

Recording key for musical works (RDA 6.17)

[Music Cataloging at Yale](#) [1] ? [Preferred titles](#) [2]

See also [The names of keys in French, German, Italian, and Spanish](#) [3]

Record the key if one or more of the following conditions applies:

- it is commonly identified in reference sources
- it appears in the composer's original title or the title proper of the first manifestation
- it is apparent from the resource described (unless it is known to be transposed in the resource).

[Best practices for music cataloging](#) [4]: If giving key as a component of an access point, routinely also give key in a [384](#) [5] field. For other works, give key separately in a [384](#) field if readily ascertainable.

[Best practices for music cataloging](#) [4]: Follow the same criteria for recording the mode ("major" or "minor") as for recording the pitch center; that is, if pitch center is given or apparent, but mode is not, record only the pitch center. Record the symbols ♯ and ♭ rather than the words "sharp" and "flat."

Source URL: <https://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/key>

Links

[1] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music>

[2] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/preferred-titles>

[3] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/names-keys-french-german-italian-and-spanish>

[4] [http://bcc.musiclibraryassoc.org/BCC-](http://bcc.musiclibraryassoc.org/BCC-Historical/BCC2015/RDA_Best_Practices_for_Music_Cataloging_v1.1-150217.pdf)

[Historical/BCC2015/RDA_Best_Practices_for_Music_Cataloging_v1.1-150217.pdf](http://bcc.musiclibraryassoc.org/BCC-Historical/BCC2015/RDA_Best_Practices_for_Music_Cataloging_v1.1-150217.pdf)

[5] <http://www.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/MARC384.htm>