National Archives Catalog

catalog.archives.gov

NARA Terminology

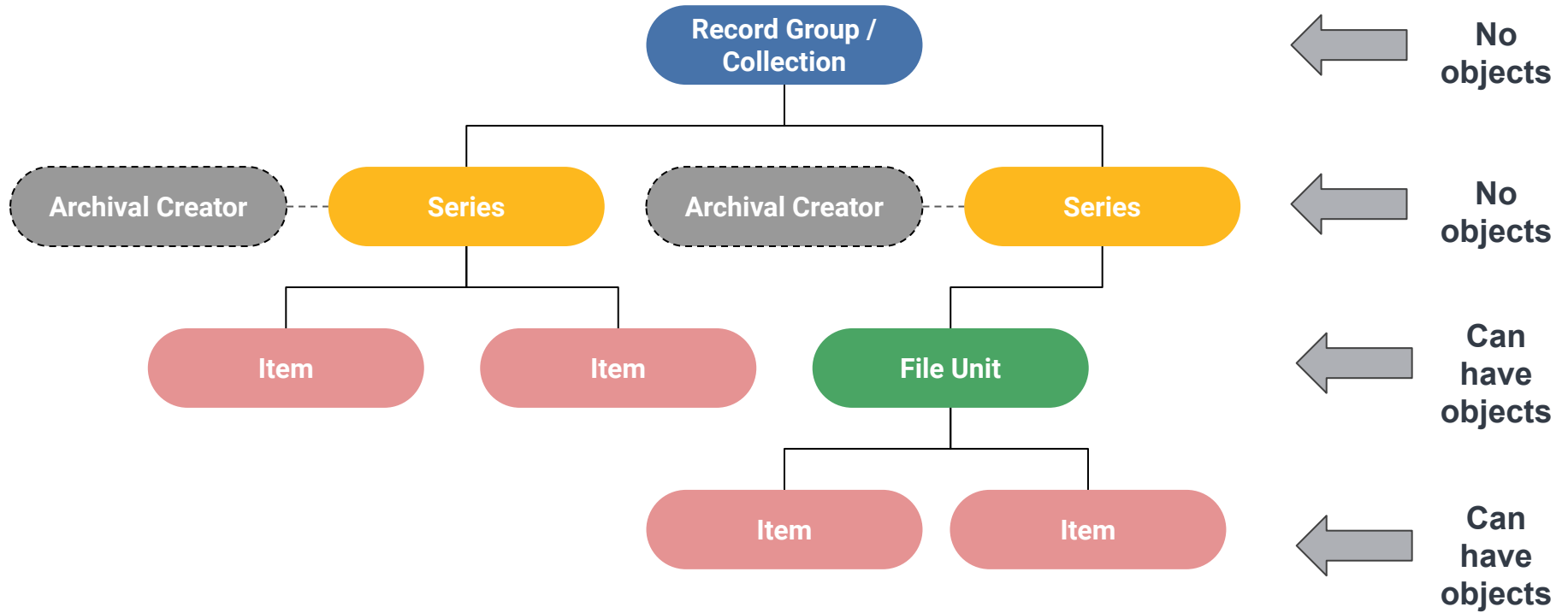| Description	Metadata describing archival records, may or may not be associated with objects.
Digital Object	Digital files associated with descriptions, usually digitized pages of archival records. Some are born digital (electronic records).
Public Contribution	Tags, transcriptions, and comments added to descriptions and objects by citizen archivists.
Authority Record	Authoritative terms established by NARA staff to identify creators of and to establish links between records.

