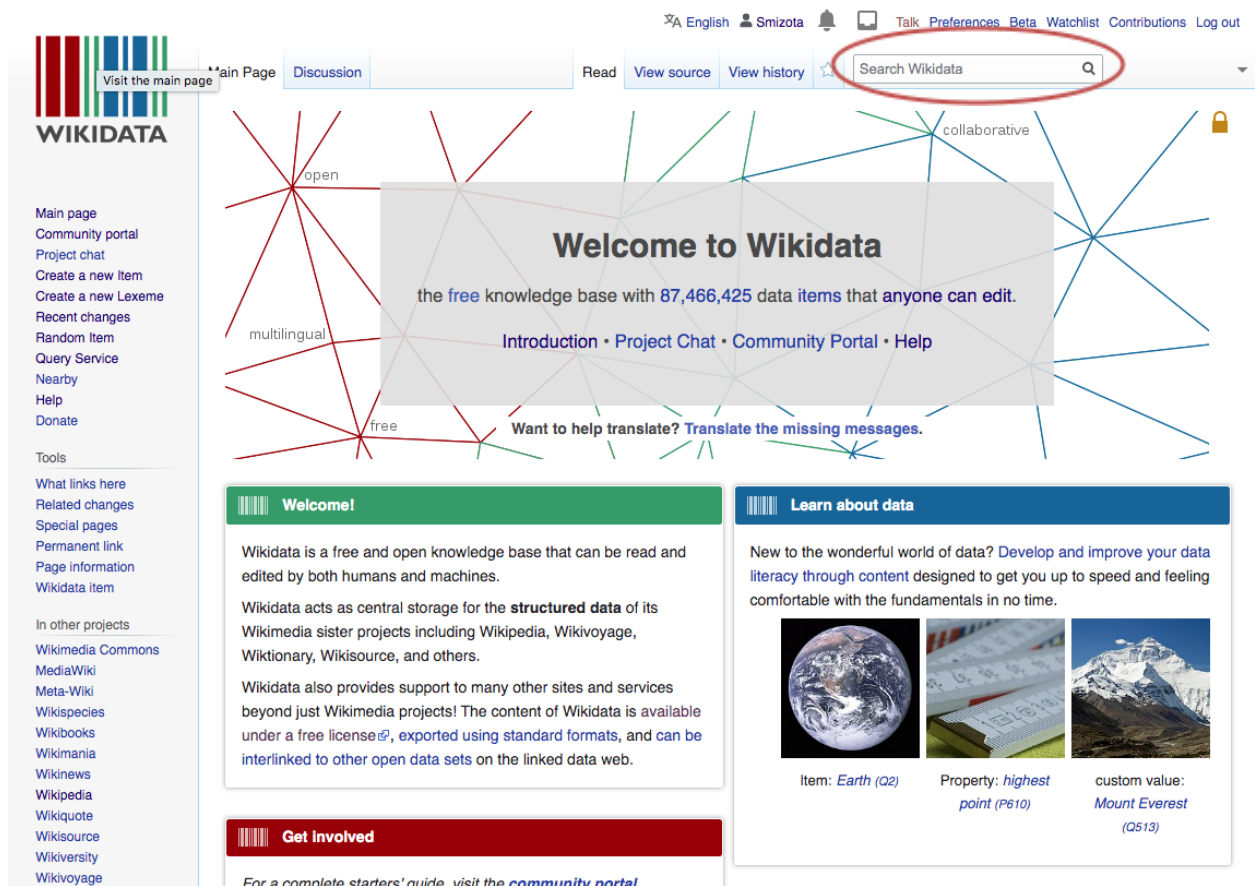
For this reason, hierarchical relationships in Wikidata should not be a factor in selecting terms for Curationist. Archivists should simply select the terms that best apply to the item they are cataloging regardless of the Wikidata hierarchy in which they appear.

Searching for Items

Searching for Items in Wikidata is easy and intuitive. There are two main ways to search, Simple Search and the Search Results page. A more advanced search using Query Service can also be used for browsing and getting an overview of a particular category or group of Items.

Simple Search

Enter the term you are looking for into the Search Wikidata box in the upper right.



The screenshot shows the Wikidata homepage. At the top right, there is a search box labeled "Search Wikidata" with a magnifying glass icon, which is circled in red. The page features a central "Welcome to Wikidata" banner with the text "the free knowledge base with 87,466,425 data items that anyone can edit." Below the banner are navigation links: "Introduction • Project Chat • Community Portal • Help". A network diagram with nodes and connecting lines is visible in the background. On the left side, there is a sidebar with various links and tools. At the bottom, there are three main sections: "Welcome!", "Learn about data", and "Get involved".

Welcome!




Wikidata is a free and open knowledge base that can be read and edited by both humans and machines.

Wikidata acts as central storage for the **structured data** of its Wikimedia sister projects including Wikipedia, Wikivoyage, Wiktionary, Wikisource, and others.

Wikidata also provides support to many other sites and services beyond just Wikimedia projects! The content of Wikidata is available under a [free license](#), [exported using standard formats](#), and can be [interlinked to other open data sets](#) on the linked data web.

Learn about data

New to the wonderful world of data? Develop and improve your [data literacy through content](#) designed to get you up to speed and feeling comfortable with the fundamentals in no time.

		
Item: <i>Earth</i> (Q2)	Property: <i>highest point</i> (P610)	custom value: <i>Mount Everest</i> (Q513)

Get involved

For a complete starters' guide, visit the [community portal](#).

As you start typing, Wikidata will anticipate the results in a dropdown menu. The search will identify Items that have your search term in their Label, or that have been identified as Aliases of the Label. As you can see, there are many entries for “dog.”

Please note that if you are searching for a multi-word term like “displaced person,” you may need to type the entire term. Typing only “displaced” may not bring up the full term in the dropdown menu.

The screenshot shows the Wikidata search interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "dog" entered. A dropdown menu is open, displaying a list of search results. The first result is "dog domestic animal", which is highlighted in blue. Other results include "Dog sign of Chinese zodiac", "Dog Wikimedia disambiguation page", "Dongola Airport (DOG) airport", "Dog fictional character in Half-Life", "hound (dog) heraldic animal", and "Wax (Dog) South Korean singer". A red circle highlights the search bar and the dropdown menu. The background of the page shows the Wikidata logo and a navigation menu.

Items usually have a short descriptive phrase that appears beneath each search result. The “dog” we are looking for is the “domestic animal,” not the “sign of Chinese zodiac,” or “fictional character in Half-Life,” so we’ll select the first Item that appears in this list.

If you are unsure which term to select, select “Wikimedia disambiguation page” which will include links to Wikipedia disambiguation pages that may direct you to the correct term.

To use this Item on Curationist, you need both the Label (“dog”) and its Wikidata Identifier. This is the number that appears after the Label. In this case it’s “Q144.” Adding this identifier as well as the Label to Curationist data ensures that we’re getting the correct meaning of “dog” and differentiates that term from others that may also be in use on the site. It also allows the site to maintain the link to the concept “dog” even if the Label of the page changes.

