

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 and Collections. (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 on Wikidata 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. Although each term on the Curationist site is linked to a Wikidata Item, it may or may not be the same as the Item’s Label.

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.

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 > domesticated animal > domesticated mammal > dog

While “wolf” is in this one:

animal > Bilateria > Nephrozoa > deuterostome > Chordata > Vertebrata > mammal > Theria > Placentalia > 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. And these relationships constantly change. The hierarchy for both of these examples has changed since this document was first drafted in 2020.

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.



Visit the main page

Main Page

Discussion

Read

View source

View history

Search 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

Welcome to Wikidata
the free knowledge base with 87,466,425 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.

Get involved

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

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)

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.

English Smizota Talk Preferences Beta Watchlist Contributions Log out

Item Discussion Read View history Search Wikidata

dog (Q144) edit

domestic animal edit

Canis lupus familiaris | Canis familiaris | domestic dog | man's best friend

[In more languages](#)
Configure

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](#)

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
- Concept URI
- Cite this page

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 navigation 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.

Special page English Smizota Talk Preferences Beta Watchlist Contributions Log out

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

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

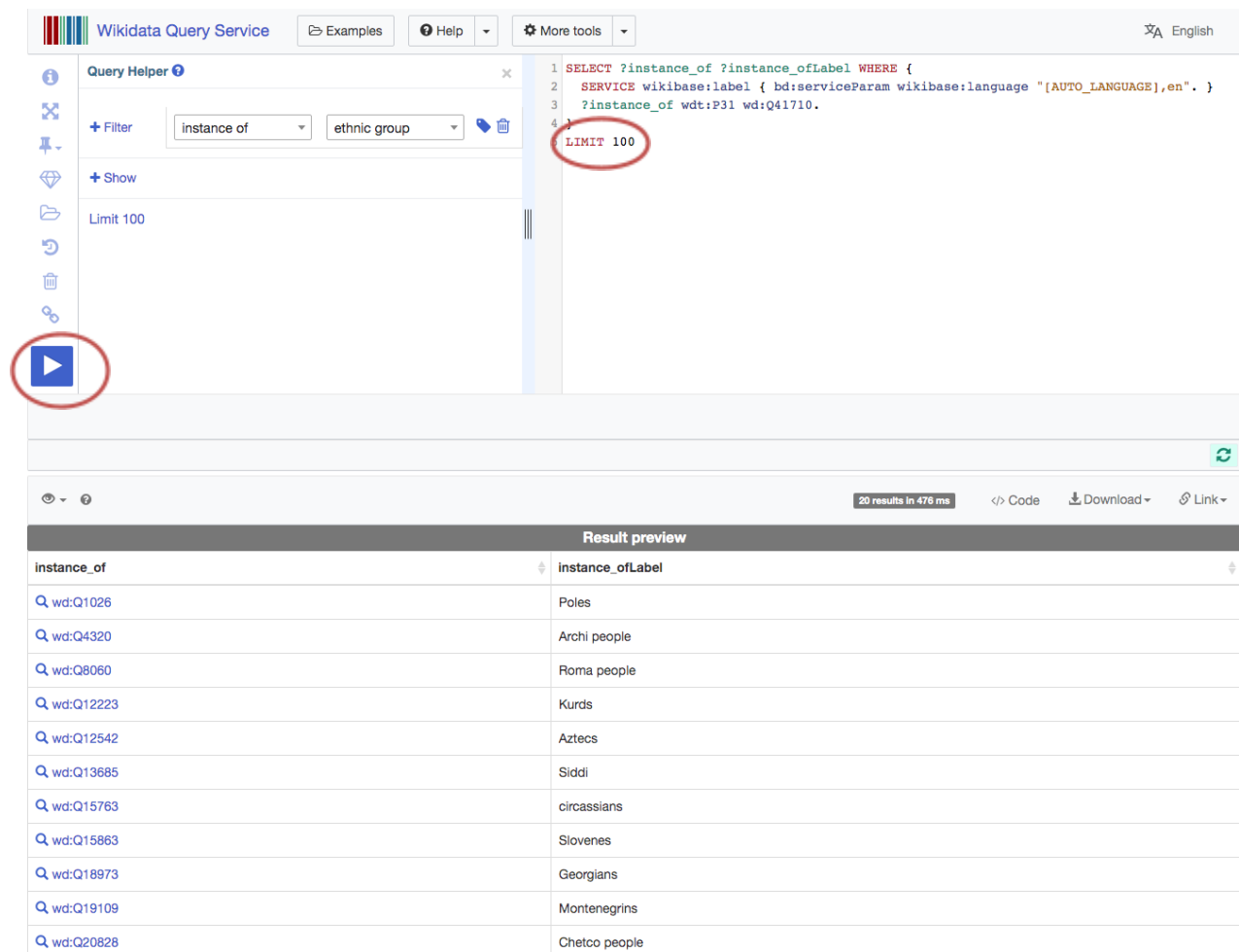
Query Service

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. The main content area features a large network diagram with nodes labeled 'open', 'multilingual', 'free', 'collaborative', 'linked', and 'structured'. A central grey box contains the text: 'Welcome to Wikidata', 'the free knowledge base with 87,466,473 data items that anyone can edit.', and 'Introduction • Project Chat • Community Portal • Help'. Below this, there are three sections: 'Welcome!' (green header), 'Learn about data' (blue header), and 'Get Involved' (red header). The 'Learn about data' section includes three images: Earth, a document, 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', along with a language selector set to 'English'. The main area is divided into three sections:

- Query Helper:** A sidebar on the left with a vertical toolbar on its left side. The toolbar contains icons for filter, show, limit, and a blue play button (circled in red). The 'Filter' section has two dropdown menus: the first is set to 'instance of' and the second to 'ethnic group'. Below the filters, it says 'Limit 100'.
- SPARQL Code:** A text area on the right containing 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 }  
LIMIT 100
```

The 'LIMIT 100' line is circled in red.
- Result preview:** A table at the bottom showing the results of the query. It has two columns: 'instance_of' and 'instance_ofLabel'. The table contains 11 rows of data.

instance_of	instance_ofLabel
Q1026	Poles
Q4320	Archi people
Q8060	Roma people
Q12223	Kurds
Q12542	Aztecs
Q13685	Siddi
Q15763	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 a Wikidata term into the Curationist cataloging interface, make sure to copy the term in the Wikidata Label. The Wikidata Identifier should also be copied in its entirety including the “Q”, but without the parens. In most cases, the only difference between the Wikidata Label and the term used by Curationist is that the Curationist term is capitalized. See examples in each section below.

Note: In some cases, you may want to use a term that is different from the Wikidata Label. In these cases, enter the Wikidata term into the “Wikidata Label” column of the [Curationist Taxonomy](#) spreadsheet along with the term’s description and “Q” Identifier (in their respective fields) and record the term you want to use in the corresponding “Terms” column. *Make sure to also add the term you want to use to the Wikidata Item as a Alias.* (The Curationist Taxonomy spreadsheet is intended to be an interim location for the Curationist controlled vocabulary, until a full integration with Wikidata can be implemented.)

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 and Collections should be drawn from Curationist’s internal list of names.

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 “Unknown,” which is an Alias of 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](#)

Unknown
[Q24238356](#)

Note: This is an example of how Curationist uses an Alias of the Wikidata Item “anonymous,” which is a generic term for an unknown creator. Be careful to distinguish it from:

unknown
[Q24238356](#)

“entity whose identity is not known”

and

unknown

[Q76651279](#)

“recruitment status in clinical trials”

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

French

[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:

Province of 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 BCE

[Q25346](#)

Subjects

Subjects describe the topic or content of a Work, Feature or Collection. 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 or names alone.

Gender

man

[Q8441](#)

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

cisgender man

[Q15145778](#)

trans man

[Q2449503](#)

Do not use:

male

[Q6581097](#)

male organism

[Q44148](#)

non-binary person

[Q69990794](#)

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

transgender person

[Q10701290](#)

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

cisgender woman

[Q15145779](#)

trans woman

[Q1052281](#)

Do not use:

female

[Q6581072](#)

female organism

[Q43445](#)

Sexual Orientation

asexual

[Q109501952](#)

Use for: an individual who does not experience sexual attraction and who identifies as asexual

bisexual

