

# **A Thesaurus of Vinyl Record Collecting**



**Laurel Hudgins**  
**INFO622 Content Representation**  
**Kate McCain**  
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## Scope of Thesaurus

Record collecting as a hobby is something I have enjoyed over the years. While I am not a diehard fanatic, I do make it a point to scoop up records by artists I have enjoyed over the years, and I do still feel a rush when I find a rare copy of a recording, especially if its price is low enough to consider purchasing for myself. Although vinyl records are no longer the prominent format for recorded music, there are plenty of musicians and listeners for whom vinyl records will always be the preferred format of music. Personally, I think vinyl records sound better than CDs or MP3s; to me the analog sounds are warmer and richer than a digital format. Most bands that I see on tour are of the do it yourself, or DIY, ethos. These bands have kept vinyl alive for young collectors like me. Most independent, DIY bands release vinyl records in addition to CDs and tapes, and I have not had to buy a CD in years. At last count, my boyfriend and I own over 500 long playing records, and hundreds more seven inch singles. We spend our money frequently on new vinyl from touring bands and at record shops in town.

Vinyl record collecting is a distinct category of hobby collecting, with a unique vocabulary of its own. Collectors use condition grades to describe the state of records for sale. These condition grades are applied across the board and mean the same thing to each collector. Records are also categorized by their condition in more playful ways. For example, the term “lunched”, meaning a record in poor condition, was coined by collectors who described a record condition as so bad, it looks like someone tried to eat it for lunch. There are terms which describe the processes of pressing the vinyl record, terms to describe physical parts of vinyl records, and terms which describe the issuance of the record. These terms are specific to the hobby, and are accepted by collectors as the true vocabulary for the hobby.

Although most of the terminology and definitions came from my own experience, there are two web resources that were invaluable to me in putting together this project, BrooklynPhono and The Record Collector’s Guild Encyclopedia. BrooklynPhono is a pressing plant which features step by step videos on how records are made. The Record Collector’s Guild Encyclopedia helped me fill in the gaps in my own knowledge of terminology that I needed to complete this thesaurus. Without these resources this thesaurus would not be as complete as it is now.

## How to Use This Thesaurus

This thesaurus is organized into two sections, a hierarchical display and an alphabetical display. The hierarchical display contains all preferred terms in the controlled vocabulary and shows the relationships of concepts. An example follows.

- Albums
  - Sleeves
    - Die Cut Sleeves
    - Gatefolds
    - White Label Promos

In the example, the display intends to show the relationship between the terms. Relationships are indicated by indent. More specific terms are types of the previous term and not intended to be seen as synonyms. In this hierarchical display, a word indented under another is a subordinate to

the preceding word. Angle brackets are used to clarify relationships and are not considered a part of the controlled vocabulary.

The Alphabetical Display is a list of the controlled vocabulary terms used in vinyl record collecting. Where synonyms are included, a reference to the preferred term is featured. An example follows.

**FULL LENGTHS**

- SN A long playing record, usually 12 inches round, which is played back at 33 1/3 revolutions per minute.
- BT Vinyl Records
- RT 12 Inches  
33 1/3 Revolutions per Minute  
Long Playing

This list is organized alphabetically and includes all terms featured in the hierarchical display. The relationships between terms are represented by the following abbreviations

LABEL	USED FOR	DEFINITION
SN	Scope Note	The definition of the term.
UF	Use for	Indication of a synonym which is not preferred.
USE		Indication of a preferred term which should be used.
BT	Broader term	Indicates a step up to a more general term in the hierarchical display.
NT	Narrower Term	Indicates a step down to a more specific term in the hierarchical display.
RT	Related Term	Indicates terms which are could be at the same level as the main term on a hierarchical display or terms which are related in meaning or process to the main term.