The screenshot shows the Wikidata page for the item 'dog' (Q144). The label 'dog' is circled in red. The page includes a navigation bar at the top with options like 'English', 'Smizota', 'Talk', 'Preferences', 'Beta', 'Watchlist', 'Contributions', and 'Log out'. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for 'Item', 'Discussion', 'Read', and 'View history', along with a search box for Wikidata. The main content area displays the label 'dog' (Q144) and the description 'domestic animal'. Below this, there is a table listing the label and description for 'dog' in various languages.

Language	Label	Description	Also known as
English	dog	domestic animal	Canis lupus familiaris Canis familiaris domestic dog man's best friend
Spanish	perro	mamífero carnívoro doméstico de la familia Canidae	perro doméstico can Canis lupus familiaris C. lupus familiaris
Traditional Chinese	犬	动物	狗
Chinese	犬	1758年命名學名的一种动物	狗

All entered languages

Search Results

In some cases, the choices provided by the dropdown menu may not be enough to determine which term is correct. In these cases you can use the “Search results” page.

To access “Search results,” click on the bottommost item in the dropdown that begins with “containing...” This will bring up all Items that contain that term, in this case, “baton.”

The image shows a screenshot of the Wikidata search interface. At the top, there is a search bar containing the text "baton". Below the search bar, a dropdown menu is open, displaying a list of search results. The results include:

- club (*baton*)**: short staff or stick, usually made of wood, wielded as a weapon
- baton**: high military officer's ceremonial object
- baton**: club of less than arm's length
- baton**: stick for conducting music
- rod (*baton*)**: formed stick in general
- baton**: Wikimedia disambiguation page

At the bottom of the dropdown menu, there is a link labeled "containing..." which is circled in red. Below this link, the text "baton" is visible. The background of the page shows the Wikidata logo and a "Welcome to Wikidata" message. There are also some red lines and arrows overlaid on the page, possibly indicating a path or highlighting specific elements.

This will bring up the Search Results page. This page has many more instances of “baton” with their descriptions and identifiers. Hopefully, you’ll be able to find the “baton” you’re looking for in this list.

English Smizota Talk Preferences Beta Watchlist Contributions Log out

Special page Search Wikidata

Search results Help

To search for Wikidata items by their title on a given site, use [Special:ItemByTitle](#).

Results 1 – 20 of 2,236

Advanced search:

Search in:

Baton Rouge (Q28218)
parish seat city in East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, USA and Louisiana federated state capital city
63 statements, 117 sitelinks - 05:52, 15 June 2020

baton (Q2014830)
high military officer's ceremonial object
9 statements, 21 sitelinks - 10:05, 11 May 2020

East Baton Rouge Parish (Q491949)
parish in Louisiana, United States
45 statements, 41 sitelinks - 14:02, 24 June 2020

baton (Q860256)
stick for conducting music
11 statements, 28 sitelinks - 14:49, 7 June 2020

West Baton Rouge Parish (Q145006)
parish in Louisiana, United States
40 statements, 38 sitelinks - 14:02, 24 June 2020

baton (Q2662964)
2 statements, 1 sitelink - 11:03, 14 January 2020

Baton (Q37433131)
family name
8 statements, 0 sitelinks - 06:35, 5 May 2020

BATON (Q3631710)
classified block cipher used by the United States government
5 statements, 2 sitelinks - 06:51, 23 June 2018

WIKIDATA

- Main page
- Community portal
- Project chat
- Create a new Item
- Create a new Lexeme
- Recent changes
- Random Item
- Query Service
- Nearby
- Help
- Donate

Tools

- Special pages
- Printable version

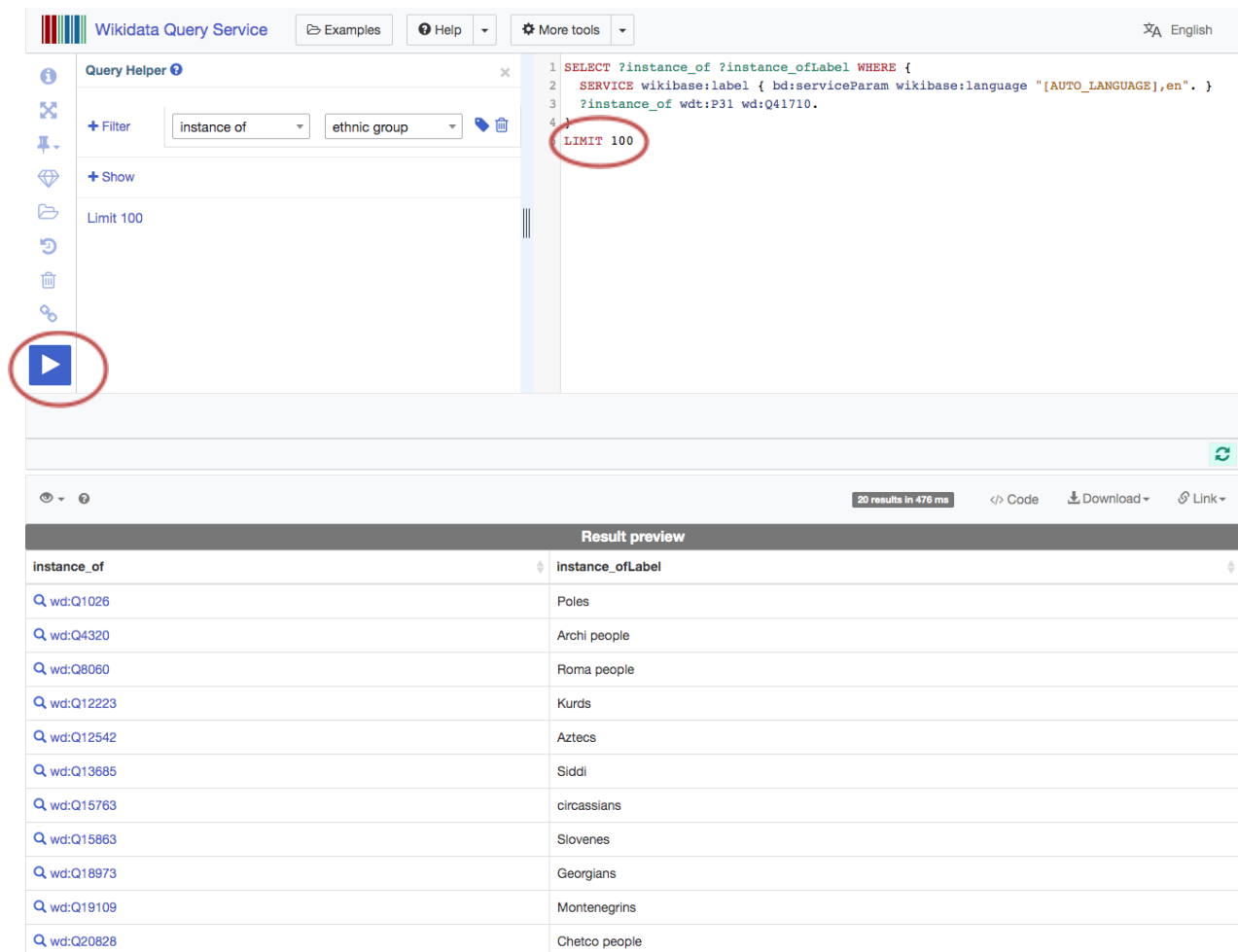
Query Service

A third way to search is by using the Query Service to look for all the terms that meet certain criteria. Query Service is available from the left hand menu bar.