NARA's Metadata Standard: The Lifecycle Data Requirements Guide

The Lifecycle Data Requirements Guide (LCDRG):
- Provides a standard for NARA archivists to describe:
  - Archival records
  - Organizations
  - Persons
  - Digital objects

- Applies to all descriptions of permanent archival materials and related authorities

- Ensures complete and consistent descriptions

NARA's Archival Hierarchy

Record Group / Collection → No objects

Archival Creator — Series — Archival Creator — Series → No objects

Item — Item — File Unit → Can have objects

Item — Item → Can have objects

What's in the National Archives Catalog?

catalog.archives.gov

- **Descriptive metadata about holdings**

- **Digital copies of records including images, videos, audio files, electronic records, etc.**

- **Authority records for people, organizations, geographic locations, and topical subjects**

- **Citizen archivist contributions that include tags, transcriptions, and comments**

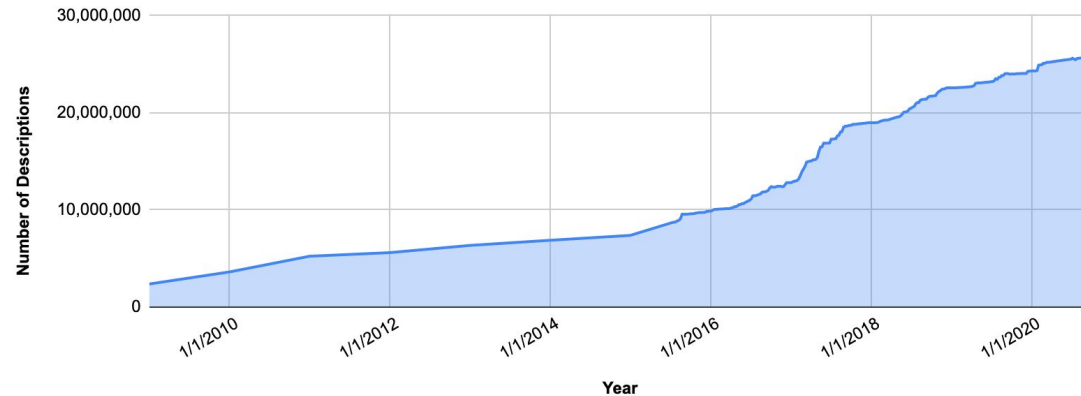- **National Archives web pages, including Presidential Libraries**

What's in the National Archives Catalog?

26,050,164 descriptions

- 576 Record Groups
- 4,764 Collections
- 268,427 Series
- 21,482,448 File Units
- 4,293,949 Items

