



DAACS Cataloging Manual: Buttons

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The DAACS Button Manual documents how buttons for personal adornment are cataloged in the DAACS PostgreSQL database. This manual is one of sixteen DAACS Cataloging Manuals. Each manual documents a specific module of the DAACS database, and they provide protocols for using each module. In addition to defining each data field (meta data), the manuals describe how data should be entered into data field, provide guidance on artifact identification, and give examples of how artifacts should be cataloged.

The DAACS database was developed in 2000 by Jillian Galle and Fraser Neiman, in collaboration with members of the [DAACS Steering Committee](#). Jillian Galle, Fraser Neiman, and DAACS Staff, including Leslie Cooper, Lynsey Bates, Lindsay Bloch, Elizabeth Bollwerk, Jesse Sawyer, and Beatrix Arendt, led the development of cataloging protocols. In addition to DAACS staff and steering committee members, Monticello current and former Archaeology Department staff, Jennifer Aultman, Sara Bon-Harper, Derek Wheeler, Donald Gaylord, Karen Smith, and Nick Bon-Harper also contributed to the development of cataloging protocols. Jennifer Aultman and Katherine Grillo produced the initial versions of these DAACS manuals in 2003. The Button table for DAACS was produced in conjunction with Barbara Heath and Heather Olsen of Poplar Forest. Their input is greatly appreciated.

This manual was substantially revised for the introduction of the Bronze, Silver, and Gold cataloging tiers in 2022, and in preparation for the new website launch in 2025. These revisions were made by Galle, Bloch, Bollwerk, and by DAACS analysts Iris Puryear, Allison Mueller, and Catherine Garcia.

Convoy, a web design and graphic design company based in Charlottesville, Virginia, initially programmed the DAACS database in SQLServer (2001-2013). The University of Virginia's Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities (IATH) built and currently maintains the PostgreSQL version of the DAACS database (2014-present). Convoy also designed the original DAACS website (2004), and has since redesigned the website twice (2014, 2024).

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1. THE DAACS DATABASE

The DAACS database was designed by Galle and Neiman in 2001, with direct input from the DAACS Steering Committee and collaborating institutions. The large relational database is programmed in PostgreSQL and comprises over 200 related tables. This structure instantiates the protocols and standards outlined in the DAACS manuals. The database is linked to a Ruby-on-Rails web-based interface, which allows DAACS Research Consortium (DRC) members to access the database through a web browser with a login from anywhere with an internet connection. For a detailed summary of the DAACS database and history of DAACS, please see Galle, Bollwerk, and Neiman 2019.

In 2018, a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities' Digital Humanities Division provided funds to develop a tiered cataloging interface that would allow DRC users to engage with the database on a variety of levels while retaining the data standards and integrity built into the original system. This new interface, with its Bronze, Silver, and Gold tiers, went live in March 2022. This project was a collaboration between DAACS, The University of Virginia's Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, and Convoy.

2. ABOUT THE BUTTON MODULE

The button module is designed for recording information on buttons used as clothing fasteners and personal adornment. If your artifact has some button-like features but cannot be confidently identified as a button, it should be cataloged into the General Artifacts module. This may include items of jewelry, non-clothing fasteners, and miscellaneous ornaments.

Button terminology is generally not as standardized, or as well-known, as terminology for other artifact classes, such as ceramics. Therefore, a great deal of what follows are definitions of terms found in the Button table.

2.1 COMPARISON AND LOCATION OF BUTTON ATTRIBUTES RECORDED FOR BRONZE, SILVER, AND GOLD CATALOGING LEVELS

Table 1. Fields by Cataloging Level

<i>Field</i>	Entry and Field Location		
	<i>Bronze</i>	<i>Silver</i>	<i>Gold</i>
Artifact Count	Main	Main	Main
Completeness	Main	Main	Main
Material	Main	Main	Main
Manu Tech	Main	Main	Main
Button Type	Main	Main	Main
Button Form	Main	Main	Main
Button Color		Main	Main
Button Metal Color		Main	Main

Mended?			Main
Decoration?	Main	Main	Main
Eye		Main	Main
Shank Material		Main	Main
Shank Style		Main	Main
Shank Condition		Main	Main
Notes	Main	Main	Main
Button Weight (g)	Main	Main	Measurements
Button Height (mm)			Measurements
Button Diameter (mm)		Main	Measurements
Button Length (mm)			Measurements
Button Width (mm)			Measurements
Back Stamp		Main	Decoration/Back Stamp
Decorative Technique			Decoration/Back Stamp
Applied Color			Decoration/Back Stamp
Jewel/Inlay Material			Decoration/Back Stamp
Decorative Motif			Decoration/Back Stamp
Button Face Material	Main	Main	Two Piece Info
Button Face Manufacturing Technique			Two Piece Info
Button Join Method			Two Piece Info
Burned?			Condition
Post-Manufacturing Modification?			Condition
Conservation			Condition
Object			Object

3. BRONZE LEVEL CATALOGING PROTOCOLS

3.1 BRONZE OVERVIEW

We urge scholars to not catalog Buttons at the Bronze Level. Buttons, like beads, buckles, and utensils, are rare finds that contain useful analytical information. We believe that it is worth the time to individually catalog buttons at the Silver or Gold level in order to collect measurements, decoration, and other critical data.

If you chose to catalog at the Bronze level, we strongly recommend against putting information that is not captured by existing Bronze level data fields into the Notes field. While button decoration, diameter, or condition may be tempting to record, this is not the purpose of the Notes field or the Bronze cataloging level. Using the Notes field in this way makes it difficult to extract consistent data and effectively negates one of the key benefits and intents of cataloging at the Bronze level by reducing

cataloger efficiency. If this higher level of data collection is desired, please consider upgrading your cataloging level to Silver or Gold.

Bronze Level cataloging is the fastest, most efficient form of cataloging in the DAACS database. It allows users to batch artifacts using only a small number of diagnostic attributes. The result is the ability to catalog more artifacts at a faster pace. However, think carefully about the analytical tradeoffs. If you catalog at the Bronze level, you will not record potentially important pieces of information, such as shank type, back marks, and decoration. The choice of cataloging level should reflect the research goals, as well as time and/or budgetary considerations, specific to a given project.

The fields recorded at the Bronze Level are:

- Artifact Count
- Completeness
- Material
- Manufacturing Technique
- Button Type
- Button Form
- Decoration?
- Button Weight
- Button Face Material
- Notes

Details on identifying specific button types and protocols for recording individual attributes can be found in Section 6.

3.2 BRONZE BATCHING PROTOCOLS

Buttons cataloged at the Bronze level may be batched by Material, Manufacturing Technique, Button Type, Button Form, and Decoration. are not batched and should be cataloged individually, i.e. each button is an individual record with a Quantity of “1”. Multiple fragments of the same *type* of button that cannot be tied to the same *actual* button should be individually cataloged with a Quantity of “1”.

There are a few scenarios where button fragments can be batched to avoid artificial inflation of button counts.

- Multiple fragments that are all associated with the *same* unique button. Catalog all associated fragments in a single record with a Quantity of “1”. Describe state of button (smashed into roughly X number of fragments) in the notes field.
- Button fragments that exhibit evidence of fresh breaks that can be mended together should also be grouped together and cataloged with Quantity of “1” in a single record. Describe state of button (fresh break – button broken in X number of fragments) in the notes field.

4. SILVER LEVEL CATALOGING PROTOCOLS

4.1 SILVER OVERVIEW

The main benefit of cataloging at the Silver level is the ability to record more diagnostic attribute data than is available at the Bronze level. This includes element information such as shank and eye attributes and diameter measurements. At the same time, it allows catalogers to work at a faster pace by removing the Gold level requirement to record detailed decoration, shape, and measurement data. However, think carefully about the analytical tradeoffs. If you catalog at the Silver level, you will not

capture potentially important pieces of information, such as formal attributes and measurements for individual button elements that may be temporally diagnostic. The choice of cataloging level should reflect the research goals, as well as time and/or budgetary considerations, specific to a given project.