The screenshot shows the Wikidata main page. The left-hand menu bar contains the following items: Main page, Community portal, Project chat, Create a new Item, Create a new Lexeme, Recent changes, Random item, **Query Service** (circled in red), Nearby, Help, Donate, Tools, What links here, Related changes, Special pages, Permanent link, Page information, Wikidata item, In other projects, Wikimedia Commons, MediaWiki, Meta-Wiki, Wikispecies, Wikibooks, Wikimania, Wikinews, Wikipedia, Wikiquote, Wikisource, Wikiversity, Wikivoyage, and Wikivoyage. The main content area features a central 'Welcome to Wikidata' message, a search bar, and several informational boxes: 'Welcome!', 'Learn about data', and 'Get involved'. The 'Learn about data' box includes images of Earth, a ruler, and Mount Everest, with captions: 'Item: Earth (Q2)', 'Property: highest point (P610)', and 'custom value: Mount Everest (Q513)'.

It uses SPARQL to query the Wikidata database, but the Query Helper on the left will help you generate a query using dropdown menus.

For example, if you want to see all the Items that describe ethnic groups (Items that have the Statement “instance of” with the value “ethnic group”) you could use the Filter module to select “instance of” in the first dropdown, and “ethnic group” in the second one. To get a full set of results, be sure to click the blue arrow on the lower left. Otherwise, you will just get a preview (as seen below). Also note that the default SPARQL script limits the search to 100 results. To see all results, simply delete that line of code, then hit the blue arrow again.



The screenshot shows the Wikidata Query Service interface. At the top, there are navigation links for Examples, Help, and More tools. The main area is divided into a Query Helper on the left and a SPARQL editor on the right. The Query Helper has two dropdown menus: the first is set to "instance of" and the second is set to "ethnic group". Below these are buttons for "+ Filter", "+ Show", and "Limit 100". A blue play button is circled in red. The SPARQL editor shows the following code:

```
1 SELECT ?instance_of ?instance_ofLabel WHERE {
2   SERVICE wikibase:label { bd:serviceParam wikibase:language "[AUTO_LANGUAGE],en". }
3   ?instance_of wdt:P31 wd:Q41710.
4 }
5 LIMIT 100
```

The "LIMIT 100" line is circled in red. Below the editor is a "Result preview" table with 20 results in 476 ms. The table has two columns: "instance_of" and "instance_ofLabel".

instance_of	instance_ofLabel
Q1026	Poles
Q4320	Archi people
Q8060	Roma people
Q12223	Kurds
Q12542	Aztecs
Q13685	Siddi
Q15783	circassians
Q15863	Slovenes
Q18973	Georgians
Q19109	Montenegrins
Q20828	Chetco people

For more information on how to use the Query Service, see this [Wikidata Help page](#).

Term Categories

Terms from Wikidata are used in the parts of Curationist records that require vocabulary control.* This control allows similar records to be grouped together unambiguously and facilitates full retrieval of all relevant records when searching. This section provides guidelines to consider when selecting terms for each type of data on the site.

* In cases where the data pertains only to internal Curationist categories, some data on the site comes from local controlled vocabularies. See the Metadata Content Standard for information on these categories.

General Guidelines

When entering any Wikidata term into the Curationist cataloging interface, make sure to copy the term EXACTLY as it appears in the Wikidata Label. The Wikidata Identifier should also be copied in its entirety including the “Q”, but without the parens. See examples in each section below.

Data Differences

If the term on Wikidata differs from the one received from the Source institution, keep the Source data, but create a second entry in the record for the Wikidata term, including its Identifier.

Inappropriate or Missing Terms

If the Wikidata term you find is inappropriate (racist, sexist, colonial, etc.) you may edit the Item. Refer to Curationist’s [Manual of Style](#) for guidelines on appropriate terms. See the [“Editing Wikidata”](#) section below for guidance on how to edit an Item.

If you don’t find the term you are looking for or a suitable equivalent in Wikidata, you can create a new Item. See the [“Editing Wikidata”](#) section below for guidance on how to create a new Item.

Audience

When selecting terms, make sure to keep Curationist’s audience in mind. Curationist serves a general audience who may not be familiar with specialized terminology. Although it is important to be specific when selecting terms, make sure you are selecting terms that a general audience will easily understand.

Title (Work)

Wikidata entries are not required for Title entries, but if the title exists as an entry in Wikidata, the Wikidata Identifier (number beginning with Q) should also be added to the record.

Untitled Works

For Works like vessels and jewelry that may not have a title, it's best to leave the Title as a free text description (i.e., "Grecian urn," "beaded necklace") rather than try to create a unique title in Wikidata.

That said, beware of "Untitled." At the time this document was written, there were 15,997 Items called "Untitled" on Wikidata. Unless you have additional information to identify the "Untitled" you are cataloging, it might be best to leave the title as free text.

Examples

Mona Lisa

[Q12418](#)

Venus de Milo

[Q151952](#)

Luncheon on the Grass

[Q152509](#)

This is the painting by Manet.

Dejeuner Sur L'herbe II

[Q96357651](#)

This is a drawing by Robert Colescott.

Agent (Creators and Subjects)

Whenever possible, Wikidata terms should be used for the names of individuals and organizations. The names can be used as either Creators or Subjects (persons depicted) of a Work.

Creators of Features, Collections, Hubs, and Series should be drawn from Curationist's internal list of usernames.

When selecting a name, make sure to verify that it belongs to the correct entity. Many people have the same or similar names. See “Harrison Ford” example below.

Unidentified Entities

If a Creator is unidentified, you may use the Wikidata term “anonymous”. See example below.

If a Subject is unknown, do not enter a Wikidata term. However, you can enter terms describing the subject, such as “woman,” “farmer,” etc. See [“Subjects”](#) section below.

Username

In cases where the *agent* name does not meet Wikidata notability criteria for adding an Item (such as agents who are only known by their Wikimedia usernames), enter the *agent* name as it appears in the Source data. See the Curationist Metadata Content Standard for more information.

Examples

Charlie Chaplin

[Q882](#)

The Coca-Cola Company

[Q3295867](#)

Andy Warhol

[Q5603](#)

Slanguage Art Collective

[Q7538650](#)

Carolina Caycedo

[Q55235675](#)

anonymous

[Q4233718](#)

Note: This Wikidata Item is a generic term for an unknown creator. Be careful to distinguish it from:

Anonymous

[Q10920](#)

The “decentralized international hacktivist group”

Harrison Ford

[Q81328](#)

“American film actor and producer”

Harrison Ford

[Q2305010](#)

“American stage and silent film actor”

Cultural Context

Cultural Context terms describe the cultural context from which a Work derives or within which it has meaning. They can be tied to national, ethnic, religious, or subcultural contexts. Whenever Cultural Context terms are assigned to a record, they should be sourced from Wikidata.

