Suggested Readings

The Academy of Certified Archivists has compiled this list of suggested readings to assist you in preparing for the Academy of Certified Archivists Certification Examination. Studying the resources on this list increases your chances of success on the examination but it does not guarantee that you will pass.

This list of resources is by no means a complete bibliography of archival works. It contains resources that will be useful as you prepare for the 2023 examination. The suggested resources include both traditional and newer resources and are representative of the breadth of archival literature. Use the Role Delineation Statement for Professional Archivists as your guide to connect the resources to the examination.

We do not expect you to read all of these resources while preparing for the examination. We have found over the years that some candidates need to read additional resources to understand one or more domains because they have not been exposed to those areas in their studies and/or professional experience. After completing a general survey of archival theory and practice, we encourage you to utilize domain specific resources to broaden your knowledge.

We recognize that the availability of resources varies by individual. Some resources are open access and links are included when available. For other resources, we encourage you to use interlibrary loan through your local library, or find databases or books at a nearby academic library. You may also consider joining or forming a study group to share resources. If you have suggestions or find open access resources, please email examdevelopment@certifiedarchivists.org so we can consider inclusion in future versions of the reading list. ACA thanks the Society of American Archivists and contributing institutions to the HathiTrust who continue to make resources available.

The examination covers archival practice in the United States; publications have primarily been written and published in the United States and are in the English language.

**Archival Classics**

Classic archival literature sets the tone for much of the development of the field in the twentieth century and is integral to professional identity. Candidates should be aware of such contributions and their authors.


Schellenberg, Theodore R. *Appraisal of Modern Records*. Bulletins of the National Archives, Number 8 (October 1956).


**General Sources: Journals**

Journal articles are at the heart of the modern development of archival theory and practice. Being aware of and keeping abreast of the leading archival periodicals is often expected of archives professionals. Many of the archival associations embargo the most recent journal issues so that members can have first access. Even reading just the abstracts can help supplement your studying. While not specifically detailed here, blogs and other social media formats can also be useful as you study. Sometimes seeing how concepts are discussed in different contexts will help deepen your knowledge and understanding. Examination candidates should be familiar with the issues from 2002–present.

*American Archivist*, Society of American Archivists  
*Archival Issues*, Midwest Archives Conference  
*Archival Science, International Journal of Recorded Information*  
*Archivaria*, Association of Canadian Archivists  
*Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies*, Yale University Library and New England Archivists  
*Journal of Western Archives*, sponsored by Western regional archival organizations  
*Provenance, Journal of the Society of Georgia Archivists*

**General Sources: Books**

General sources provide overviews and in-depth analyses that apply to multiple Domains and are
excellent resources to use throughout your professional career.


**General Sources: Organizations and Publications**

There are many resources available to archivists that include professional organizations, standards, best practices, protocols, and other documents. These are guiding documents that inform professional ethics, application of standards, and understanding the profession as a whole.

Associated Organizations and Associations
International Council on Archives
Society of American Archivists
ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS)
Society of American Archivists Standards Portal

**General Sources: Terminology**

The archives profession has its own terminology that includes thousands of words, some of which are common and some of which are specific to the profession. In 2005, the Society of American Archivists published *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*, a lengthy list of terms with definitions. From 2020 to the present, the *Dictionary of Archives Terminology (DAT)* expands on the *Glossary* and is designed with a syndetic structure that provides a rich context for each entry to help users better understand the meaning and usage of terms. Examination candidates are not expected to memorize all terms, but are encouraged to explore *DAT* and be familiar with archival
Domain 1: Selection, Appraisal, and Acquisition


Domain 2: Arrangement and Description


Domain 3: Reference Services and Access


Domain 4: Preservation and Protection


The Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems, NASA. Reference Model for an OpenArchival Information System (OAIS), Recommended Practice issue 2, June 2012.


Domain 5: Outreach, Advocacy, and Promotion

**Domain 6: Managing Archival Programs**

Wilstead, Thomas P., and Michele F. Pacifico. *Archival and Special Collections Facilities: Guidelines for Archivists, Librarians, Architects, and Engineers*. Chicago: Society of
Domain 7: Professional, Ethical, and Legal Responsibilities

Note: The examination covers United States laws and copyright.


U.S. Copyright Office


Domain 8: Cultural Competency

The Cultural Competency Domain is the newest addition to the ACA Examination, starting in 2023. Concepts and practices of cultural competency are applicable to all areas of archival functions. The following are articles relevant to archival theory found outside of standard archival literature. Additional sources are found in *American Archivist, Archivaria, Archival Science*, and *Journal of Western Archives*. This Domain will be expanded in future examinations.