[Q12905217](#)

Use for: a person who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to persons with a gender or genders like theirs and those with a gender or genders unlike theirs

gay

[Q592](#)

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

Do not use:

homosexuality

[Q6636](#)

heterosexual

[Q110541178](#)

Use for: person who is attracted to people of gender identities other than their own, typically used to refer to those with female gender identities who are attracted to those with male gender identities, or vice versa

Do not use:

heterosexuality

[Q1035954](#)

lesbian

[Q110271724](#)

Use for: a homosexual woman or girl

Do not use:

lesbianism

[Q6649](#)

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:

person with disabilities

[Q15978181](#)

Do not use:

cripple

[Q1790733](#)

disability

[Q12131](#)

Use:

person 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:

unhoused person

[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 Americans” ([Q43103](#)) and “white people” ([Q235155](#)) 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.

The term “Whites” ([Q65967295](#)) is currently defined as “individuals having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.” Although individuals with origins in West Asia (the Middle East) and North Africa are currently classified as “white” by the U.S. Census, Curationist recognizes these populations, which include Arab people, as people of color because they are often racialized as “brown” and discriminated against in the United States. Also, please note that Curationist does not capitalize the word “white” because its capitalization is often linked to white supremacist materials.

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 Americans

[Q787519](#)

Use for: people of Arab descent in the United States

Asian people

[Q4058325](#)

Use for: inhabitants of Asia and their descendants

Asian Americans

[Q727928](#)

Use for: people of Asian descent in the United States

European people

[Q394067](#)

Use for: inhabitants of Europe

European Americans

[Q43103](#)

Use for: people of European descent in the United States

white people

[Q235155](#)

Use for: people of European descent

Do not use:

Whites

[Q65967295](#)

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](#))

multiracial people

Use for: people of multiracial backgrounds

[Q1378555](#)

person of color

[Q2072081](#)

Use for: peoples in the United States descended from the original peoples of Africa, Asia, the Americas, Oceania, or the Pacific Islands.

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 Church” ([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](#)

This term is 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](#)

and

pottery ware

[Q17379525](#)

Use

jewelry

[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 recording

[Q34508](#)

Installation artwork

[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, a term indicating public domain, and a term for “No known copyright.”.

Examples

CC Public Domain

[Q19652](#)

CC0

[Q6938433](#)

CC BY

[Q6905323](#)

No known copyright

[Q47530955](#)

Editing Wikidata

If you're not finding the term you want to use in the Curationist Taxonomy, or 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.