When to Use These Terms

These terms should be used only when the cultural affiliation of a given Work is clear, i.e., supported by documentation or contextual information. Unless you are a member of the culture from which the Work originates, identification of cultural affiliation should not be made on the basis of visual examination alone.

Examples

Culture of France

[Q1985804](#)

Maori culture

[Q3647357](#)

Buddhism

[Q748](#)

Hip hop

[Q1132127](#)

Ball culture

[Q28130022](#)

Location (Subjects and Locations)

Wherever possible, Wikidata terms should be used for the names of geographic places. Place names are used as Subjects depicted in a Work or as Locations associated with the creation, display, or housing, etc. of a Work.

Place names should only be used for specific, named, geographic locations. Generic terms like “mountain” or “ocean” that do not refer to a specific mountain ([Mount Fuji Q39231](#)) or ocean ([Indian Ocean Q1239](#)) should be entered under Subjects.

Broader/Specific Terms

Wikidata place names can be quite granular. Select the *most specific term* that applies to the Work you are cataloging. However, if you’re unsure as to the specific location, it is safer to select a broader term. For example, Wikidata has three entries for Antwerp, Belgium:

Antwerp (province in Flanders, Belgium)

[Q1116](#)

Antwerp (municipality in the province of Antwerp, Belgium)

[Q12892](#)

Antwerp (town in Antwerp municipality, Belgium)

[Q31467408](#)

If you have documentation that the Work was created in the town of Antwerp, enter Q31467408. But if you’re unsure, or don’t have specific data, it’s safer to enter Q1116, as the province encompasses the municipality and the town.

In some cases, it’s useful to enter both a broad and a specific location. For a costume housed in the Anna Wintour Costume Center ([Q16729216](#)), you might also want to add its parent location, Metropolitan Museum of Art ([Q160236](#)), as an additional Location.

Examples

Palmyra

[Q5747](#)

Eiffel Tower

[Q243](#)

Chrysler Building

[Q11274](#)

Angkor Wat

[Q43473](#)

Language (Work and Metadata)

These terms describe the language in which any textual component of the Work is written or voiced, or the language of the metadata that has been imported or added to any Curationist record, including translations. Language terms should always be sourced from Wikidata.

Translation and Localization

Wikidata uses [ISO 639-3](#) to code its languages so this data should be available for translation and localization efforts.

Examples

French

[Q150](#)

Sanskrit

[Q11059](#)

Arabic

[Q13955](#)

StylePeriod

These terms describe the style, school, or artistic movement with which the Work is associated. StylePeriod terms should always be sourced from Wikidata.

When to Use These Terms

These terms should be used only when the style or movement of a given Work is clear, i.e., supported by documentation or contextual information. Identification of style or movement should not be made on the basis of visual examination alone.

Examples

Impressionism

[Q40415](#)

Dada

[Q6034](#)

Mono-ha

[Q3321083](#)

Time Periods (Date)

Time period terms indicate the century in which the Work was created. These terms are a part of the Date metadata for a Work and may be extrapolated from more specific date information. They should always be sourced from Wikidata.

Known Issue

Wikidata appends “BC” to the names of centuries, indicating that the time period is before the birth of Christ. The preferred non-Christian-specific term is “Before the Common Era,” or “BCE”. The “BCE” time period often appears as an Alias, but does not show up in the display Label. (This may be a Wikidata clean up project for the future.) Time periods in the common era do not have anything appended to them.

Examples

19th century

[Q6955](#)

18th century

[Q7015](#)

8th century BC

[Q25346](#)

Subjects

Subjects describe the topic or content of a Work, Feature, Collection, Hub, or Series. They include descriptive terms, names of persons or organizations depicted, and geographic place names.

See “Agent” section above for guidelines for selecting names of persons and organizations that appear as Subjects.

See “Location” section above for guidelines for selecting names of geographic locations.

Broader/Specific Terms

Select the *most specific term appropriate* for the Work you’re cataloging. In some cases it is advisable to select both a specific term and a broader term. For example, for a picture of a fedora, you might want to assign both “fedora” ([Q638335](#)) and “hat” ([Q80151](#)).

For Works that depict or refer to multiple subjects, it is not necessary to name everything that appears in the Work. Sometimes it is both more efficient and useful to assign broader terms. For example, a painting of a living room should have the subject “living room” ([Q475018](#)), but may not need the terms “couch” ([Q131514](#)), “table” ([Q14748](#)), or “chair” ([Q15026](#)) because these are things that are commonly found in a living room. Unless the couch, table or chairs are especially prominent or exceptional, “living room” is descriptive enough. Users who are looking for images of chairs, for example, may not want to find this painting if the only chair is very small and in the background.

Common vs. Specialist Terms

Wikidata is a mix of commonly used and specialized terminology. When given a choice, select the term that is commonly used rather than the scientific or specialist term. For example a search for the animal “pig” brings up:

Sus scrofa
[Q58697](#)

pig
[Q787](#)

Although “Sus scrofa” appears first in the search results, it is the scientific name and is less commonly understood. Select “pig” instead.

Activities

When cataloging Works that depict activities, be sure to include term(s) for the activity as well as for the objects involved. For example, a photograph of a cycling race, might have all of the following terms:

bicycle
[Q11442](#)
Use for: pedal-driven, two-wheeled vehicle

athlete
[Q2066131](#)
Use for: person who participates regularly in a sport

cycling
[Q53121](#)
Use for: the activity of riding a bicycle

cycle sport

[Q2215841](#)

Use for: competitive activities that involve riding a bicycle

racing

[Q878123](#)

Use for: competitive activity where the goal is to complete the course as fast as possible

Gender and Sexual Orientation

Wikidata contains many different, often overlapping terms to describe gender and sexual orientation. As a start, use the terms below to describe the gender and sexual orientation of persons depicted. Terms that describe gender and sexual orientation are slippery, sensitive, and always changing, so these guidelines may need to be updated as the meanings of these terms evolve, or as they are superseded by new terms.

When to Use These Terms

These terms should be used only when the gender or sexual orientation of a given person or group is clear, i.e., supported by documentation or contextual information. Identification of gender and sexual orientation should not be made on the basis of visual examination alone, as they cannot always be determined on sight.

Known Issues

The Wikidata terms for both gender and sexual orientation need improvement. For example, there are currently no terms that describe an asexual, bisexual, or heterosexual person, only terms that describe the condition of asexuality, bisexuality, and heterosexuality. Curatorist may want to consider using [Homosaurus](#), “an international linked data vocabulary of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) terms” instead, or adding terms from Homosaurus to Wikidata.