Total # of Descriptions in the National Archives Catalog (FY 2008-FY 2020)
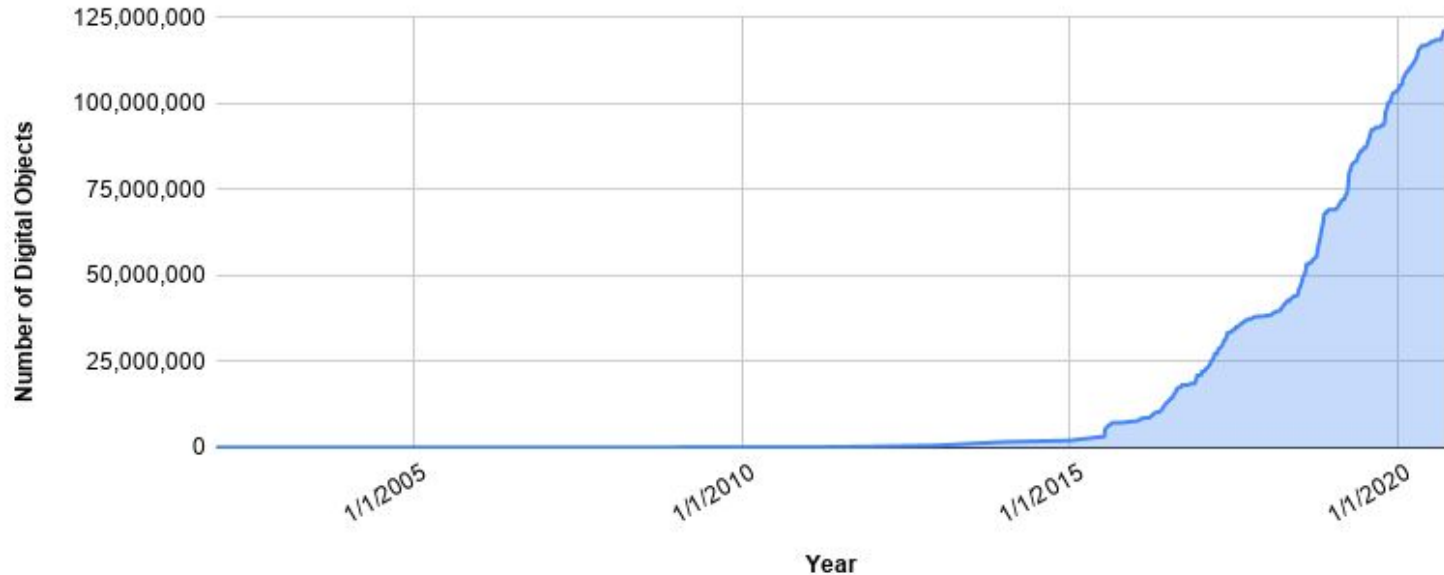
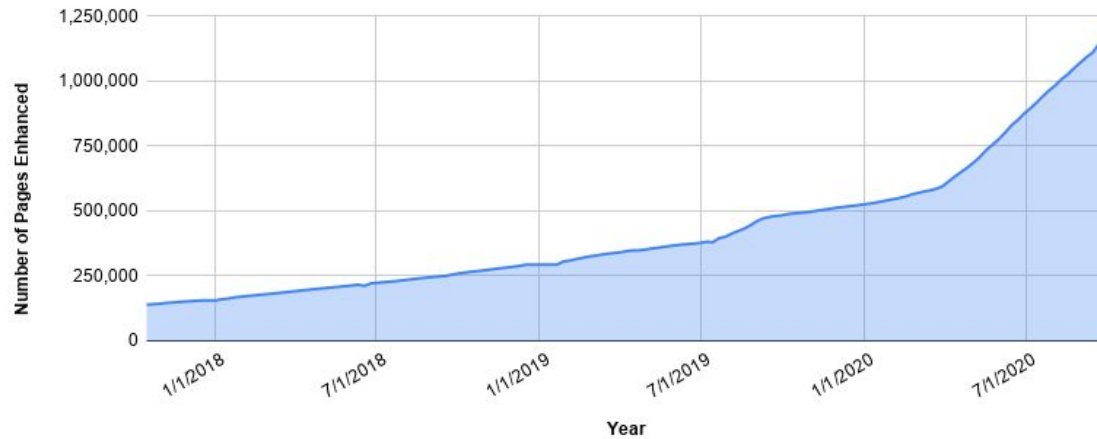## 121,348,030 digital objects

Total # of Digital Objects in the National Archives Catalog (FY 2001-FY 2020)

1,166,644 pages of records enhanced by citizen archivists

- Includes:
  - 2,750,090 tags
  - 1,000,278 transcriptions
  - 56,144 comments

Total # of Pages Enhanced in the National Archives Catalog (FY 2018-2020)

National Archives Catalog Technology: Current

Search	Apache Solr for database and index
	SolrCloud for search engine
	Apache Zookeeper for coordination across SolrCloud nodes
	MySQL database for citizen archivist contributions
Image Viewer	OpenSeadragon for image viewer
Cloud Storage	AWS S3 Storage
Image Processing	AWS Lambda for code-based image processing, which includes: ● Generating tiles and thumbnails ● Converting TIF and JP2 to JPG ● Extracting optical character recognition (OCR) data
User Interface	JavaScript and HTML5

National Archives Catalog Technology: Future

Search	**Elasticsearch for database, index, and search engine**
	MySQL database for citizen archivist contributions
Image Viewer	**IIIF image viewer / image delivery APIs**
Cloud Storage	AWS S3 Storage
Image Processing	AWS Lambda for code-based image processing, which includes: ● Generating tiles and thumbnails ● Converting TIF and JP2 to JPG ● Extracting optical character recognition (OCR) data
User Interface	**TBD**

With the Catalog user interface, you can:

- Search for records (advanced search included also)
- Filter your search results
- Sort your search results
- Download records
- Export search results
- Contribute as a citizen archivist
- Register for an account / log in to your account

Searching the Catalog

Digital copies and descriptions mixed by default, sorted by relevance

Can limit to only digital copies

Faceting of results:
- **Data sources**
- **Level of description**
- **Type of materials**
- **File format**
- **Location**
- **Record Group/Collection Date**