The recorded fields at the Silver level are:

- Artifact Count
- Completeness
- Material
- Manufacturing Technique
- Button Type
- Button Form
- Button Color
- Button Metal Color
- Decoration?
- Eye
- Shank Material
- Shank Style
- Shank Condition
- Button Weight
- Button Diameter
- Back Stamp
- Button Face Material
- Notes

4.2 SILVER BATCHING PROTOCOLS

Buttons are not batched at the Silver level. Multiple fragments of the same *type* of button that cannot be tied to the same *actual* button should be individually cataloged with a Quantity of “1”.

There are a few scenarios where button fragments can be batched to avoid artificial inflation of button counts.

- Multiple fragments that are all associated with one unique button. Catalog all associated fragments in a single record with a Quantity of “1”. Describe state of button (smashed into roughly X number of fragments) in the notes field.
- Button fragments that exhibit evidence of fresh breaks that can be mended together should also be grouped together and cataloged with Quantity of “1” in a single record. Describe state of button (fresh break – button broken in X number of fragments) in the notes field.

4.3 SILVER CATALOGING RECOMMENDATIONS

We strongly recommend against putting extraneous information that is not captured by existing Silver level data fields into the Notes field. While it may be tempting to record decoration or detailed measurements in this section, this is not the purpose of the open text field. Using the Notes field in this way makes it difficult to extract consistent data and effectively negates one of the key benefits and intents of cataloging at the Silver level by reducing cataloger efficiency. If this higher level of data collection is desired, please consider upgrading your cataloging level to Gold.

5. GOLD LEVEL CATALOGING PROTOCOLS

5.1 GOLD OVERVIEW

The main benefit of cataloging at the Gold level is the ability to record a large number of individualized measurements and the maximum amount of attribute data for every artifact. Cataloging at the Gold level also allows you to capture formal characteristics and measurements for buttons, which may be temporally diagnostic. However, think carefully about the analytical tradeoffs. Identifying and recording measurements for buttons can be time consuming and requires a high level of cataloger expertise. The choice of cataloging level should reflect the research goals, as well as time and/or budgetary considerations specific to a given project.

Please note that Gold Level standards represent the original Button attribute fields that have been part of DAACS since 2001. These original fields were chosen by DAACS staff and material culture scholars. Silver and Bronze Levels are stream-lined versions of the original DAACS Button module.

The fields recorded at the Gold Level are:

- Artifact Count
- Completeness
- Material
- Manufacturing Technique
- Button Type
- Button Form
- Button Color
- Button Metal Color
- Mended?
- Decoration?
- Eye
- Shank Material
- Shank Style
- Shank Condition
- Notes
- Button Weight (g)
- Button Height (mm)
- Button Diameter (mm)
- Button Length (mm)
- Button Width (mm)
- Back Stamp
- Decorative Technique
- Applied Color
- Jewel/Inlay Material
- Decorative Motif
- Button Face Material
- Button Face Manufacturing Technique
- Button Join Method
- Burned?
- Post-Manufacturing Modification?
- Conservation

5.2 GOLD BATCHING PROTOCOLS

Buttons are not batched at the Gold level. Multiple fragments of the same *type* of button that cannot be tied to the same *actual* button should be individually cataloged with a Quantity of “1”.

There are a few scenarios where button fragments can be batched to avoid artificial inflation of button counts.

- Multiple fragments that are all associated with one unique button. Catalog all associated fragments in a single record with a Quantity of “1”. Describe state of button (smashed into roughly X number of fragments) in the notes field.

- Button fragments that exhibit evidence of fresh breaks that can be mended together should also be grouped together and cataloged with Quantity of “1” in a single record. Describe state of button (fresh break – button broken in X number of fragments) in the notes field.

6. DAACS FIELD DEFINITIONS AND PROTOCOLS FOR BUTTONS

6.1 MAIN BUTTON TABLE

6.1.1 ARTIFACT COUNT

Numeric

This field documents the number of artifacts in that record.

6.1.2 COMPLETENESS

Controlled Vocabulary

Choose “Complete,” “Incomplete,” or “Shank Only.” Record Completeness of linked buttons/cufflinks as either “One Linked Button: Complete” or “Two Linked Buttons: Complete Set.”

6.1.3 MATERIAL

Controlled Vocabulary

This field documents the main type of material (copper alloy, iron, silver, etc.) from which a button is made. For buttons with two or more parts, the material that composes the back of the button is considered the primary material, to be entered here. The material that faces front—the faces the “viewer”, is recorded in the Button Face Material field (Section 6.4.1) in the Silver and Gold modules.

For example, a copper alloy button with a glass inset for the face has Button Material of “Copper Alloy,” and Button Face Material as “Glass.”

Button Material and Button Face Material may be one of the following. For further information and descriptions, see Bloch 2024, Hughes and Lester 1981:

“Bone”: natural animal skeletal material. Note that related animal products (horn/antler and ivory) are identified separately.

“Ceramic”: earthenware or stoneware pottery material. Porcelain is identified separately.

“Copper Alloy”: general category of copper artifacts including buttons of brass (copper + zinc) and bronze (copper + tin). Note that “Tombac,” a specific kind of brass that appears “white” in color as opposed to “yellow”, is identified separately.

“Glass”: human-made amorphous silicate material. Note that “Paste,” a specific formula of glass, is identified separately.

“Gold”: the precious metal, rare as a primary button material. Note that gold plated, or gilt, buttons should be identified by their primary material, with plating noted as decoration in Gold Level cataloging.

“Hard Rubber”: vulcanized natural rubber, first patented in 1851.

“Horn/Antler”: Horn includes keratin animal products from horns and hooves and is translucent. Antler is an opaque bony protrusion from the crania of cervids.

“Iron”: a magnetic ferrous metal, or iron-rich alloy such as steel.

“Ivory”: Tusk or tooth material from several different kinds of animals.

“Lead Alloy”: a dense, soft metal, often poorly preserved.

“Metal, unid”: This term should be used for items that are metal, but too corroded or otherwise ambiguous for identification.

“Missing”: This term is used for button fragments that do not have their backs and thus lack a primary material. The facing material should be identified in Button Face Material.

“Paste”: a leaded glass used to imitate jewels.

“Pewter”: tin alloy.

“Porcelain”: vitrified ceramic produced via the Prosser molding process or using the same recipes as for ceramic vessels.

“Shell”: natural material from mollusk shell, also called mother-of-pearl (An example: [Birmingham Buttons – Find of the month - Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service](#))

“Silver”: the precious metal, uncommon as a primary button material. Note that silver plated buttons should be identified by their primary material, with plating noted as Decoration in the Gold module.

“Synthetic/Modern”: plastics and other composite materials.

“Synthetic, unid”: Likely plastics or composite materials, including possible hard rubber.

“Textile”: buttons made of fabric, yarn, thread and other spun or woven fiber materials.

“Tombac”: copper alloy of copper and zinc.

“Wood”: natural material from trees and large shrubs.

“Unidentifiable”: Materials that are not able to be identified.

“Not Applicable”: Use when cataloging only shanks that have separated from the button. If the button is missing, select “Missing” as the primary material type.

6.1.4 MANUFACTURING TECHNIQUE

Controlled Vocabulary

Manufacturing Technique records the main manufacturing technique of the button. For one-piece metal buttons, for example, Manufacturing Technique is usually “Cast” or “Stamped.” For two-piece buttons, Manufacturing Technique refers to the main button part or back, not the button face. Button Face Manufacturing Technique (Section 6.4.2) refers to the manufacturing technique of the button face.

Table 2. Button Manufacturing Techniques.