Gender

man

[Q8441](#)

Use for: people who identify as men, whether cisgender or transgender

Do not use:

male

[Q6581097](#)

male organism

[Q44148](#)

cisgender male

[Q15145778](#)

non-binary

[Q48270](#)

Use for: people who identify with a range of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine

transgender person

[Q189125](#)

Use for: people whose gender identity or expression does not match their assigned sex

woman

[Q467](#)

Use for: people who identify as women, whether cisgender or transgender

Do not use:

female

[Q6581072](#)

female organism

[Q43445](#)

cisgender female

[Q15145779](#)

Sexual Orientation

asexuality

[Q724351](#)

Use for: a sexual orientation where there is a lack of sexual attraction to anyone

bisexuality

[Q43200](#)

Use for: a sexual and/or romantic attraction to people of both the same gender and the opposite gender

gay

[Q592](#)

Use for: people who are sexually attracted to members of the same gender

Do not use:

homosexuality

[Q6636](#)

heterosexuality

[Q1035954](#)

Use for: romantic and/or sexual attraction or behavior between people of opposite genders

lesbian

[Q6649](#)

Use for: women who are sexually attracted to other women

People with Disabilities

When cataloging Works that depict or describe people with disabilities, be careful to use terms that emphasize their humanity. Terms that describe disability are sensitive and always changing, so these guidelines may need to be updated as the meanings of these terms evolve, or as they are superseded by new terms.

Examples

Use:

people with disabilities

[Q15978181](#)

Do not use:

cripple

[Q1790733](#)

disability

[Q12131](#)

Use:

people with visual disabilities

[Q16649002](#)

Do not use:

blindness

[Q10874](#)

Other Groups

Below are examples of other groups of people that are sometimes difficult to describe. In all cases, select the term that best respects the humanity of the person(s) you are describing.

Use:

homeless people

[Q29325697](#)

Use for: persons with no permanent residence, excluding nomads

Do not use:

homelessness

[Q131327](#)

tramp

[Q1965933](#)

hobo

[Q843281](#)

migrant

[Q1932461](#)

Use for: person who voluntarily or involuntarily moves to another country

Use:

immigrant

[Q12547146](#)

Use for: persons living in a nation other than that of their birth, generally by choice

Do not use:

foreigner

[Q473741](#)

refugee

[Q131572](#)

Use for: persons who have been forcibly removed from their home or home region

Racial and Ethnic Groups

Below are some definitions to help guide term selection for racial and ethnic groups. Terms that describe race and ethnicity are slippery, sensitive, and always changing, so these guidelines may need to be updated as the meanings of these terms evolve, or as they are superseded by new terms.

When to Use These Terms

These terms should be used only when the race or ethnicity of a given person or group is clear, i.e., supported by documentation or contextual information. Identification of race or ethnicity should not be made on the basis of visual examination alone, as racial or ethnic origin cannot always be determined on sight.

That said, historically in United States libraries and archives, terms like “European American” and “White people” have not always been used because Whiteness was assumed as the default racial identity of persons depicted. Since Curationist is a project with an international scope and an anti-racist agenda, persons of White European descent should be identified as such when that identity is substantiated.

Known Issues

The list of terms below is not comprehensive and is biased toward a North American context. Future editors of this document may want to include additional terms relevant to other areas of the world.

African people

[Q1075929](#)

Use for: inhabitants of Africa

African Americans

[Q49085](#)

Use for: people of Black African descent in the United States

Black people

[Q817393](#)

Use for: people of Black African descent

Arabs

[Q35323](#)

Use for: inhabitants of the Arab states in Western Asia, Northern Africa, The Horn of Africa and Western Indian Ocean islands and their descendants

Arab American

[Q787519](#)

Use for: people of Arab descent in the United States

Asian people

[Q4058325](#)

Use for: inhabitants of Asia and their descendants

Asian American

[Q727928](#)

Use for: people of Asian descent in the United States

Europeans

[Q394067](#)

Use for: inhabitants of Europe

European American

[Q43103](#)

Use for: people of European descent in the United States

White people

[Q235155](#)

Use for: people of European descent

indigenous people

[Q103817](#)

Use for: the original inhabitants of a given region and their descendants

Indigenous peoples of America

[Q36747](#)

Use for: the original inhabitants of North and South America and their descendants

Indigenous peoples of South America

[Q1479328](#)

Use for: the original inhabitants of South America and their descendants

Indigenous peoples of the United States

[Q49297](#)

Use for: the original inhabitants of North America within the boundaries of the present-day United States (including Alaska and Hawaii) and their descendants

Indigenous peoples in Canada

[Q863284](#)

Use for: the original inhabitants of North America within the boundaries of present-day Canada and their descendants

First Nations

[Q392316](#)

Use for: Indigenous peoples in Canada who are neither Inuit ([Q189975](#)) nor Métis people ([Q262457](#))

Latin Americans

[Q16799549](#)

Use for: inhabitants of Latin American countries

Latinx

[Q30324002](#)

Use for: inhabitants of Latin American descent in the United States

Do not use:

Latino ([Q1464994](#))

Hispanic ([Q1211934](#))

Hispanic and Latino Americans ([Q58669](#))

mixed race people

Use for: people of multiracial backgrounds

[Q1378555](#)

person of color

[Q2072081](#)

Use for: non-White peoples in the United States

Religious Groups

Use these terms to describe members or practitioners of a religion. Be careful to distinguish between terms that describe a person and terms that describe the religion itself. For example, for an image of a Buddhist monk, use “Buddhist” ([Q6926246](#)), not “Buddhism” ([Q748](#)).

“Buddhism” may be used as a Cultural Context, but it is not necessarily the subject of the image. For *objects* associated with a religion, use Cultural Context to describe their affiliation. See the Cultural Context section.

When to Use These Terms

These terms should be used only when the religious affiliation of a given person or group is clear, i.e., supported by documentation or contextual information. Identification of religious affiliation should not be made on the basis of visual examination alone.

Examples

Muslim

[Q47740](#)

Use “Islam” ([Q432](#)) for Cultural Context

Sikh

[Q582779](#)

Use “Sikhism” ([Q9316](#)) for Cultural Context

Christian

[Q106039](#)

Use “Christianity” ([Q5043](#)) for Cultural Context

Rastafarian

[Q96642873](#)

Use “Rastafari movement” ([Q101462](#)) for Cultural Context

Jewish people

[Q7325](#)

Use “Judaism” ([Q9268](#)) for Cultural Context

Worktype

Worktype terms describe the type or general category of Work you are cataloging. Use the *broadest category* that makes sense for the object and still allows it to be differentiated from other Worktypes.

Examples

Even if you know a painting is an oil painting, use:

painting

[Q3305213](#)

Do not use:

oil painting

[Q56676227](#)

acrylic painting

[Q61268321](#)

These terms are too specific and will make it difficult for users to find all of the paintings on the site.

Use:

drawing

[Q93184](#)

Do not use:

charcoal drawing

[Q84080586](#)

pencil drawing

[Q85621166](#)

You will be able to capture what the Work is made of in the Material section.

However, use both:

sculpture

[Q860861](#)

and

statue

[Q179700](#)

Because “statue” is a subtype of sculpture (figurative, often public) that users might find useful to search.

Similarly, you can use both:

container

[Q987767](#)

and

urn

[Q11083119](#)

or

vase

[Q191851](#)

or

basket

[Q201097](#)

Use

ceramics

[Q13464614](#)

Do not use:

Pottery ware

[Q17379525](#)

Use

jewellery

[Q161439](#)

and

necklace

[Q189299](#)

or

brooch

[Q499916](#)

Do not use:

fibula

[Q324926](#)

This is not a commonly understood term for brooch.