## Hierarchical Display

Albums

- Vinyl Records
  - Extended Play
  - Full Lengths
  - Long Playing
  - Singles

Sleeves

- Die Cut Sleeves
- Gatefolds
- Poly Liners

Attributes

<attributes by condition>

<conditions by grade>

- Fair
- Good
- Good Plus
- Mint
- Near Mint
- Poor
- Very Good
- Very Good Plus

<conditions by quality>

- Lunched
- Perfect
- Playable

<attributes by issuance>

- Backed With
- Bootlegs
- Catalog Numbers
- Counterfeits
- First Pressings
- Reissues
- White Label Promos

<attributes by physical form>

- 7 Inches
- 10 Inches
- 12 Inches
- Cue Scratches
- Lead-In Grooves
- Lead-Out Grooves
- Matrixes
- Revolutions per Minute
  - 33 1/3 Revolutions per Minute
  - 45 Revolutions per Minute
  - 78 Revolutions per Minute
- Ring Wear

Equipment

- Audio Tapes
  - Mono
  - Stereo

Master Discs  
Negative Masters  
Polyvinyl Chloride  
Record Cutters  
Soft Masters  
Shellac

Production

Machine Stamping  
Mastering  
Pressing  
Plating

## Alphabetical Display

### 7 INCHES

SN The smallest size for vinyl records, played back at 45 revolutions per minute.  
RT 45 Revolutions per Minute  
Extended Play  
Singles

### 10 INCHES

SN A rare size of long playing vinyl records.  
RT Long Playing

### 12 INCHES

SN The standard size for a full length long playing vinyl record.  
RT 33 1/3 Revolutions per Minute  
Full Lengths  
Long Playing

### 33 1/3 REVOLUTIONS PER MINUTE

BT Revolutions per Minute  
RT 12 Inches  
Long Playing

### 45 REVOLUTIONS PER MINUTE

BT Revolutions per Minute  
RT 7 Inches  
Singles

### 78 REVOLUTIONS PER MINUTE

BT Revolutions per Minute  
RT Shellac

#### ALBUMS

SN A common name for any vinyl record and its sleeve.  
NT Vinyl Records  
Sleeves

#### AUDIO TAPES

SN The medium in which performances are recorded on before being transferred to vinyl record.  
BT Equipment  
NT Stereo  
Mono  
RT Master Discs  
Mastering

#### B/W

USE Backed With

#### BACKED WITH

SN The flip or “B” side of a single.  
UF B/W  
RT Singles

#### BOOTLEGS

SN An illegal recording of a concert, done without the copyright holder’s permission.

#### CAT. NO.

USE Catalog Number

#### CATALOG NUMBERS

SN The number assigned to the release by the record company that put the record out, usually printed on the vinyl record in the lead-out grooves.  
UF Cat. No.  
RT Lead-Out Grooves  
Matrix Numbers

#### CENTER MATRIXES

USE Matrixes

#### CONDITION GRADES

SN A letter grade given an album based on the condition of the gramophone record and sleeve.  
NT Fair  
Good

Good Plus  
Mint  
Near Mint  
Poor  
Very Good  
Very Good Plus

#### COUNTERFEITS

SN A copy of a previous recording, done without the permission of the copyright holder.

#### CUE BURNS

USE Cue Scratches

#### CUE SCRATCHES

SN A hiss or skip on a vinyl record where the record was cued up at a certain point, created by holding the needle in one place while the turntable rotates.

UF Cue Burns

#### DEAD WAX

USE Lead-Out Grooves

#### DIE CUT SLEEVES

SN A paper sleeve with a hole in the center so the matrix of the record is exposed

BT Sleeves

#### END GROOVES

USE Lead-Out Grooves

#### EP

USE Extended Play

#### EQUIPMENT

SN The physical pieces used in the process of making vinyl records.

NT Audio Tapes  
Master Discs  
Negative Masters  
Polyvinyl Chloride  
Record Cutters  
Soft Masters  
Shellac  
Stampers

#### EXTENDED PLAY

SN Usually 7 inch records played at 45 revolutions per minute with one or two tracks on each side.