Manufacturing Technique	Description
“Cast”	Molten metal was poured into a button mold and allowed to harden. The button would have characteristic mold seams most likely on the back of the button and possibly the eye. Some buttons had cast eyes (with mold marks) and others were cast with an iron or brass wire shank placed into the mold. Hinks (1988:60) notes that most cast buttons from the early 18 th century are pewter, but by the mid-18 th century large numbers of cast brass and copper (i.e., copper alloy) buttons were produced.
“Cut/Carved”	Used for bone, ivory, shell, wood, and other organic materials that were cut or carved by hand or machine.
“Drawn”	Most commonly applies to drawn glass buttons and wire metal buttons. For instance, metal rings that were used as button forms for covered buttons, such as crocheted buttons, were usually drawn wire. Drawn glass buttons were made in much the same way as drawn glass beads, where a long tube of glass was blown out, stretched (drawn), and then cut.
“Hollow cast”	The face and back are cast as one piece around a separate, often iron, shank. Two holes are present in the back to allow internal gasses to escape during casting. Used for brass or pewter buttons. Most common in the first half of the 18 th century (Hinks 1988:56).
“Molded”	The button is shaped in a die or mold, often with the application of pressure, heat, and/or steam. Note that in DAACS, glass buttons that were poured in liquid form into a mold should be identified as “Molded,” though casting would also describe this process.

“Prosser Molded”	Highly compressed, heated ceramic buttons. Post-1840 (Sprague 2002:111). In DAACS, the material type for Prosser molded buttons is “Porcelain.”
“Spun Back Cast”	Button was cast in a mold, usually with an added wire eye cast in place. After casting, the button was placed in a chuck and spun by the lathe. A tool was used to cut the back of the button to remove the mold seams and smooth the surface. This type is characterized by the concentric circles that can often be seen on the button back. The eye was often a wire cast in place with a blob of metal, later lathe-finished which created a cone-like shape to the shank (Section 6.1.13).
“Stamped”	Metal discs stamped out of sheet metal, creating a very thin and uniform button. Stamped buttons are almost always copper alloy or iron, as tin alloys are too soft and brittle to be rolled out into thin sheets and stamped. Soldering/brazing was used to attach wire shanks to stamped buttons.
“Unidentifiable”	Use when the manufacturing technique is unidentifiable.
“Wound”	Used for glass buttons made like beads, which were wound from long threads of molten glass.
“Woven”	Used for textile buttons. Rare archaeologically.
“Not Applicable”	Use when the primary button material is missing.
“Not Recorded”	Rarely used. Only in cases where data are imported from existing datasets into the database and manufacturing technique was not recorded in the imported data or records are added for missing artifacts that do not have complete information.

6.1.5 BUTTON TYPE

Controlled Vocabulary

The Button Type field records the general structure of the button, primarily recording whether the body is composed of a single piece of material or is a composite, and whether it has curvature. Note that shanks do not count as a button piece for the purposes of distinguishing 1-Piece from 2-Piece or 3-Piece buttons. The options for Button Type are:

 1 piece (top, carved bone; bottom, molded glass)	 1 piece, domed (left, cast Cu alloy; right, molded glass)	 1 piece, semi-domed (top, cast pewter; bottom cast Cu alloy)	 Flat disc (left, cast pewter; right, stamped Cu alloy back)
 FD, concave back (both stamped Cu alloy)	 FD, convex back (stamped Cu alloy)	 2 piece (left, iron back, Cu alloy face; right, iron)	 2-piece domed (both stamped Cu alloy backs and faces)
 2-piece semi-domed (iron back, Cu alloy face)	 3 piece (left, Cu alloy band and face; right, Cu alloy band, shell face)	 3 piece, semi-domed (Cu alloy band and face)	 Blank/mold (left, middle, carved bone; right, carved wood)
 Collar button (carved bone)	 Linked 1 piece (stamped silver, face and back)	 Linked 2 piece, complete (stamped Cu alloy back and face, plated)	 Ring (left, drawn Cu alloy, right, carved bone)

Figure 1. Button types.

“1 Piece”: One-piece buttons are made from a single piece of material, such as wood, bone, horn, glass, and metal. The distinguishing feature of a one-piece button is that the button body is constructed from a single material type. One-piece buttons can have holes, which are colloquially known as “sew-through” buttons. One-piece buttons may also have added shanks. These buttons have flat or nearly flat faces, with a height-to-diameter ratio of 0.29 or less.

Note: In DAACS, cast metal buttons with integral cast shanks should NOT be cataloged as “1 Piece.” If they have flat faces, they should be “Flat Disc,” if they are domed, they should be “1 Piece, domed,” and if they are semi-domed they should be “1 Piece, semi-domed.”

“1 Piece, domed”: These buttons resemble one-piece buttons, but have a high domed face. For example, cast one-piece metal buttons are often “1-Piece, domed.” A button must have a height-to-diameter ratio of 0.46 or greater to be cataloged as “1 Piece, domed”.



Figure 2. Example of a “1 Piece, domed” glass button with a wire eye and back plate. DAACS Artifact ID: 1405-91-01-023-DRS--00548

“1 Piece, semi-domed”: These one-piece buttons have a convex front but lack the exaggerated arch of domed buttons. A semi-domed button will have a height-to-diameter ratio between 0.3 and 0.45.

“Flat Disc”: DAACS describes flat, metal one-piece buttons as “Flat Disc” buttons. These buttons are flat discs with shanks either cast as part of the button or brazed/soldered onto the back. Use only for metal buttons with shanks, not buttons with eyes. If the back is not flat, see “FD concave back” and “FD convex back.” The example pictured in Figure 1 is slightly domed but has a height ratio of less than 0.29, which means it would be classified as flat.

“FD concave back”: These are flat disc buttons with concave backs. The faces tend to be slightly convex, but these buttons are not as domed as “1 Piece, domed” or “1 Piece, semi-domed” buttons.

“FD convex back”: These are flat disc buttons with convex backs. Note that the front of the button is often concave.

“2 Piece”: These buttons consist of separate faces and backs that most often were brazed/soldered or crimped together. The face and back were often made of different materials. Most common in copper alloy buttons. These buttons will have a height-to-diameter ratio of 0.29 or less. Also see “2 Piece, semi-domed” and “2 Piece, domed.”

Note: some wire-shanked buttons of glass, porcelain, and other non-metal materials may have a small metal shank plate to secure the shank. This does not count as a back. In most cases these buttons should be cataloged as 1-Piece.

“2 Piece, domed”: Made just like other two-piece buttons, but with a high domed face (and possibly a domed back). A domed button will have a height-to-diameter ratio of 0.46 or greater.

“2 Piece, semi-domed”: These buttons consist of a separate face and back piece brazed/soldered or crimped together. The face and back can be different materials. They have convex fronts but lack the

exaggerated arch of domed buttons. A semi-domed button will have a height-to-diameter ratio between 0.3 and 0.45.

“3 Piece”: These buttons consist of a face, a back, and a separate metal band or rim that joins the back and face together. They are brazed/soldered or crimped together. The back and face are often different materials. Measure the height-to-diameter ratio to determine if the button is “3 Piece” or “3 Piece, semi-domed.”



Figure 3. 3 piece button with iron back, glass face, and copper alloy band. DAACS Artifact ID: 1410-97-01-30-DRS--00746

“3 Piece, semi-domed”: These buttons consist of a (usually stamped) face, a back and a separate band or mid-section that joins the two pieces. They have convex fronts but lack the exaggerated arch of domed buttons. A semi-domed button will have a height-to-diameter ratio between 0.3 and 0.45.



Figure 4. 3 piece button with stamped copper alloy face and band. The band crimps over the back, like the face of a 2 piece metal button.

“Blank/Mold”: A bone or wood button with either zero holes or one hole. The single hole was a product of manufacturing, when these buttons were cut with a lathe or a carpenter’s brace and bit (Hinks 1988:67). They could be used as the backs to stamped metal buttons, the supporting disc for cloth buttons, or more holes could be drilled in them to make simple, one-piece bone or wooden buttons (ibid).

Note that scrap materials from bone button manufacture are catalogued in General Artifacts, with a Form of “Button Blank.”

