

Help:Authority control

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This is an information page.

It is not a Wikipedia policy or guideline; rather, its purpose is to explain certain aspects of Wikipedia's norms or practices. It may reflect varying levels of [consensus](#).

Authority control is a method used in databases and [library catalogs](#) that assigns a unique identifier to a given subject. Many Wikipedia articles contain links to authority control databases at the bottom of the page, connecting the article subject to bibliographical records, music databases, and other information repositories.

Databases use authority control to distinguish between subjects that share the same name, and to assign a single identifier to a subject that has multiple names. Some common authority control databases include: [International Standard Name Identifier](#) (ISNI); [Virtual International Authority File](#) (VIAF); [Library of Congress Control Number](#) (LCCN); and [Integrated Authority File](#) (GND), *Gemeinsame Normdatei* in German. [WorldCat](#) is a global cooperative [union catalog](#) which itemizes the collections of 72,000 libraries in 170 countries and territories. See {{[Authority control](#)}} for a full list of supported databases on Wikipedia.

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