UF EP  
BT Vinyl Records  
RT 7 Inches  
45 Revolutions per Minute  
Singles

F  
USE Fair

#### FAIR

SN A condition grade of a vinyl record and its sleeve which is severely damaged.  
UF F  
BT Condition Grades

#### FIRST PRESSINGS

SN The original release of a vinyl record.

#### FULL LENGTHS

SN A long playing record, usually 12 inches round, which is played back at 33 1/3 revolutions per minute.  
BT Vinyl Records  
RT 12 Inches  
33 1/3 Revolutions per Minute  
Long Playing

G  
USE Good

G+  
USE Good Plus

G/F  
USE Gatefolds

#### GATEFOLDS

SN An album sleeve which folds open.  
UF G/F  
BT Sleeves

#### GOOD

SN A condition grade of a record in which the sleeve, matrix, and vinyl pressing are worn out but still playable.  
UF G  
BT Condition Grades  
RT Playable



## GOOD PLUS

SN A condition grade of a record that may look well-played, but still is able to playback with minimal crackles and hisses.

UF G+

## GRAMAPHONE RECORDS

USE Vinyl Records

## JACKETS

USE Sleeves

## LACQUERS

USE Soft Masters

## LEAD-IN GROOVES

SN Known colloquially as the “dead air” at the beginning of a record, this also refers to the un-grooved area at the outside of a vinyl pressing.

RT Lead-Out Grooves

## LEAD-OUT GROOVES

SN The area between the end of the grooves on a vinyl pressing and the center matrix, usually containing a die cut printing of the matrix numbers and the catalog numbers.

UF Dead Wax  
End Grooves  
Matrix Areas  
Run Out Grooves

RT Catalog Numbers  
Lead-In Grooves  
Matrix Numbers

## LONG PLAYING

SN Refers usually to 12 inch records played at 33 1/3 revolutions per minute.

UF LP

BT Vinyl Records

RT 10 Inches  
12 Inches  
33 1/3 Revolutions per Minute  
Full Lengths

## LP

USE Long Playing

## LUNCHED

SN A term used to describe a vinyl record's condition which is so poor it is unplayable. This term is used on records which are in such poor condition, they look like someone tried to eat it for lunch.

RT Poor

## M

USE Mint

## M-

USE Near Mint

## MACHINE STAMPING

SN The process in which the matrix numbers are stamped onto the lead-out groove of a record using die-cut letters and numbers.

BT Production

RT Lead-Out Grooves  
Matrix Numbers

## MASTERS

USE Master Discs

## MASTER DISCS

SN The discs onto which sound are directly recorded on in the pressing process.

UF Masters

BT Equipment

RT Audio Tapes  
Negative Masters

## MASTER MATRIXES

USE Negative Masters

## MASTER NUMBERS

USE Matrix Numbers

## MASTERING

SN Process in which audio tape is transferred to the soft master.

BT Production

RT Audio Tapes  
Soft Masters

## MATRIXES

SN The center of a vinyl record in which a paper circle is pasted with information about the recording.

UF Center Matrixes

RT Matrix Numbers

## MATRIX NUMBERS

- SN The side identification of a record, usually printed in the matrix and/or stamped onto the lead-out groove.
- UF Master Numbers
- RT Catalog Numbers  
Lead-Out Grooves  
Matrixes

## MINT

- SN A designation used rarely for albums for sale which have either never been opened or played only a handful of times.
- UF M
- BT Condition Grades
- RT Perfect

## MONO

- SN A recording done using one channel of sound input.
- BT Audio Tapes
- RT Stereo

## NEAR MINT

- SN A condition grade of an album with no more than the smallest, trivial defect.
- UF M-
- BT Condition Grades
- RT Playable

## NEGATIVES

- USE Stampers

## NEGATIVE MASTERS

- SN The metal master removed from the soft master, so called because it contains the negative of the grooves on the disc.
- UF Master Matrix
- BT Equipment
- RT Audio Tapes  
Master Discs  
Plating  
Pressing

## P

- USE Poor

## PERFECT

- RT Mint

## PHONOGRAPHIC RECORDS

USE Vinyl Records

## PLASTIC LINERS

USE Poly Liners

## PLATING

SN Process of electroplating the soft master to create the metal parts used in making the negative master.