“Collar Button”: Collar buttons have wide flat backs, necks of varying length, and round faces. They may be one piece or a composite of multiple parts or materials. Beginning in the late 19th century, collar buttons or studs were primarily used to connect detachable collars to mens’ shirts. They were also worn in place of buttons on formal shirts.

Note: Record Button Form as “Round” for collar buttons.

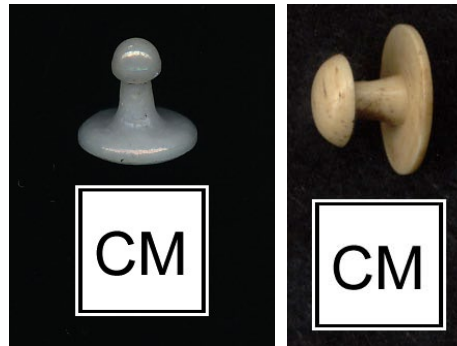


Figure 5. Left: Prosser molded porcelain collar button. DAACS Artifact ID: 1410-97-03-138-DRS--00303. Right: carved bone collar button. DAACS Artifact ID: 1406-95-03-01-DRS—00047.

“Linked 1-Piece Button”: Often called cufflinks; used for fastening together sleeve cuffs. DAACS uses the terms “1-Piece” to describe a linked button composed of one material, such as metal. Linked buttons may be any shape, but oval is most common, and the shank is typically smaller than a standard wire shanked button designed to be sewn onto clothing.

Note: Remember to record Completeness as either “One Linked Button: Complete” or “Two Linked Buttons: Complete Set.” A “complete set” contains the two linked parts necessary for fastening one shirt sleeve.



Figure 6. Stamped copper alloy linked 1-piece button, complete set. DAACS Artifact ID: 1224-R14.1-DRS--00009

“Linked 2-Piece Button”: Often called cufflinks; used for fastening together sleeve cuffs. DAACS uses the terms “2-Piece” to describe linked buttons comprised of more than one type of material, for example, metal with a jewel inlay (see Section 7 for information on cataloging 2-piece buttons).

Note: Remember to record Completeness as either “One Linked Button: Complete” or “Two Linked Buttons: Complete Set.” A “complete set” contains the two linked parts necessary for fastening one shirt sleeve.



Figure 7. Incomplete linked 2-piece button with paste jewel face. DAACS Artifact ID: 108-364B-DRS—00054.

“Ring”: These buttons have a cloth or crocheted covering structured around a thin metal or bone ring. The ring is often the only part recovered archaeologically. See how to catalog button rings in Section 7.5.6.



Figure 8. Drawn copper alloy button ring. DAACS Artifact ID: 1412-99-01-027-DRS—00133.

6.1.6 BUTTON FORM

Controlled Vocabulary

This field records the shape of the button as seen from the top or face, not in profile.

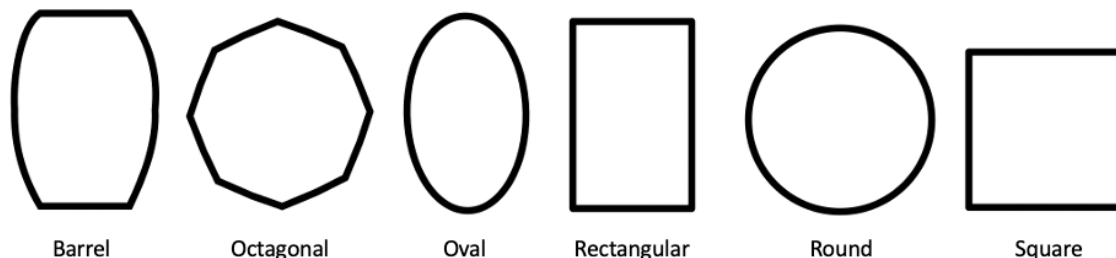


Figure 9. Button forms.

“Barrel”: Semi-rectangular, but long ends taper at either end; short ends somewhat flattened

“Octagonal”: Eight-sided form

“Oval”: Elliptical in shape

“Rectangular”: Two sets of parallel lines, joining orthogonally, with one longer pair.

“Round”: Circular in shape.

“Square”: Four sides of equal length, joining orthogonally.

“Missing”: The button back is not present.

“Unidentifiable”: Original button shape cannot be determined.

6.1.7 BUTTON COLOR

Controlled Vocabulary

Button Color is recorded at Silver and Gold Levels. Record “Button Color” for only certain button materials: ceramic, glass, hard rubber, porcelain, and synthetic. The color of the button should be identified using the **Basic Colors** section of the DAACS Color Book. For all other materials, “Not Applicable” should be selected. Also, be sure to see “Button Metal Color” below, which records color for metal buttons.

6.1.8 BUTTON METAL COLOR

Controlled Vocabulary

Recorded at Silver and Gold Levels, this field describes the color of a metal button as it would have looked to the consumer. It is a subjective assessment of the button’s appearance rather than its actual composition. When present, the color of plating or gilding is recorded. If gilding or plating is not present,

the original color of the button metal, if identifiable, is recorded. This field should only be used for metal buttons; for all other button types use the default “Not Applicable.” There are only three options: “Yellow,” “White,” and “Unidentifiable.” See Heath 1999 (pp. 58-62) for discussion of button metal color.

“Yellow”: Button surfaces with a DAACS Basic Color of “Copper,” “Gold/Gilt,” or “Bronze” should be identified as “Yellow.” Despite patination which might make copper alloy buttons appear black or green, the original color was and should be recorded as “Yellow,” unless there is evidence of “White” plating (i.e. silver or tin). Buttons with gilding should be recorded as “Yellow.”

“White”: Button surfaces with a DAACS Basic Color of “Silver/Tin” should be identified as “White.” Most pewter and lead alloy buttons should be “White.” White copper alloys (i.e., tombac) should be identified as “White,” unless there is evidence of gilding. Note: True silver plating can tarnish and appear Black. Using a microscope or Derm Light can help determine if a copper alloy button has blackened silver plating or has simply blackened due to oxidation.

“Unidentifiable”: Iron buttons should be “Unidentifiable,” unless there is evidence of plating or gilding. If the metal surface is enameled/painted (typically black), and the metal color is completely obscured select “Unidentifiable.”

Note: Plating, gilding, and painting/enameling should also be listed in the Decoration table at the Gold level.



Figure 10. Top row: Buttons classified as “Yellow” according to plating and button material. Bottom row: Buttons classified as “White” according to plating and button material.

6.1.9. MENDED?

Controlled Vocabulary

The default for this field is “No.” This field is not recorded in Silver or Bronze modules.

If the artifact has physically been glued together with multiple fragments, enter “Yes, Physically Mended.” If multiple fragments mend together but are not physically glued, enter “Yes, Mends But Not Physically” in this field.

6.1.10 DECORATION?

Controlled Vocabulary

Enter “Yes” or “No” depending on whether decoration is present. If “Yes,” be sure to fill out the fields in the Decoration/Back Stamp tab (see Section 6.3 below). DAACS defines decoration as added embellishment meant to be seen, and therefore will only be present on the visible (i.e., front) part of the button. Backstamps are not considered decoration. Backstamp information should only be entered in Backstamp field on Decoration/Backstamp Tab, and in the Notes field. . Plating is considered decoration.

6.1.11 EYE

Controlled Vocabulary

Enter in the number of eye holes on the button. Even though a button may be broken and some holes may be missing, enter in the number of eye holes the button would have had originally. For buttons with shanks, enter “Not Applicable.” For collar buttons, solid button molds, and rings, select “Not Applicable.”