The screenshot shows the Wikidata main page. In the top left, the Wikidata logo is displayed. Below it, a vertical menu lists various options, with "Create a new Item" circled in red. The main content area features a central "Welcome to Wikidata" message, stating it is "the free knowledge base with 87,466,473 data items that anyone can edit." Below this message are links for "Introduction", "Project Chat", "Community Portal", and "Help". A search bar is located in the top right, and navigation tabs for "Main Page" and "Discussion" are in the top left. Below the welcome message, there are three main sections: "Welcome!", "Learn about data", and "Get involved". The "Learn about data" section includes three images: Earth, a document, and Mount Everest, with corresponding labels and identifiers.

Left-hand menu:

- 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

Top navigation:

- English
- Smizota
- Talk
- Preferences
- Beta
- Watchlist
- Contributions
- Log out

Main content area:

Read View source View history Search Wikidata

collaborative linked

Welcome to Wikidata

the free knowledge base with 87,466,473 data items that anyone can edit.

Introduction • Project Chat • Community Portal • Help

multilingual free structured

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 'Create a new Item' page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'English', 'Smizota', and various utility links like 'Talk', 'Preferences', 'Beta', 'Watchlist', 'Contributions', and 'Log out'. A search box labeled 'Search Wikidata' is also present. The main heading is 'Create a new Item'. Below the heading, there are several paragraphs of instructions: '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.', and 'To create a new lexeme, please use Special:NewLexeme.' A disclaimer follows: '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 itself is titled 'Create a new Item' and contains the following fields:

- 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, Smizota, and other user options. Below the Wikidata logo, there is a sidebar with various utility links like 'Main page', 'Community portal', and 'Tools'. The main content area features the item's title and a brief description: 'follower of Rastafarianism, an Abrahamic religion that developed in Jamaica during the 1930s'. Below this is a table of labels in different languages. The 'English' label is 'Rastafarian' with a description: 'follower of Rastafarianism, an Abrahamic religion that developed in Jamaica during the 1930s'. Other languages like Spanish, Traditional Chinese, and Chinese have no labels or descriptions defined. The 'Also known as' section lists 'Rasta', 'Rastas', 'Rastafaris', 'Ras Tafaris', 'Rastafarians', and 'Rastafarites'. The 'Statements' section shows two statements: 'instance of' (religious identity) with one reference to the Wikipedia page 'https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rastafari', and 'part of' (Rastafari movement) with one reference.

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 Tafaris Rastafarians Rastafarites
Spanish	No label defined	No description defined	
Traditional Chinese	No label defined	No description defined	
Chinese	No label defined	No description defined	

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.

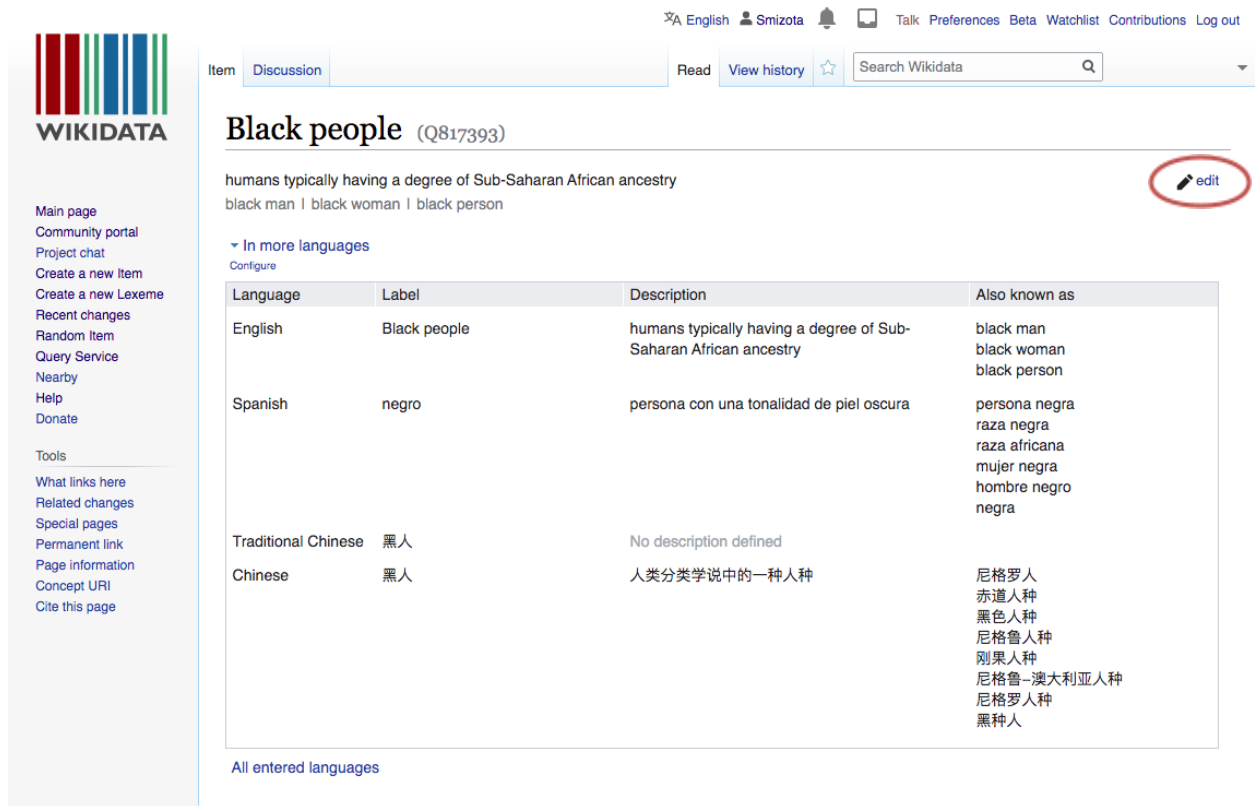
To learn how to add Statements and References, please see the respective tutorials on [Wikidata Tours](#).

Once you've added your Item, make sure to add it to the Curationist Taxonomy under the appropriate category. Then you may use it as a term on Curationist.

