

Northern Territory Archives Service

Citing Archives

The archival holdings of the Northern Territory Archives Service (NTAS) range from those created by the Northern Territory Government and community organisations through to the archives of private individuals. Unlike published material, archives are unique and exist at only one location. Citation conventions have developed over time to describe archival material effectively and meet the requirements of researchers and archives institutions.

Why is it important

Crediting sources of information is done through citing. The purpose of citing archives is to effectively communicate the nature of the archives used. The absence of citing of sources of information in academic papers and publications can amount to plagiarism. The meticulous process of citing enables the referenced archives to be easily re-located by the intended reader.

Contents of Citations

Citations of archives usually include the following elements: custody, creating agency or individual, series number, series title or description, date range, item number and/or description, and item within an item title or description and date.

Custody

This identifies the institution, company or other organisation that holds the records. In this case it is the Northern Territory Archives Service.

Creating agency or individual

Archives are maintained in accordance with the same order maintained by the entity which created them. The term 'agency' is used in the case of government offices, departments or authorities. With respect to organisational and personal archives this would be the name of the person or the organisation responsible for creating the archives.

Series number

The term 'series' is used to describe a group of records having a common system of control or resulting from the same process of accumulation and having a similar format and informational content. The record series is the basic unit of management and control of records at the NTAS. The NTAS registers details of all record series in its custody and assigns each record series a unique identifying number prefixed by the letters NTRS (Northern Territory Record Series). Some series have been inherited from the National Archive of Australia and may have a 'F', 'E' or 'O' prefix.

Series title

The title of a series describes the contents of the series. Examples include 'Correspondence files', 'Day journals', 'Photographs of the Katherine region'.

Date range

The date range covered in the series normally follows the series title.

Items description and/or number

Series can comprise any number of items. Items may be files, individual documents, volumes or photograph albums.

When original control numbers or symbols and titles already exist to identify, for example, a set of files prior to their deposit into Archives, they should be retained. If items do not carry an original control number, symbol or title, the NTAS will normally have applied its own identifier. The control number or symbol and title should be followed by the date range of the item.

Further

When the item is a file or a photograph album it is necessary to include a description of the specific document or photograph being used. A letter should be identified by the date and the author of the letter. A photograph should be identified by its number and its caption or description when available.

When is it necessary to cite Archives

Bibliographies for monographs and papers or articles

Whether the work is published or non-published, regardless of the medium, a citation in full is expected.

Footnotes and endnotes

A citation in full is also expected the first time it appears in footnotes and endnotes. Subsequent citations in footnotes and end notes can be abbreviated. Please see below for examples of full and abbreviated citations.

Exhibitions and displays

Full archives citations should be included in display captions and exhibition catalogues.

Media broadcasts

Full archives citations should be given in scripted television/film acknowledgements. Where the program credit format in television, film and radio broadcasts is unsuited to this citation format, summarised verbal acknowledgement is acceptable. However complete citation should be provided with the material documenting the program.

Citations should look like this

Full citation	Abbreviated form
Northern Territory Archives Service, Christa Roderick, NTRS 1670/P2, Correspondence, invitations and personal papers, 1950-1989, Item 2, Letter from Black & Co, 1952	NTAS, Roderick, NTRS 1670/P2, Item 2
Northern Territory Archives Service, NTRS 226, Typed transcripts of oral history interviews with "TS" prefix, Christa Roderick, TS 113	NTAS, NTRS 226, TS 113

Contacts

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