6.1.12 SHANK MATERIAL

Controlled Vocabulary

If the shank is missing, enter “Missing.” If the button did not originally have a shank or had a thread shank (e.g, button mold or ring), enter “Not Applicable.” The default is “Not Applicable.” See Material (Section 6.1.3) for descriptions of shank material. Choices are:

- “Copper Alloy”
- “Glass”
- “Gold”
- “Iron”
- “Lead Alloy”
- “Pewter”
- “Missing”
- “Not Applicable”
- “Not Recorded”
- “Unidentifiable”

6.1.13 SHANK STYLE

Controlled Vocabulary

Complete this field only for shanked buttons. For collar buttons and other buttons without shanks, enter “Not Applicable.” This field records the button’s shank style. Even if the shank is missing, look for evidence that tells you what the shank was. Two flanges of cast metal on the back of the button indicate that the shank was “Cast in Boss.” If there are two tiny dots or marks on the back of a copper alloy button, this usually means that the shank was an Alpha, as these are the points where the shank was attached. If there are two little flat feet in a ballet dancer’s first position, on the back of a copper alloy button, this usually means that the shank was an Omega, as these are the spot where the splayed shank feet were attached. If the shank is missing and you can’t determine the style of the shank, enter “Missing” into this field.

Table 3. Button Shank Information

Note: These images are examples of what each shank type might look like. Not all shanks will appear exactly like those pictured – be sure to read the Button Type and Descriptions column.

Shank Type	Button Material	Shank Material	Date Range	References	Button Type and Descriptions	Image
"Alpha"	Copper Alloy; occasionally Iron	Copper Alloy; occasionally Iron	1770s-~1800	Hinks 1988:60; Hughes and Lester 1981:221	1-piece, flat disc buttons. Shank is shaped like the Greek letter Alpha. Similar to Omega shanks, but without the splayed Omega feet. When Alpha shanks are missing, they often leave two little dot "footprints". This allows a cataloger to say what type of shank the button had while also noting that the shank is "missing".	
"Bar Type"	Copper Alloy or Iron	Copper Alloy or Iron			2-piece buttons. A bar is soldered to button back or stamped as part of button. Face usually has one large center hole. Curtain weights look similar but are made of heavier metal like lead alloy and undecorated.	
"Bird Cage"	Porcelain	Porcelain	post-1840	Hughes and Lester 1981:32, Luscomb 1968:23-24, 221	1-piece Prosser molded porcelain buttons. The bird cage shank, made separately, has two to four holes and was fused to the body of the button.	
"Cast Eye"	Pewter	Pewter	17th-mid 18 th century	Hinks 1988:52-54; Hughes and Lester 1981:221	1-piece and flat disc buttons. Note the mold seams visible on the shank and back of the button.	
"Cone w/ Wire Eye"	Tombac or Copper Alloy	Iron or Copper Alloy	18 th to early 19 th century	Hughes and Lester 1981:221	1-piece, flat disc buttons. Cone shank with embedded wire eye. The cone shank is cast and often lathe-finished.	

"Drilled Eye"	Pewter, Copper Alloy, or Tombac	Pewter, Copper Alloy, or Tin Alloy	17 th to mid-19 th century	Hughes and Lester 1981:221	Cast 1-piece and flat disc buttons. Shank was cast as solid projection and then drilled. Domed and semi-domed doublet-style buttons (Figure 1) are earlier than the 18 th to mid-19 th flat peg-shaped shank.	
"Drilled Eye, swaged-in"	Shell	Copper Alloy	Late 18 th to early 20 th century	Hughes and Lester 1981: 233	1-piece shell buttons. Metal shank and "plug" (one piece) is wedged inside shell button back.	
"Embedded wire"	Pewter; occasionally Copper Alloy	Iron or Copper Alloy	1800-1830s	Hughes and Lester 1981:221	1-piece, flat disc buttons. A wire eye shank is embedded in a metal hump. Typical of "hard white" pewter buttons.	
"Omega"	Copper Alloy	Copper Alloy; occasionally Iron	after ~1800	Hinks 1988: 60; Hughes and Lester 1981:221	1-piece buttons. Shank is shaped like the Greek letter Omega and soldered onto the back of flat disc buttons. Similar to Alpha shanks, but Omega shanks have splayed feet. When Omega shanks are missing, they often leave two little flat "footprints" like a ballet dancer in first position. This allows a cataloger to say what type of shank the button had while also noting that the shank is "missing".	

Shank Type	Button Material	Shank Material	Date Range	References	Button Type and Descriptions	Image
"Shank through Back Plate"	Pewter, Copper Alloy	Copper Alloy, occasionally Iron		Hughes and Lester 1981:221	2-piece buttons. Shank is punched through the back plate. Solder may be applied on one or both sides of the back plate.	
"Shank cast in boss"	Pewter, Copper Alloy, or Tombac	Iron or Copper Alloy	1760-~1800	Hinks 1988:53	1-piece, flat disc buttons. These buttons are usually cast with a spun back. The shank is set into a blob or cylinder of metal. Note the "wings" of metal around the shank.	
"Wire Eye"	Wire shanks on glass, ceramic, shell or bone buttons.	Iron or Copper Alloy			Should NOT be used for unidentifiable shanks on metal buttons. Also NOT to be used for 2-piece, hollow cast buttons.	

Drawn images are from: Hughes and Lester 1981:221.

6.1.14 SHANK CONDITION

Controlled Vocabulary

Choices are "Bent," "Broken," "Corroded," and "Straight." Also in the list are "Missing" and "Not Applicable." The default is "Not Applicable." If more than one condition applies, i.e., a shank is both bent and corroded, the cataloger should pick one of these options to enter into the table, and then write the other in Notes.

6.1.15 NOTES

Open Text

Use this field to record any additional diagnostic information about the button not captured in an existing field. However, when cataloging at the Bronze or Silver levels, we strongly recommend *against* putting extraneous information that is not captured by existing level data fields into the Notes field. While it may be tempting to record decoration or detailed measurements in this section, this is not the purpose of the open text field. Using the Notes field in this way makes it difficult to extract consistent data and effectively negates one of the key benefits and intents of cataloging at the Bronze and Silver levels by reducing cataloger efficiency. If this higher level of data collection is desired, please consider upgrading your cataloging level.

6.2 MEASUREMENTS TABLE

6.2.1 BUTTON WEIGHT

Numeric

Button Weight is recorded at all cataloging levels. Always take a weight, regardless of button completeness. Button weight should be measured in grams, to the nearest tenth.

6.2.2 BUTTON HEIGHT

Numeric

Button Height records the thickness of the button body (i.e., back and face). The distance the shank extends from the button back is NOT included in the height measurement. Button height should be measured with calipers in millimeters, to the nearest tenth.

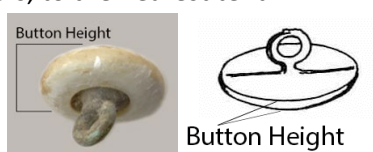


Figure 11. Examples of locations for button height measurements.

6.2.3 BUTTON DIAMETER

Numeric

Record at Silver and Gold Levels. If the Button Form is “Round,” record the maximum diameter here. Button Diameter should be measured with calipers in millimeters, to the nearest tenth.

6.2.4 BUTTON LENGTH

Numeric

Record at the Gold Level. If the Button Form is NOT “Round,” record the longest dimension here. Button Length should be measured with calipers in millimeters, to the nearest tenth. For “Round” buttons and fragmentary buttons without full original length, leave this field blank.

6.2.5 BUTTON WIDTH

Numeric

Record at the Gold Level. If the Button Form is NOT “Round,” record the shortest dimension here. For “Square” or “Octagonal” buttons, this measurement may be the same as Button Length. Button Width should be measured with calipers in millimeters, to the nearest tenth. For “Round” buttons and fragmentary buttons without full original width, leave this field blank.

6.3 DECORATION/BACK STAMP

Any buttons with a decorative element visible on the face or sides of the button should be entered into the Decoration? field as “Yes” but no additional information is recorded at the Bronze and Silver levels. At the Gold level, the “Decoration?” field should be entered as “Yes” with detailed information completed on the Decoration/Back Stamp Tab. This includes engraving, stamped decoration, molded decoration, and plating, among others. Back stamps may include decorative motifs but are not considered decoration, as they would not be visible when buttons were worn. Back stamp information, including decorative motifs, is recorded at the Silver and Gold levels in the Back Stamp Field.

