

ADR3.1 Object details

Short title

The title should be clear and express the most important thing about the object briefly and succinctly.

It should be expressed in common language, be flexible and easy to understand.

When an object has a title already this should be included and indicated using single quotation marks, for example, 'Delphos' dress by Mariano Fortuny.

Please don't include date or place names in the short title because this information has a separate field.

Registration number

This is the number assigned to the object by the institution or organisation in whose collection it belongs.

It is not relevant to garments in private collections and can be left blank.

Description

For all clothing items excluding hats, shoes and flat textile items such as scarves and shawls.

Order of description:

1. Start with what the object is at its most basic level, ie a dress, an ensemble, pair of trousers, a jacket and what it's predominantly made of and colour.

A sentence which includes a general description including the parts, for example, an ensemble is made up of a bodice, skirt and hat, or jacket, waistcoat and trousers.

2. Then from top to bottom — ie neckline, bodice, sleeves, waist, skirt.

- Neckline: what kind of neckline does it have — round, square? And what kind of collar does it have — turn down, sailor?

- Sleeves: does it have sleeves and what kind — short, long, full, straight, puff, leg of mutton? Do the sleeves have cuffs and what do they fasten with?
- Chest: does it stop at the waist or extend to the hip? If the garment is a jacket, is it single or double-breasted?
- Waist: is the waist defined? If so, is it high or low? Is it gathered? Does it have darts or a waistband?
- Pockets: are there any pockets? Sometimes they are small and hidden. If so, where are they? Breast, side seam or at hip level? Are they internal or external? What kind of pockets are they — patch, slash, welt? Do any of the pockets have flaps? Do they fasten?
- Skirt: is it full? Does it have a bustle? Are there any pleats or gathering? What length is the skirt, eg floor length or ankle length? Does it have a train?
- Trousers: are they wide or narrow? Knee breeches or long?

3. Decoration.

How is the decoration applied to the fabric — printed, appliquéd, embroidered, beaded?

What does it consist of and what are the patterns or motifs used?

4. Fastenings.

Where does the garment open for ease of dressing? Centre front, back, side etc?

What are the fastenings made from? For example, metal, jet, glass, celluloid.

Hints and tips

1. When describing 'left' or 'right', it is always from the wearer's perspective and not the viewer's. This is crucial as it determines the gender of the garment.
2. It is good to provide as much information as possible. If you have information that can't be confirmed write 'possibly', for example, dress may be made of cotton or may have been made by Aunt Jessie, use 'possibly made of cotton' or 'possibly made by Aunt Jessie'.
3. Only include the physical aspects of the object in the description.

Exact date or date range

If you know a specific date for an object, enter that date, for example, you know the dress was worn for a wedding in 1880.

If you don't know a specific year, provide an approximate date range, for example, 1875–85. Use this date range format instead of, for example, about 1880.

For example

The following is a description of a woollen wedding gown worn by Hannah Palser Prior for her marriage to Alfred Adlam, Kelso, near Bathurst, NSW, Australia, in 1882.

The wedding dress is made from fine cream coloured wool with silk satin and gauze trim, silk bustle and train. The dress has a satin and wool stand collar and a panel of ruched satin at each side of the front. It is trimmed with a spray of wax orange blossom at the front neck. The centre front opens to the hip and fastens with 18 satin covered buttons. The fitted bodice extends below the waist (known as a cuirasse bodice). The long sleeves are set into the armholes with satin piping and are finished with rows of satin ruching at the cuff. The straight skirt features many rows of the horizontally ruched woollen fabric that finishes with three rows of pleated frills at the hem. An asymmetrical pleated wool sash is attached across the front of skirt from the right side and trimmed with satin. The train, attached to the bustle at the back of the dress, is also trimmed at the hem with three rows of pleated frills. The dress is both machine and hand sewn.



Gift of Anne Schofield, 1981. A8070

The Australian Dress Register is an initiative of the Powerhouse Movable Heritage NSW program, which is coordinated through the Museum's Regional Services program to support research and documentation of cultural heritage collections.

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