



DAACS Cataloging Manual: Buttons

OCTOBER 2003
UPDATED JUNE 2018

DAACS Cataloging Manuals document how artifacts, contexts, features, objects and images are cataloged into the DAACS database. They provide information not only about artifact identification but also about how each database field is used and how data should be entered into that field.

The DAACS database was developed by Jillian Galle and Fraser Neiman, in collaboration with members of the [DAACS Steering Committee](#). Jillian Galle and DAACS Staff, Leslie Cooper, Lynsey Bates, 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, Fraser Neiman, 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 Kate Grillo produced the initial versions of these DAACS manuals in 2003. They have been substantially revised by Cooper, Galle, and Bates in the intervening years.

Updated June 20th, 2018

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INTRODUCTION

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.

The Button table for DAACS was produced in conjunction with Barbara Heath and Heather Olsen of Poplar Forest. Their input is greatly appreciated.

1. MAIN BUTTON TAB

1.01 ARTIFACT COUNT

Do not batch buttons.

1.02 COMPLETENESS

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

1.03 MATERIAL

Refers to the main material of which the button is composed. For buttons with insets, the main material is that which comprises the back and sides of the button, and the inset material is listed under Button Face Material. For example, a copper alloy button with a bone inset on the face has Button Material as “Copper Alloy,” and Button Face Material as “Bone.”

“Bone”	“Paste”
“Ceramic”	“Pewter”
“Copper Alloy”	“Porcelain”
“Glass”	“Shell”
“Hard Rubber”	“Silver”
“Iron”	“Synthetic, unid”
“Ivory”	“Tombac”
“Lead Alloy”	“Unidentifiable”
“Missing”	“Wood”
“Not Applicable”	

1.04 MANUFACTURING TECHNIQUE

Manufacturing Technique refers to the main manufacturing technique of the button. For one-piece buttons, for example, this is usually “Cast” or “Stamped.” For two-piece buttons,

Manufacturing Technique refers to the main button part, not the button face. Button Face Manufacturing Technique refers to the manufacturing technique of the button face.

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”	Used primarily for glass buttons that are poured in liquid form into a mold and allowed to harden.
“Prosser Molded”	Highly compressed, heated ceramic buttons. Generally date after 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 the 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 (described below).

"Stamped"	Metal discs stamped out of large sheets of metal, creating a very thin and uniform button. Stamped buttons are almost always copper alloy, such as brass, as tin alloys are too soft and brittle to be rolled out into thin sheets and stamped. Solder was used to attach wire shanks to stamped buttons.
"Unidentifiable"	Use when the manufacturing technique is unidentifiable.
"Wound"	Used for glass buttons that were wound from long threads of glass.

1.05 BUTTON TYPE

"1 Piece": These buttons are made from a single material, such as wood, bone, horn, glass, and nineteenth-century metal "sew-through" buttons. The distinguishing factor of one-piece buttons is that they are constructed from one material, as only one part. These buttons will have a height-to-diameter ratio of 0.29 or less.

Note: In DAACS, flat metal buttons with shanks should **not** be cataloged as one-piece. There is a separate Button Type, "Flat Disc," to describe flat, metal one-piece buttons with shanks. Also see "1 Piece, semi-domed" and "1 Piece, domed."

"1 Piece, domed": These buttons resemble one-piece buttons, but are domed instead of flat. For example, cast one-piece metal buttons are often "1 Piece, domed." A domed button will have a height-to-diameter ratio of 0.46 or greater.

"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.

"2 Piece": These buttons consist of separate faces and backs that were brazed/soldered or crimped together. The face and back were often made of different materials. Most common in brass buttons, although found in pewter as well. These buttons will have a height-to-diameter ratio of 0.29 or less. Also see "2 Piece, semi-domed" and "2 Piece, domed."

"2 Piece, domed": Made just like other two-piece buttons, but with a 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, 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 are brazed/soldered or crimped together. 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.



U.S. Army General Staff button 1832-1902
Hughes and Lester, 1981, *The Big Book of Buttons*

“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.”

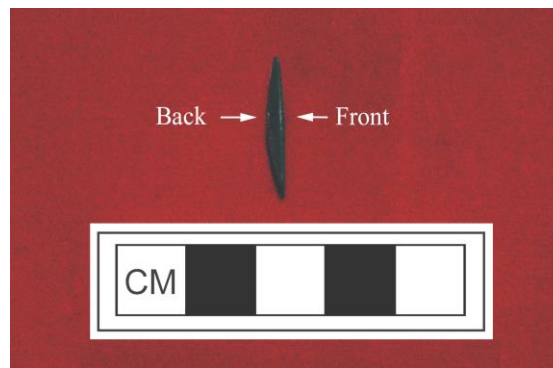
“Collar Button”: Beginning in the late 19th century, collar buttons or studs were primarily used to connect detachable collars to mens’ shirts. They were also worn in place of buttons on formal shirts.

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



“FD concave back”: These are flat disc buttons with concave backs. Note that these buttons are not as domed as “1 piece, domed” buttons, but are only slightly concave.

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



“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 soldered onto the back. See also “FD concave back.”

“Linked 1-Piece Button”: Often called cufflinks; used for fastening together sleeve cuffs. DAACS uses the terms “1-Piece” to describe linked buttons comprised of one material, such as metal.

Note: Remember to record Completeness as either “One Linked Button: Complete” or “Two Linked Buttons: Complete Set.”

“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 4 for information on cataloging 2-piece buttons).