6.3.1 BACK STAMP

Open Text

Record at Silver and Gold Levels. If the button has lettering or a stamped design on the back, record the lettering or describe the design in the Back Stamp field. If the stamp is too long or intricate to describe in the Back Stamp field, enter “See notes,” and then describe the stamp in the Notes (Section 6. 1.15). If there is no stamp, the default for this field is “None.” If a stamp is present but cannot be identified, record as “Unidentifiable.” Do not record Decoration as “Yes” if the button only has a backstamp.

6.3.2 DECORATIVE TECHNIQUE

Controlled Vocabulary

Use this field to describe the type of decoration seen on a button. Select Add Decoration for each additional decorative technique and/or motif that is present. Choices are described in Table 4.

Table 4. Decorative Techniques on Buttons

Decorative Technique	Button Material	Description	Example
“Added Glass”	Glass	Prunts or other decorative additions of glass that are fused onto the glass button face. Can also be used to describe marbling of different glass colors. Do not use this term for inlays on non-glass buttons.	 Colorless glass button, added red glass  Marbled glass -- 1029-MT245.G-WTS-1467--00050

“Carved”	Typically organic materials (e.g., shell, bone)	Removal of button material with a blade or sharp tool to create lines and more complex designs.	 Shell
“Cast”	Metal	Decoration transferred from the button mold used for cast metal buttons.	 Pewter (also plated)
“Engraved”	Metal, occasionally other materials.	Fine-line incised decoration, characterized by smooth lines, and fine, sharp punctations, typically reserved for metal buttons. See also “Wheel Engraved.”	 Cu alloy (also plated)
“Faceted”	Typically glass, occasionally other materials	Material cut to create faces/planes. Add number of faces present to Decorative Motif. May be imitated via molding, in which case, select “Molded.” Cut facets will be less regular than molded facets.	 Black glass
“Jewel Setting”	Typically metal	A fitting for an inlaid material such as paste jewel, glass jewel, precious stone, or shell, etc. Also known as a bezel. If the inlay is still present, identify in Jewel/Inlay Material and Applied Color.	 Paste jewel in Cu alloy
“Luster”	Porcelain, ceramic, and glass	A translucent and glossy metallic coating.	 Prosser-molded porcelain
“Molded”	Glass, ceramic, porcelain, synthetic, horn, and other plastic materials	Decoration transferred from a mold, while button material is in a plastic state. Used for non-metal button materials.	 Red glass

"Painted"	Most materials	Application of paint or enamel (heat set paints). Typically opaque.	 Black glass
"Plated"	Metals	Application of a thin layer of silver, gold, or tin. Gold plating is technically known as gilding or gilt.	 Silver/tin plated Cu alloy
"Stamped"	Most common on sheet metal	Decoration transferred from a mold or die under pressure.	 2-piece Cu alloy
"Transfer Printed"	Prosser molded porcelain	Transfer of a colored pattern from an engraved plate to ceramic material.	 Prosser molded porcelain
"Wheel Engraved"	Most common on metal	Use of a spinning wheel to cut decorations, characterized by stippled/textured lines. If button is engraved but wheel marks cannot be confirmed, use "Engraved."	 Plated pewter

6.3.3 APPLIED COLOR

Controlled Vocabulary

Use the **Basic Colors** section of the DAACS Color Book to describe any applied color associated with a decorative technique such as "Plating", "Painted," or "Transfer Printed." This field should also be used to describe the color of jewel inlays. If a button has more than one decorative color, enter separate records for each color. This field should be recorded as "No Applied Color" for any decorative technique, such as engraving or molding, which does not have any applied color.

Note: for plating, use only "Gold/Gilt" if the Button Metal Color is "Yellow," and "Silver/Tin" if the Button Metal Color is "White." The terms "Gilt," "Gold," "Silver," and "Tin" should not be used unless you have specific diagnostic information that provides this level of detail.

6.3.4 JEWEL/INLAY MATERIAL

Controlled Vocabulary

This field should be used to describe any jewels or inlays set into the face of a button. Note that this field does not refer to two-piece buttons with glass or other nonmetal faces (Section 6.4.1). Instead, this field describes the inlaid embellishments sometimes found on button faces. The options are:

“Glass”: this term is used for inlays of glass that are not molded or cut to imitate gemstones. This includes shields of colorless glass placed on top of other materials. See also “Paste.”

“Gold”: the precious metal.

“Paste”: glass molded or cut to imitate gemstones. Typically leaded, it may glow under short-wave UV light and is relatively soft, becoming scratched and dull over time.

“Semi-Precious”: minerals such as garnet, quartz crystal, and other gemstones.

“Shell”: nacre (mother-of-pearl) from mollusk shell.

“Silver”: the precious metal.

“Missing”: if only the jewel setting is present, select this term.

“Not Applicable”: Default if no jewel setting or inlay.

“Unidentifiable”: jewel or inlay cannot be determined.

6.3.5 DECORATIVE MOTIF

Open Text

Use this field when further description of a button decoration or design is necessary. One should, for example, describe the pattern seen on an engraved button face or the design seen on a molded button face. Count and record the number of facets on a faceted button. If no description is necessary (as with plating, for example), leave this field blank.

6.4 TWO PIECE INFO

6.4.1 BUTTON FACE MATERIAL

Controlled Vocabulary

“Button Face Material” is used for 2-piece or 3-piece buttons, including “Linked 2-Piece Buttons”. For one-piece buttons, this field should be “Not Applicable” (default value). The list of materials for this field is the same as for the Button Material field described above (Section 6.1.3).

Note: If there is a non-metal material on the front of the button, to classify as a button face, the material must extend at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Button Diameter or Button Length. Materials that are non-continuous or

extend less than $\frac{3}{4}$ the diameter are classified as inset decoration. Buttons with insets consist of the main material which comprises the back and sides of the button, and the inset material, which is classified using the Decorative Technique “Jewel Setting.” This jewel setting is also known as a bezel. See Section 7.5 for examples on how to catalog different face styles.



Figure 12. Examples of 2-piece buttons with non-metal faces (left) versus non-metal inlays (right). Ratio of applied material to full button diameter or maximum length must be greater than or equal to 0.75 to be classified as button face.

6.4.2 BUTTON FACE MANUFACTURING TECHNIQUE

Controlled Vocabulary

This field records the manufacturing technique of the button face. Choices for this field are the same as those for Manufacturing Technique (Section 6.1.4). For buttons without a separate face material (e.g. 1-piece buttons), this field should be “Not Applicable” (default value).

Note: The faces of most 2-piece and 3-piece metal buttons were shaped by hammering sheet metal into a molded cavity; therefore, record manufacturing technique for most metal faces of 2-piece buttons as “Stamped” (this includes domed and semi-domed buttons as well).

6.4.3 BUTTON JOIN METHOD

Controlled Vocabulary

This field describes the way the front and back of a 2-piece button (including 2-piece linked buttons) are joined together. Options include:

“Brazed”: Fused together using a molten metal, this is a similar method to soldering but used on copper alloys.

“Crimped”: The face material is bent and compressed around the back material.

“Missing”: Unless there is evidence for the original join method, select “Missing” if the Button Face Material is missing.

“Unidentifiable”: If the original join method cannot be determined, select “Unidentifiable.”

“Not Applicable”: Default for buttons that are not 2-piece or 3-piece.

6.5 CONDITION

6.5.1 BURNED

Controlled Vocabulary

Enter “Yes” or “No.” The default is “No.” Disregard the “N/A” option.

6.5.2 POST-MANUFACTURING MODIFICATION?

Controlled Vocabulary

Enter “Yes” or “No.” The default is “No.” Disregard the “N/A” option.