Sort results

NATIONAL ARCHIVES CATALOG

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truman   🔍   Advanced Search   Login   Register

1 – 20 of 130,833 results in 0.44 seconds.   Show expanded search terms

Highlight Results ⌄   Sort ⌄   ➕ Share   Export   🖨

All   Available Online   Web Pages   Documents   Images   Videos   << < **1** 2 3 Page: 1 of 6542 > >>

Results per page: 20 ⌄

⌄ **Refine By: Data Source**

Archival Descriptions (97670)

Archival Descriptions with Digital Objects (32533)

Archives.gov (7623)

Authority Records (630)

Presidential Libraries (15)

⌄ **Refine By: Level of Description**

Item (23932)
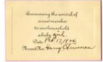File Unit (104346)
Series (1634)
Record Group (1)
Collection (290)

⌄ **Refine By: Type of Materials**

Truman Doctrine
From RG: 233
Original House Documents
This document is President Harry S. **Truman's** message to Congress recommending assistance to Greece and Turkey. 09026_2010_001_PR 09026_2010_002_PR
National Archives Identifier: 2668751
Creator: U.S. House of Representatives. 3/4/1789-

Birth Announcement for Margaret Truman
From Collection: HST-BWT
Subject Files
National Archives Identifier: 139308942
Creator: Truman, Bess Wallace, 1885-1982

National Archives website pages

Truman
National Archives: Online Exhibits
TO PRINT USE CTRL 'P' President Harry **Truman** signs the Economic Cooperation Act of 1948 surrounded by the Act's supporters. (Left to

Truman

Searching the Catalog – Advanced Search

Search more directly on:
- **Record Group/Collection**
- **Archival creator**
- **Citizen archivist tags**
- **Dates**
- **Type of materials**
- **Level of description**
- **File format**
- **Location**
- **Title**
- **Geographic references**

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‹ Return to new basic search

➕ Share | Login

Advanced Search   Search   Clear

The advanced search is dynamic and search fields will change or become inactive based on the categories (e.g., archival descriptions, authority records, webpages) selected. For more search tips, visit our Help page.

Limit search to: ☑ Archival Descriptions   ☑ Archival Materials Online   ☐ Authority Records   ☐ Web Pages

Search Term: [   ]

Record Group Number / Collection ID: [   ]

Person or Organization Name: [   ]

Tags: [   ]

Dates: ◉ Search by Date Range   ○ Search by Exact Date   ○ Search by Recurring Date

From: [MM▾] [DD▾] [YYYY] 📅   To: [MM▾] [DD▾] [YYYY] 📅

Type of Archival Materials:
Architectural and Engineering Drawings
Artifacts
Data Files
Maps and Charts

With the Catalog API, you can:

- Register for a user account

- Log in to a user account

- Search the Catalog data

  - Can access in bulk with cursor mark-based pagination

- Add citizen archivist contributions

- Search non-sensitive user data

The API supports the following methods:

- **GET** - performing searches and retrieving metadata

- **POST** - creating new citizen archivist contributions

- **PUT** - updating/saving citizen archivist contributions

- **DELETE** - removing your own citizen archivist contributions

API Call Syntax

URL root

Parameter **Value** **Add More Parameters**

https://catalog.archives.gov/api/v1?q=Baltimore&type=object

Decorator

https://catalog.archives.gov/api/v1?description.item.title_is=Truman Doctrine

The Archival Hierarchy and Parameters

Due to NARA's data structure, what may appear to be the same field is "repeated" in multiple parameters that reflect the archival hierarchy.

For example, the "title" field is actually many fields:

description.collection.title

description.recordGroup.title

description.series.title

description.fileUnit.title

description.item.title

NARA products built using data from the API:

- **Record Group Explorer**

- **Presidential Library Explorer**

- **Bureau of Indian Affairs Photographs Finding Aid**

Documentation about how to use the API available on GitHub: https://github.com/usnationalarchives/catalog-api

As the volume of data grows in the National Archives Catalog:

- How can NARA make records easier to find?

- How can NARA make records available more efficiently?

- How can NARA ensure it's data's integrity?