BT Production

RT Mastering  
Negative Masters  
Pressing  
Soft Masters  
Stampers

## PLAYABLE

SN The condition of a vinyl record in which the record is capable of playback.

RT Good  
Good Plus  
Mint  
Near Mint  
Very Good  
Very Good Plus

## POLY LINERS

SN A paper sleeve inside the album sleeve used to protect the vinyl record contained within.

UF Plastic Liners

BT Sleeves

## POLYVINYL CHLORIDE

SN Material used currently in vinyl pressing to make vinyl records.

UF PVC

BT Equipment

RT Shellac

## POOR

SN A condition grade of an album which is severely cracked or warped and will not playback without skipping or repeating.

UF P

BT Condition Grade

RT Lunched

## PRESSING

SN The process of making a vinyl record from the negative master using a record cutter.  
RT Mastering  
Negative Masters  
Plating  
Record Cutters

#### PRODUCTION

NT Machine Stamping  
Mastering  
Plating  
Pressing

#### PVC

USE Polyvinyl Chloride

#### RECORD CUTTERS

SN The machine which engraves the grooves onto a master vinyl disc.  
BT Equipment  
RT Pressing

#### REISSUES

SN A record which has been repressed from a master copy, done with or without the permission of the copyright holder.

#### REVOLUTIONS PER MINUTE

SN The speed at which a record is played, measured by how long a full rotation of the record takes.  
UF RPM  
NT 33 1/3 Revolutions per Minute  
45 Revolutions per Minute  
78 Revolutions per Minute

#### RING WEAR

SN Condition of a sleeve which is visibly lightened in a circle by the record contained therein.  
UF RW

#### RPM

USE Revolutions per Minute

#### RUN OUT GROOVES

USE Lead-Out Grooves

#### RW

USE Ring Wear

## SHELLAC

- SN The material used to make early 78s, discontinued use because the records produced were too brittle and easily broken.
- BT Equipment
- RT 78 Revolutions per Minute  
Polyvinyl Chloride

## SINGLES

- SN A 7 inch extended playing record, played back at 45 revolutions per minute. Usually contains one or two songs on each side.
- BT Vinyl Records
- RT 7 Inch  
45 Revolutions per Minute  
Backed With  
Extended Play

## SLEEVES

- SN Outermost printed paper cover of a vinyl record.
- UF Jacket
- NT Die Cut Sleeves  
Gatefolds  
Poly Liners

## SOFT MASTERS

- SN The original master disc used for vinyl pressing.
- UF Lacquers
- BT Equipment
- RT Mastering  
Plating  
Pressing

## STAMPERS

- SN Electroplated negative masters used to make vinyl records.
- UF Negatives
- BT Equipment
- RT Negative Masters  
Plating

## STEREO

- SN A recording done using two channels of sound input.
- UF Stereophonic
- BT Audio Tapes
- RT Mono

## STEREOPHONIC

USE Stereo

VERY GOOD

SN A condition grade of an album that has a fair amount of wear and tear on the sleeve and vinyl pressing, but which is still in good playable condition.  
UF VG  
BT Condition Grade  
RT Playable

VERY GOOD PLUS

SN A condition grade of an album which shows signs of being played, but has very small damage due to routine wear and tear.  
UF VG+  
BT Condition Grade  
RT Playable

VG

USE Very Good

VG+

USE Very Good Plus

VINYL RECORDS

SN A thin disc made of polyvinyl chloride or shellac with spiral grooves used for storing analog sound.  
UF Gramophone Records  
Phonograph Records  
BT Album  
NT Extended Play  
Full Lengths  
Long Playing  
Singles

WHITE LABEL PROMOS

SN A promotional record released without cover art, usually before the official release of the album.  
UF WLP

WLP

USE White Label Promo

# Appendix

## Bibliography

*BrooklynPhono*. (2009). Retrieved from <http://brooklynphono.com/>

*Glossary of terms relating to record collecting*. (2009). Retrieved from [http://www.auroraantiquepavilion.com/?page\\_id=181](http://www.auroraantiquepavilion.com/?page_id=181)

McDonald, D. (producer) & Zweig, A. (director). (2000). *Vinyl* [motion picture]. Canada: The Asylum Productions.