Post-Manufacturing Modification is a database field recorded for all artifact categories in DAACS. Use this field when an artifact appears to have been physically modified to change its original function. Catalog the object as it would be cataloged in its original form. Enter “Yes” under Post-Manufacturing Modification and describe in Notes how the object has been modified.

6.5.3 CONSERVATION

Controlled Vocabulary

The default is “No Conservation.” If the button has been conserved, enter “Yes” into this field and describe the conservation in the Notes (Main tab).

6.6 IMAGES

In general, all decorated buttons should be imaged. Unusual examples of undecorated buttons, or buttons with useful diagnostic attributes should be imaged (this could include backstamps).

7. EXAMPLES FOR CATALOGING VARIOUS BUTTON TYPES

This section outlines how to catalog different types of buttons at the Gold level. For Bronze and Silver, complete only the fields that are present in the module.

7.1 ORGANIC BUTTONS (BONE, WOOD, SHELL, AND IVORY)

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	“Bone,” “Shell,” etc. as appropriate
Manu Tech:	“Cut/Carved”
Button Type:	Usually “1-Piece.” These are the buttons that typically have two, four or five holes. Do not record them as “Flat Disc.” A bone button with a single hole in the center is a “Blank.” Use “2-Piece” if the bone is the back to a metal button (Figure X).
Button Form:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view. Usually “Round.”
Button Color:	“Not Applicable”
Button Metal Color:	“Not Applicable”

Decoration?:	As appropriate. If “Yes,” complete the Decoration/Back Stamp tab. May be “Carved.”
Eye:	As appropriate
Shank Material:	“Not Applicable”
Shank Style:	“Not Applicable”
Shank Condition:	“Not Applicable”



Figure 13. Example of a 4-hole bone button. DAACS Artifact ID: 104-373B-NOS—00001.

7.2 CERAMIC BUTTONS

7.2.1 PROSSER MOLDED PORCELAIN BUTTONS

These buttons are typically white, but the body may be dyed in other colors such as black, brown, or blue. They typically have eyes rather than shanks, but shanked varieties (such as birdcage shanks) do exist. Patented in 1840, Prosser molded buttons may be mistaken for glass, but have an orange peel-like texture on the back and are more grainy in texture, as visible along broken surfaces.

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	“Porcelain”
Manu Tech:	“Prosser Molded”
Button Type:	Usually “1 Piece,” but may be part of a “2 Piece” button
Button Form:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view
Button Color:	Identify the closest color match in DAACS Basic Colors.
Button Metal Color:	“Not Applicable”
Decoration?:	As appropriate. If “Yes,” complete the Decoration/Back Stamp tab. Often “Molded,” “Painted,” “Luster,” or “Transfer Printed.”
Eye:	As appropriate
Shank Material:	“Not Applicable”
Shank Style:	“Not Applicable” or “Bird Cage”
Shank Condition:	“Not Applicable”



Figure 14. Prosser molded porcelain button with transfer printed “Calico” decoration. DAACS Artifact ID: 1410-97-02-03-DRS--00369

7.2.2 OTHER CERAMIC BUTTONS

Other ceramic buttons include buttons made of earthenware. These buttons were typically lead glazed and molded. Use the material type “Ceramic” for all non-porcelain ceramic buttons.

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	“Ceramic”
Manu Tech:	Typically “Molded”
Button Type:	Usually “1-Piece,” but may form the face of a “2-Piece” button. In that case, the Material would be metal, not “Ceramic.” Enter the face information on the Two Piece Info tab.
Button Form:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view.
Button Color:	Identify the closest color match in DAACS Basic Colors.
Button Metal Color:	“Not Applicable”
Decoration?:	As appropriate. If “Yes,” complete the Decoration/Back Stamp tab. Typically undecorated.
Eye:	As appropriate
Shank Material:	As appropriate
Shank Style:	As appropriate
Shank Condition:	As appropriate



Figure 15. Example of a “Norwalk” ceramic button made from marbled earthenware in early 19th c. Connecticut. This example has a wire “pin” shank that extends through the face of the button. DAACS Artifact ID: 1410-97-02-26-DRS—00123.

7.3 GLASS BUTTONS

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	“Glass”
Manu Tech:	Usually “Molded.” If the glass is faceted (and therefore cut), the Manufacturing Technique is still “Molded,” but note the cut facets on the Decoration/Back Stamp tab.
Button Type:	Usually “1 Piece,” but may be part of a “2 Piece” button.
Button Form:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view.
Button Color:	Identify the closest color match in DAACS Basic Colors.
Button Metal Color:	“Not Applicable”
Decoration?:	As appropriate. If “Yes,” complete the Decoration/Back Stamp tab.
Eye:	As appropriate
Shank Material:	As appropriate
Shank Style:	As appropriate
Shank Condition:	As appropriate



Figure 16. Examples of glass buttons. Left: Molded black glass button with “Faceted” decoration and wire shank. DAACS Artifact ID: 1405-91-01-023-DRS—00548. Right: Molded colorless glass with “Molded” and “Painted” decoration and two eyes. DAACS Artifact ID: 104-467/468A-NOS—00068.

7.4 METAL BUTTONS

7.4.1. UNDECORATED METAL BUTTONS

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	“Cu Alloy” (yellow/green metal), “Tombac,” “Iron,” “Lead Alloy,” “Pewter,” or “Metal, unid.”
Manu Tech:	Usually “Cast,” “Spun Back cast,” or “Stamped.” Pewter, Lead Alloy, and Tombac buttons will be “Cast.” Copper Alloy and Iron buttons tend to be Stamped.
Button Type:	All types are possible.
Button Form:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view.
Button Color:	“Not Applicable” for metal buttons.
Button Metal Color:	“Yellow,” “White,” or “Unidentifiable.” See section 6.1.8.
Decoration?:	“No.”
Eye:	As appropriate
Shank Material:	As appropriate
Shank Style:	As appropriate
Shank Condition:	As appropriate



Figure 17. Undecorated tombac flat disc button, face and back. DAACS Artifact ID: 1004-752AB4-NOS—00044.

7.4.2 PLATED METAL BUTTONS

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	"Cu Alloy" (yellow/green metal), "Tombac," "Iron," "Lead Alloy," "Pewter," or "Metal, unid."
Manu Tech:	Usually "Cast," "Spun Back cast," or "Stamped." Pewter, Lead Alloy, and Tombac buttons will be "Cast." Copper Alloy and Iron buttons tend to be Stamped.
Button Type:	All types are possible.
Button Form:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view.
Button Color:	"Not Applicable" for metal buttons.
Button Metal Color:	"Yellow," "White," or "Unidentifiable." See the Section 6.1.8 on Button Metal Color for a detailed description of this field.
Decoration?:	"Yes"
Decorative Technique:	"Plated"
Jewel/Inlay Material:	"Not Applicable"
Applied Color:	"Gold/Gilt," "Silver/Tin," "Silver," or "Tin" as appropriate.
Decorative Motif:	Leave this field blank. If there is additional decoration (e.g., "Stamped" or "Engraved" motif, select Add Decoration and describe separately.

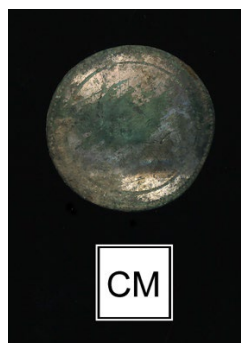


Figure 18. Stamped copper alloy flat disc button with "Silver/Tin" plating and engraved bands. DAACS Artifact ID: 1410-98-01-054-DRS—00016.

7.5 OTHER BUTTON TYPES

7.5.1 3 PIECE BUTTON

3 piece buttons are most often all metal, but some faces will be non-metal. See Section 6.4.1 to determine if you have a 2 piece button with inlay or a 3 piece button. The material and manufacturing technique of the third part/band is only recorded in Notes. The Button Join method records the way the band attaches the face to the back.