Editing an 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 interface 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 bar for Wikidata. The main content area displays the item's label in English as 'Black people' and in Spanish as 'negro'. The description in English is 'humans typically having a degree of Sub-Saharan African ancestry'. The 'edit' button is circled in red. The page also includes a sidebar with various navigation options and a table of labels in different languages.

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 尼格鲁人种 刚果人种 尼格罗-澳大利亚人种 尼格罗人种 黑种人

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.

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

✓ publish ✕ cancel ?

▼ In more languages
Configure

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>	<u>persona con una tonalidad de piel oscura</u>	persona negra raza negra raza africana mujer negra hombre negro negra enter an alias
Traditional Chinese	<u>黑人</u>	<u>enter a description in Traditional</u>	enter an alias
Chinese	<u>黑人</u>	<u>人类分类学说中的一种人种</u>	尼格罗人 赤道人种 黑色人种 尼格鲁人种 刚果人种 尼格鲁-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](#)

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
Concept URI
Cite this page

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.

The screenshot shows the Wikidata interface for the item "Black people" (Q817393). The page title is "Revision history of 'Black people' (Q817393)". The interface includes a navigation bar with "English", "Smizota", and "Talk" buttons. A search bar for Wikidata is visible. The main content area shows a list of revisions. The first revision is circled in red, with its "undo" link highlighted. The revision details are as follows:

cur prev	Date	Time	Editor	Size Change	Description	Actions
<input type="radio"/> cur <input checked="" type="radio"/> prev	18:46, 24 June 2020		Smizota (talk contribs)	(22,989 bytes) (0)	(Changed English label: <i>Black people</i>)	undo
<input type="radio"/> cur <input checked="" type="radio"/> prev	03:39, 24 June 2020		Tuanminh01 (talk contribs)	(22,989 bytes) (+98)	(Added link to [viwiki]: <i>Người da đen</i>)	undo thank restore
<input type="radio"/> cur <input type="radio"/> prev	05:51, 15 June 2020		Animalparty (talk contribs)	(22,891 bytes) (+66)	(Added English alias: <i>black person</i>)	undo thank restore
<input type="radio"/> cur <input type="radio"/> prev	05:27, 14 June 2020		Renaissance (talk contribs)	(22,825 bytes) (+104)	(Added Belarusian (<i>Taraškievica orthography</i>) alias: <i>чорная раса</i>)	undo thank restore
<input type="radio"/> cur <input type="radio"/> prev	05:27, 14 June 2020		Renaissance (talk contribs)	(22,721 bytes) (+83)	(Added [be-tarask] label: <i>негap</i>)	undo thank restore
<input type="radio"/> cur <input type="radio"/> 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
<input type="radio"/> cur <input type="radio"/> prev	00:59, 30 May 2020		2001:2d8:304:615::38b4:a4 (talk)	(22,753 bytes) (+432)	(Created claim: topic's main category (P910): <i>Category:Black (human racial classification)</i> (Q86309895))	undo restore
<input type="radio"/> cur <input type="radio"/> prev	05:20, 22 May 2020		Andrus Kallastu (talk contribs)	(22,321 bytes) (+95)	(Added link to [etwiki]: <i>Mustanahaline</i>)	undo thank restore
<input type="radio"/> cur <input type="radio"/> prev	04:43, 22 May 2020		Andrus Kallastu (talk contribs)	(22,226 bytes) (-88)	(Removed link to [etwiki]: <i>Neegrid</i>)	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.