*Record collector's guild -- encyclopedia*. (2009). Retrieved from [http://www.recordcollectorsguild.org/index.php?module=pnEncyclopedia&func=search\\_letter&get\\_letter=all&vid=0](http://www.recordcollectorsguild.org/index.php?module=pnEncyclopedia&func=search_letter&get_letter=all&vid=0)



## Database Records

The records listed below contain websites, books and a film which will enlighten even the most seasoned collector to new intricacies of the hobby. Books contain pricing guides and condition grading information, while web resources are interactive resources for collectors.

1.

<b>Title</b>	American Premium Record Guide, 1900-1965
<b>Author(s)</b>	Docks, L. R.
<b>Imprint</b>	Iola, WI; Krause Publications
<b>Copyright Date</b>	2001
<b>Resource Type</b>	Book
<b>Abstract</b>	Guide to pricing, collecting and caring for vintage vinyl.
<b>Descriptors</b>	7 Inches, 45 Revolutions per Minute, 78 Revolutions per Minute, Albums, Condition Grades, Shellac, Polyvinyl Chloride, Vinyl Records

2.

<b>Title</b>	BrooklynPhono
<b>Features</b>	Pressing Plant, Processing Information & Videos
<b>Resource Type</b>	Website
<b>Copyright Date</b>	2009
<b>Abstract</b>	Web home for Brooklyn, NY based pressing plant, which contains videos of pressing process and information on how to submit a recording to be pressed.
<b>Descriptors</b>	Audio Tapes, Machine Stamping, Master Discs, Mastering, Negative Masters, Plating, Polyvinyl Chloride, Pressing, Record Cutters, Soft Masters, Vinyl Records
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://www.brooklynphono.com">http://www.brooklynphono.com</a>

3.

<b>Title</b>	Record Collector's Guild Online
<b>Features</b>	Encyclopedia, Forums, Marketplace
<b>Resource Type</b>	Website
<b>Copyright Date</b>	2009
<b>Abstract</b>	Web site for serious record collectors to post tips and tricks in forums, as well as a vibrant

**Descriptors** marketplace for record selling  
33 1/3 Revolutions per Minute, 45 Revolutions per Minute, 78 Revolutions per Minute, Albums, Extended Play, Full Lengths, Long Playing, Mono, Singles, Stereo, Vinyl Records

**URL** <http://www.recordcollectorsguild.org/>

4.

**Title** Rockin' Records 2009  
**Author(s)** Osbourne, Jerry  
**Imprint** Port Townsend, WA; Jellyroll Productions  
**Copyright Date** 2003  
**Resource Type** Book  
**Abstract** The most extensive guide to pricing your records, over 1,000 pages of collector information and featured vinyl recordings.

**Descriptors** 33 1/3 Revolutions per Minute, 45 Revolutions per Minute, 78 Revolutions per Minute, Albums, Extended Play, Full Lengths, Long Playing, Mono, Singles, Stereo, Vinyl Records

5.

**Title** Vinyl  
**Director** Zweig, Alan  
**Distributor** Canada; The Asylum Productions  
**Copyright Date** 2000  
**Resource Type** Documentary Film  
**Descriptors** A film chronicling the obsession vinyl record collecting can inspire, the film also has features on the world's most collectible vinyl.

**Descriptors** Albums, Condition Grades, Full Lengths, Singles, Vinyl Records