You can use both:

mural

[Q219423](#)

and

fresco

[Q22669139](#)

Do not use:

Fresco painting

[Q134194](#)

fresco

[Q25631150](#)

These last two belong under Technique and Material, respectively

Some other examples:

photograph

[Q125191](#)

video

[Q34508](#)

installation

[Q20437094](#)

Material

These terms describe what the Work is made of. Use the most specific term available but also include the broader term to facilitate searching.

Examples

Use:

paint

[Q174219](#)

and

oil paint

[Q296955](#)

or

acrylic paint

[Q207849](#)

or

latex paint

[Q1412498](#)

graphite

[Q5309](#)

charcoal

[Q1424515](#)

clay

[Q42302](#)

ceramic

[Q45621](#)

Note: This is a different term than the Worktype term.

marble

[Q40861](#)

Use:

bronze

[Q34095](#)

Do not use:

bronze

[Q2778382](#)

The first term describes the material “bronze,” the second describes the color.

Technique

These terms describe the techniques used to make the Work. Be careful to differentiate terms used in this section from terms used in *material* above. *Material* describes substance; *technique* describes process.

Examples

lithography

[Q133036](#)

3D printing

[Q229367](#)

fresco painting

[Q134194](#)

photography

[Q11633](#)

Rights

Wikidata includes terms for Creative Commons licenses and a term indicating public domain.

Examples

public domain

[Q19652](#)

CC0

[Q6938433](#)

Creative Commons Attribution–NonCommercial-ShareAlike

[Q6998997](#)

Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported

[Q14947546](#)

Editing Wikidata

If you're not finding the term you want to use on Wikidata, you may add it or edit an existing Item. To do this, you should first create a Wikidata account.

Note: Technically, you do not need an account to edit Wikidata, but it is an ethical practice across Wikimedia sites for editors to be accountable and transparent about their activities. Your account should reflect your true, individual identity; it should not be created solely for business purposes or under a pseudonym. In other words, you should *not* have separate accounts for personal and Curationist-related use. If you edit Wikidata without an account, Wikidata will use your IP address instead to track your activity.

This document provides basic instructions for creating and editing an Item. For interactive tutorials on basic editing in Wikidata, please see [Wikidata Tours](#).

The [Wikidata Help page](#) also provides a wealth of information.

Creating an Account

To create a new account, all you'll need is a username and password. [Go here to create an account](#).

Creating an Item

To add an Item to Wikidata, you should first [login here](#).

Before adding an Item make sure that the term you want to add:

- 1) Is not already on the site, possibly under a synonym, and
- 2) Meets Wikidata's criteria for notability.

Notability means it meets *at least one* of these three criteria:

- 1) It has a reference on another Wikimedia site,

- 2) It is a “clearly identifiable conceptual or material entity” and “can be described using serious and publicly available references.” Valid outside references include other publicly available vocabularies or reputable published sources.
- 3) It fulfills a structural need supporting statements in other items.

See Wikidata’s [Notability Policy](#) for more detailed information.

When you are sure that the Item should be added, click on “Create a new item” in the left hand menu bar.

English Smizota Talk Preferences Beta Watchlist Contributions Log out

Main Page Discussion Read View source View history Search Wikidata

WIKIDATA

Main page
Community portal
Project chat
Create a new item
Create a new Lexeme
Recent changes
Random item
Query Service
Nearby
Help
Donate

Tools

What links here
Related changes
Special pages
Permanent link
Page information
Wikidata item

In other projects

Wikimedia Commons
MediaWiki
Meta-Wiki
Wikispecies
Wikibooks
Wikimania
Wikinews
Wikipedia
Wikiquote
Wikisource
Wikiversity
Wikivoyage

open collaborative linked
multilingual structured
free

Welcome to Wikidata
the free knowledge base with 87,466,473 data items that anyone can edit.
Introduction • Project Chat • Community Portal • Help

Want to help translate? Translate the missing messages.

Welcome!


Wikidata is a free and open knowledge base that can be read and edited by both humans and machines.

Wikidata acts as central storage for the **structured data** of its Wikimedia sister projects including Wikipedia, Wikivoyage, Wiktionary, Wikisource, and others.


Wikidata also provides support to many other sites and services beyond just Wikimedia projects! The content of Wikidata is available under a free license, exported using standard formats, and can be interlinked to other open data sets on the linked data web.

Learn about data

New to the wonderful world of data? Develop and improve your data literacy through content designed to get you up to speed and feeling comfortable with the fundamentals in no time.


Item: *Earth* (Q2)


Property: *highest point* (P610)


custom value: *Mount Everest* (Q513)

Get involved

For a complete starters' guide, visit the [community portal](#).

You'll see the "Create a new Item" screen. Follow the instructions on the page. Your default editing language will be pre populated. You will need to provide:

- **Label:** This will be the title of your Item and the form the term will take on Curationist
- **Description:** A brief definition of the Item.
- **Aliases:** Enter any known synonyms for the Item. Each Alias should be separated from the others by "pipes," the keyboard character that looks like a vertical line "|".

Here's how the form looked for the Item "Rastafarian."

The screenshot shows the Wikidata interface for creating a new item. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for English, Smizota, Talk, Preferences, Beta, Watchlist, Contributions, and Log out. Below this is a search bar for Wikidata. The main heading is "Create a new Item".

Instructions on the page include: "Please make sure that the item you want to create complies with our notability policy and that it doesn't already exist. If you want to create an item about a living person, be mindful of their privacy. We appreciate it if you create a label and a description for all of your new items. The first letter of your label should only be capitalized if it is a proper noun (Q147276), and your description should not be phrased as a sentence. To create a new lexeme, please use Special:NewLexeme. By clicking 'Create', you agree to the terms of use, and you irrevocably agree to release your contribution under the Creative Commons CC0 License."

The form fields are as follows:

- Language:** A dropdown menu with "en" selected.
- Label:** A text input field containing "Rastafarian".
- Description:** A text input field containing "follower of Rastafarianism, an Abrahamic religion that developed in Jamaica during the 1930s".
- Aliases, pipe-separated:** A text input field containing "Rasta | Rastas | Rastafaris | Ras Tafari | Rastafarians | Rastafarites".

A blue "Create" button is located at the bottom of the form.

Once you've created your Item, you'll need to support it with "Statements." Statements provide context for the item, relating it to other terms or providing additional information. Here's the page for "Rastafarian."

The screenshot shows the Wikidata page for the item 'Rastafarian' (Q96642873). At the top, there are navigation links for English, user Smizota, and various actions like Talk, Preferences, Beta, Watchlist, Contributions, and Log out. Below the navigation is a search bar and a 'View history' link. The main content area features the Wikidata logo on the left and the item title 'Rastafarian (Q96642873)' on the right. Under the title, there is a description: 'follower of Rastafarianism, an Abrahamic religion that developed in Jamaica during the 1930s'. Below the description is a table of labels in different languages. The 'Statements' section is visible at the bottom, showing two statements: 'instance of' (religious identity) and 'part of' (Rastafari movement). The 'instance of' statement has one reference to a Wikipedia page.