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	Typically "Cu Alloy" (yellow/green metal) or "Iron"
Manu Tech:	Usually "Stamped."
Button Type:	"3 Piece" or "3 Piece, semi-domed."
Button Form:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view.
Button Color:	"Not Applicable" for metal buttons.
Button Metal Color:	"Yellow," "White," or "Unidentifiable." See the Section 6.1.8 for a detailed description of this field.
Decoration?:	As Appropriate. If "Yes," fill out Decoration/Back Mark tab.
Decorative Technique:	As appropriate
Jewel/Inlay Material:	As appropriate
Applied Color:	As appropriate.
Decorative Motif:	As appropriate.
Button Face Material:	As appropriate
Button Face Manu Tech:	As appropriate
Button Join Method:	As appropriate. This describes the join of the third piece.



Figure 19. 3 piece, semi-domed button with stamped copper alloy face and band. DAACS Artifact ID: 1405-90-01-082-DRS--00133

7.5.2 BUTTON SHANKS

How to catalog a single button shank, when the rest of the button is missing:

Completeness:	"Shank Only"
Material:	"Unidentifiable" This field is for button body only. The shank is identified under Shank Material.
Manu Tech:	"Unidentifiable"

Button Type:	"Unidentifiable"
Button Form:	"Unidentifiable"
Button Color:	"Not Applicable"
Button Metal Color:	"Not Applicable"
Decoration?:	"No"
Eye:	"Not Applicable"
Shank Material:	As appropriate
Shank Style:	As appropriate
Shank Condition:	Record "Broken" if the shank itself is broken (not to indicate that the shank has been broken off from the rest of the button).
Button Height:	Record the length of the shank here. Note, for most button types, the shank measurement should NOT be included for Button Height.



Figure 20. Broken copper alloy "Omega" style shank. DAACS Artifact ID: 1003-947J-NOS—00026.

7.5.3 TWO-PIECE BUTTON WHEN ONLY FACE IS PRESENT

How to catalog a button face when rest of button is missing:

Completeness:	"Incomplete"
Material:	"Missing"
Manu Tech:	"Unidentifiable."
Button Type:	Record the type of 2-piece button
Button Form:	Record the shape of button
Button Color:	Record color if glass or ceramic
Button Metal Color:	Record color if metal.
Decoration?:	As appropriate. If "Yes," complete the Decoration/Back Stamp tab.
Eye:	As appropriate
Shank Material:	"Not Applicable"
Shank Style:	"Not Applicable"
Shank Condition:	"Not Applicable"
Button Face Material:	As appropriate
Button Face Manu Tech:	As appropriate
Button Join Method:	As appropriate.



Figure 21. Stamped copper alloy button face with stamped decoration. DAACS Artifact ID: 1018-07.02-DRS--00014

7.5.4 TWO-PIECE BUTTON WHEN ONLY BACK IS PRESENT

How to catalog a button back when face is missing:

Completeness:	"Incomplete"
Material:	As appropriate
Manu Tech:	As appropriate
Button Type:	Record the type of two-piece button
Button Form:	Record the shape of button
Button Color:	If face was a material for which Button Color is recorded, "Unidentifiable" Otherwise "Not Applicable."
Button Metal Color:	If metal, "Unidentifiable. " Otherwise, "Not Applicable."
Decoration?:	"Uni"
Eye:	As appropriate
Shank Material:	As appropriate
Shank Style:	As appropriate
Shank Condition:	As appropriate
Button Face Material:	"Missing"
Button Face Manu Tech:	"Not Recorded"
Button Join Method:	"Not Recorded"



Figure 22. Bone back to a 2-piece button with wire eye. Likely had a sheet metal face. DAACS Artifact ID: 1003-963D-NOS—00071.

7.5.5 2-PIECE BUTTON WITH INLAID NON-METAL FACE

This example may be appropriate for glass, shell, and other non-metal faces. See Section 6.4.1 to determine if this secondary material should be recorded as Face or Inlay. If Face, complete as follows:

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	Typically metal. "Cu Alloy" (yellow/green metal), "Tombac," "Iron," "Lead Alloy," "Pewter," or "Metal, unid."
Manu Tech:	Usually "Cast," "Spun Back cast," or "Stamped." Pewter, Lead Alloy, and Tombac buttons will be "Cast." Copper Alloy and Iron buttons tend to be Stamped.
Button Type:	2-piece or 3-piece varieties.
Button Form:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view.
Button Color:	"Not Applicable" for metal buttons.
Button Metal Color:	"Yellow," "White," or "Unidentifiable." See Section 6.1.8.
Decoration?:	Typically "Yes." The addition of non-metal faces on metal backed buttons is generally for decorative effect. If "Yes," complete the Decoration/Back Stamp tab.
Eye:	As appropriate
Shank Material:	As appropriate
Shank Style:	As appropriate
Shank Condition:	As appropriate
Decorative Technique:	Typically "Jewel Setting." If the jewel is faceted or molded, etc., select Add Decoration and record each decorative technique separately.
Jewel/Inlay Material:	As appropriate
Applied Color:	If glass or other material that is recorded with DAACS Basic Colors, record the closest matching color of the face here. If shell or other material for which color is not recorded, select 'Not Applicable.'
Decorative Motif:	As appropriate
Button Face Material:	As appropriate
Button Face Manu Tech:	As appropriate
Button Join Method:	As appropriate



Figure 23. Copper alloy button with colorless glass face. DAACS Object ID: 3144721.

7.5.6 BUTTON WITH JEWEL/INLAY EMBELLISHMENT

See Section 6.4.1 to determine if a secondary material should be recorded as Face or Inlay. If Inlay, complete as follows:

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	Typically metal. "Cu Alloy" (yellow/green metal), "Tombac," "Iron," "Lead Alloy," "Pewter," or "Metal, unid."
Manu Tech:	Usually "Cast," "Spun Back cast," or "Stamped." Pewter, Lead Alloy, and Tombac buttons will be "Cast." Copper Alloy and Iron buttons tend to be Stamped.
Button Type:	All are possible.
Button Form:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view.
Button Color:	"Not Applicable" for metal buttons.
Button Metal Color:	"Yellow," "White," or "Unidentifiable." See Section 6.1.8.
Decoration?:	"Yes."
Eye:	As appropriate
Shank Material:	As appropriate
Shank Style:	As appropriate
Shank Condition:	As appropriate
Decorative Technique:	Typically "Jewel Setting." If the jewel is faceted or molded, etc., or there is other decoration on the face, select Add Decoration and record each decorative technique separately. Shell should be entered as "Carved".
Jewel/Inlay Material:	As appropriate
Applied Color:	If glass or other material that is recorded with DAACS Basic Colors, record the closest matching color of the face here.
Decorative Motif:	As appropriate.
Button Face Material:	As appropriate. Do not record inlay information here.
Button Face Manu Tech:	As appropriate. Do not record inlay information here.
Button Join Method:	As appropriate. Do not record inlay information here.



Figure 24. Stamped copper alloy button with shell inlay. DAACS Artifact ID: 108-407A-DRS—00009.

7.5.7 BUTTON RINGS (COPPER ALLOY OR IRON RINGS THAT SUPPORTED FABRIC OR THREAD BUTTONS)

How to catalog a button ring. Note that in most cases, all traces of thread will be missing. Button rings should be imaged.

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	As appropriate (Copper Alloy, Iron, or Bone)
Manu Tech:	Typically "Drawn"
Button Type:	"Ring"
Button Form:	"Round"
Button Color:	"Not Applicable"
Button Metal Color:	"Not Applicable." While typically made of metal, the metal would have been fully obscured by thread.
Decoration?:	"N/R"
Eye:	"Not Applicable"
Shank Material:	"Not Applicable"
Shank Style:	"Not Applicable"
Shank Condition:	"Not Applicable"
Button Face Material:	"Not Applicable"



Figure 25. Drawn iron button ring with corrosion in form of original thread covering. DAACS Artifact ID: 1412-97-03-123-DRS—00220.

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