Language	Label	Description	Also known as
English	Rastafarian	follower of Rastafarianism, an Abrahamic religion that developed in Jamaica during the 1930s	Rasta Rastas Rastafaris Ras Tafari Rastafarians Rastafarites
Spanish	No label defined	No description defined	
Traditional Chinese	No label defined	No description defined	
Chinese	No label defined	No description defined	

Statements

- instance of
 - religious identity
 - 1 reference
 - Wikimedia import URL: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rastafari>
 - + add reference
 - group of humans
 - 0 references
 - + add reference
 - + add value
- part of
 - Rastafari movement
 - 1 reference
 - + add value

There are many different kinds of Statements that can be added to an Item. Here we've added "instance of," which indicates the type of item, and "part of" which indicates a larger context to which the Item belongs.

Statements need to be supported by References. In the example above, the "instance of" Statement is supported by a Reference to a Wikipedia page.

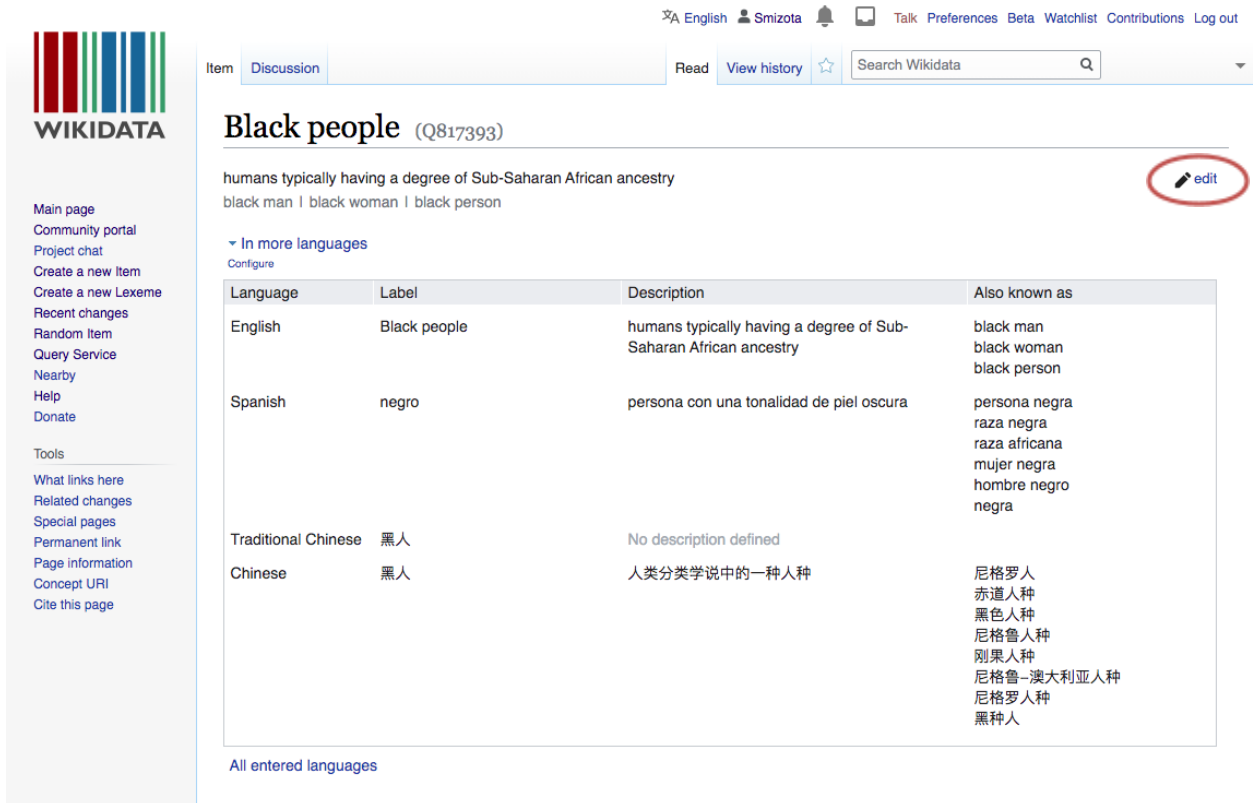
To learn how to add Statements and References, please see the respective tutorials on [Wikidata Tours](#).

Once you've added your Item, you may use it as a Tag on Curationist.

Editing a Item

In some cases, you may need to edit an Item. For example, you may want to update the Label to reflect contemporary language or usage. In the following example, the Label was updated to capitalize "Black people."

To edit the Label, simply click on the "edit" button to the right of the Label.



The screenshot shows the Wikidata page for the item "Black people" (Q817393). The page includes a navigation bar at the top with options like "English", "Smizota", "Talk", "Preferences", "Beta", "Watchlist", "Contributions", and "Log out". Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for "Item" and "Discussion", and a search box for Wikidata. The main content area displays the item name "Black people" with its QID (Q817393) and a description: "humans typically having a degree of Sub-Saharan African ancestry". Below the description, there are links for "black man", "black woman", and "black person". A table titled "In more languages" shows the labels and descriptions for the item in various languages. The "edit" button is circled in red.

Language	Label	Description	Also known as
English	Black people	humans typically having a degree of Sub-Saharan African ancestry	black man black woman black person
Spanish	negro	persona con una tonalidad de piel oscura	persona negra raza negra raza africana mujer negra hombre negro negra
Traditional Chinese	黑人	No description defined	
Chinese	黑人	人类分类学说中的一种人种	尼格罗人 赤道人种 黑色人种 尼格罗人种 刚果人种 尼格罗-澳大利亚人种 尼格罗人种 黑种人

All entered languages

You'll see this editable view of the Item below. Make your changes and click “publish” in the upper right. If you change your mind, click “cancel” to revert the page back to its previous form.

Wikidata logo and navigation menu (English, Smizota, Talk, Preferences, Beta, Watchlist, Contributions, Log out).

Item: [Discussion](#) | [Read](#) | [View history](#) | [Search Wikidata](#)

Black people (Q817393)

humans typically having a degree of Sub-Saharan African ancestry

black man | black woman | black person

?

[In more languages](#)

Language	Label	Description	Also known as
English	<u>Black people</u>	humans typically having a degree of Sub-Saharan African ancestry	black man black woman black person enter an alias
Spanish	<u>negro</u>	persona con una tonalidad de piel oscura	persona negra raza negra raza africana mujer negra hombre negro negra enter an alias
Traditional Chinese	<u>黑人</u>	enter a description in Traditional	enter an alias
Chinese	<u>黑人</u>	人类分类学说中的一种人种	尼格罗人 赤道人种 黑色人种 尼格罗人种 刚果人种 尼格罗-澳大利亚人种 尼格罗人种 黑种人 enter an alias

[All entered languages](#)

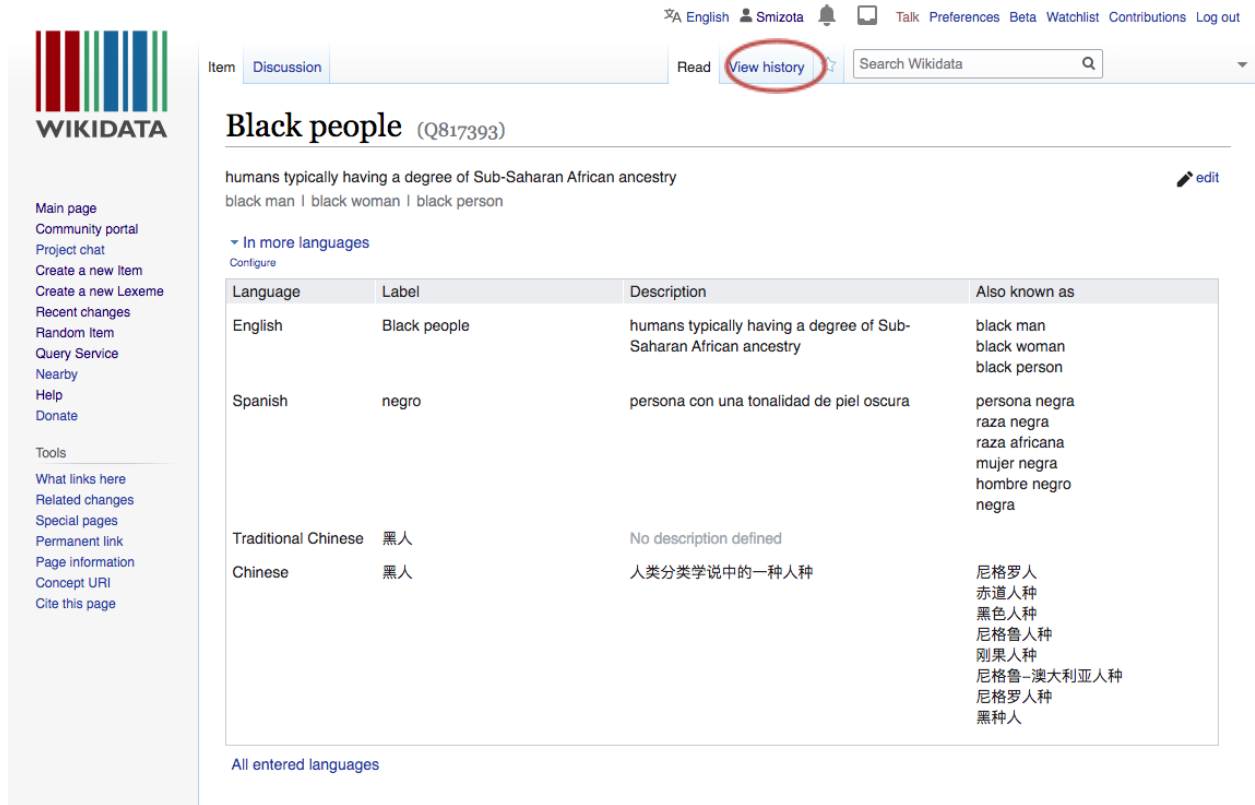
You can also edit or add Statements and References, although it's usually not necessary to do so if an Item already exists in Wikidata.

To learn how to edit Statements and References, please see the respective tutorials on [Wikidata Tours](#).

If You Make a Mistake

If you publish an Item or edits to an Item that you later decide are incorrect, you can always return the page to a previous state.

Click on the “View History” tab in the upper right.



English Smizota Talk Preferences Beta Watchlist Contributions Log out

Item Discussion Read **View history** Search Wikidata

Black people (Q817393)

humans typically having a degree of Sub-Saharan African ancestry [edit](#)
black man | black woman | black person

In more languages
[Configure](#)

Language	Label	Description	Also known as
English	Black people	humans typically having a degree of Sub-Saharan African ancestry	black man black woman black person
Spanish	negro	persona con una tonalidad de piel oscura	persona negra raza negra raza africana mujer negra hombre negro negra
Traditional Chinese	黑人	No description defined	
Chinese	黑人	人类分类学说中的一种人种	尼格罗人 赤道人种 黑色人种 尼格罗人种 刚果人种 尼格罗-澳大利亚人种 尼格罗人种 黑种人

[All entered languages](#)

You'll see the Revision History for the page. This page lists every edit that has been made to the page since its inception. To undo the edit you just made, click the "undo" link next to your edit.

Wikidata logo and navigation menu (English, Smizota, Talk, Preferences, Beta, Watchlist, Contributions, Log out).

Item: Discussion | Read | View history | Search Wikidata

Revision history of "Black people" (Q817393)

View logs for this item (view abuse log)

Filter revisions

Diff selection: Mark the radio boxes of the revisions to compare and hit enter or the button at the bottom.
 Legend: **(cur)** = difference with latest revision, **(prev)** = difference with preceding revision, **m** = minor edit.

(latest | earliest) View (newer 50 | older 50) (20 | 50 | 100 | 250 | 500)

Compare selected revisions | **Edit tags of selected revisions**

Select: All, None, Invert

- (cur | prev) 18:46, 24 June 2020 Smizota (talk | contribs) . . (22,989 bytes) (0) . . *(Changed English label: Black people)* **(undo)**
- (cur | prev) 03:39, 24 June 2020 Tuanminh01 (talk | contribs) . . (22,989 bytes) (+98) . . *(Added link to [viwiki]: Ngurđi da den)* (undo | thank) (restore)
- (cur | prev) 05:51, 15 June 2020 Animalparty (talk | contribs) . . (22,891 bytes) (+66) . . *(Added English alias: black person)* (undo | thank) (restore)
- (cur | prev) 05:27, 14 June 2020 Renaissance (talk | contribs) . . (22,825 bytes) (+104) . . *(Added Belarusian (Taraškievica orthography) alias: чорная раса)* (undo | thank) (restore)
- (cur | prev) 05:27, 14 June 2020 Renaissance (talk | contribs) . . (22,721 bytes) (+83) . . *(Added [be-tarask] label: негap)* (undo | thank) (restore)
- (cur | prev) 07:50, 30 May 2020 Pi bot (talk | contribs) . . (22,638 bytes) (-115) . . *(Updated item: Moving commons category sitelink to category item (Q86309895))* (undo) (restore)
- (cur | prev) 00:59, 30 May 2020 2001:2d8:304:615::38b4:a4 (talk) . . (22,753 bytes) (+432) . . *(Created claim: topic's main category (P910): Category:Black (human racial classification) (Q86309895))* (undo) (restore)
- (cur | prev) 05:20, 22 May 2020 Andrus Kallastu (talk | contribs) . . (22,321 bytes) (+95) . . *(Added link to [etwiki]: Mustanahaline)* (undo | thank) (restore)
- (cur | prev) 04:43, 22 May 2020 Andrus Kallastu (talk | contribs) . . (22,226 bytes) (-88) . . *(Removed link to [etwiki]: Neegrid)* (undo | thank) (restore)

You can also undo changes that other editors have made. If you do so, it's best to provide an explanation when you submit your "undo". If you have a significant disagreement with an edit that someone else has made, it's best to approach the editor on their "talk" page in a friendly manner, rather than make the change without consulting them.