Note: Remember to record Completeness as either “One Linked Button: Complete” or “Two Linked Buttons: Complete Set.”



Photo courtesy of the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory,
Diagnostic Artifacts Project

“Ring”: These buttons have a cloth or crocheted covering structured around a thin metal ring. The metal ring is often the only part recovered archaeologically. See how to catalog button rings in Section 6.8.



Button ring recovered from West Cabin at The Hermitage

1.06 BUTTON SHAPE

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

“Barrel”: tapers to either end; ends somewhat flattened

“Octagonal”

“Oval”

“Rectangular”

“Round”

“Square”

“Unidentifiable”

1.07 BUTTON COLOR

Button color is used only for ceramic and glass buttons. The color of the button should be identified by 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 applies to metal buttons.

1.08 BUTTON METAL COLOR

This field describes the color of the button as it would have looked to the consumer. It is a subjective assessment of the button’s appearance rather than its actual composition. 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”: Copper Alloy buttons should be “Yellow,” unless there is evidence of plating. Tin plating and silver plating are commonly seen on Copper Alloy buttons; these should be listed as “White.” Buttons with Gilding should be listed as “Yellow.”

“White”: Tombac buttons should be “White,” unless there is evidence of Gilding. Gilt buttons should be “Yellow.” Pewter Buttons should be “White.”

“Unidentifiable”: Iron buttons should be “Unidentifiable,” unless there is evidence of plating or gilding.

Note: Plating and gilding should also be listed in the Decoration table.

1.09 DECORATION?

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 3 below).

1.10 EYE

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, enter “Not Applicable.”

1.11 SHANK MATERIAL



Choices are “Copper Alloy,” “Iron,” “Pewter,” and “Unidentifiable.” If the shank is missing, enter “Missing.” If the button did not originally have a shank, enter “Not Applicable.” The default is “Not Applicable.”



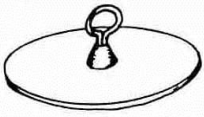




1.12 SHANK STYLE

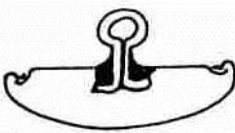

This field records the button’s shank style. If the shank is missing and you can’t determine the style of the shank, enter “Missing” into this field. Even if the shank is missing, look for evidence that tells you what the shank was. Two flanges of cast metal on the back of the button indicate that the 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. For collar buttons and other buttons without shanks, enter “Not Applicable.”

Table 1.1 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 columns.

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 typical Omega feet.	
“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.	

Shank Type	Button Material	Shank Material	Date Range	References	Button Type and Descriptions	Image
"Bird Cage"	Porcelain	Porcelain	Terminus post quem of 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 inserted into the front of the button.	
"Cast Eye"	Pewter	Pewter	17 th -mid 18 th century	Hinks 1988:52-54; Hughes and Lester 1981:221	1-piece, 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	18 th to mid-19 th century	Hughes and Lester 1981:221	1-piece, flat disc buttons. The drilled, peg-shaped shank is cast with the rest of the button.	
"Drilled Eye, swaged-in"	Shell	Copper Alloy	Late 18 th to early 19 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 feet.	

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 can 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, or bone buttons.	Iron or Copper Alloy			Should NOT be used for unidentifiable shanks on metal buttons. Also NOT be used for 2-piece, hollow cast buttons.	

Images are from: Hughes and Lester 1981:221

1.13 SHANK CONDITION

Choices are "Bent," "Broken," "Corroded," and "Straight." Also in the list are "Missing" and "Not Applicable." The default is "Not Applicable." Sometimes a shank will be, for example, both bent and corroded. For Shank Condition, the cataloger should pick one of these options to enter into the table, and then write the other in Notes.

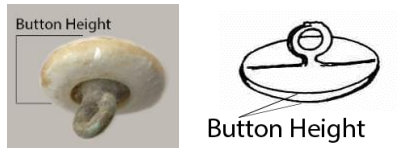
2. BUTTON MEASUREMENTS

2.1 BUTTON WEIGHT

Always take a weight, regardless of whether you have a complete button. Button weight should be measured in grams, to the nearest tenth.

2.2 BUTTON HEIGHT

Measure the thickness of the button itself; distance the shank extends from the button back is NOT included in the height measurement.



2.3 BUTTON DIAMETER

If the button is **round**, record the diameter here.

2.4 BUTTON LENGTH

If the button is **non-round**, record the longest dimension here.

2.5 BUTTON WIDTH

If the button is **non-round**, record the shortest dimension here.

3. DECORATION/BACK STAMP

Any buttons with a decorative element should be entered into the Decoration tab. This includes engraving, stamped decoration, molded decoration, and plating.

3.1 BUTTON BACK STAMP

Back Stamp is a text field. 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 (Main tab). If there is no stamp, the default for this field is "None."

3.2 DECORATIVE TECHNIQUE

Use this field to describe the type of decoration seen on a button. Choices are:

- "Added Glass"
- "Carved"
- "Cast"
- "Engraved"
- "Facetted"
- "Jewel Setting"
- "Molded"
- "Painted"
- "Plated"
- "Stamped"
- "Transfer Printed"
- "Wheel Engraved"

Plating and Gilding should be catalogued as follows:

Decorative Technique: "Plated"
Jewel/Inlay Material: "Not Applicable"
Dech Tech Color: "Tin," "Silver," or "Gilt"
Decorative Motif: Leave this field blank

3.3 JEWEL/INLAY MATERIAL

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. Instead, this field describes the inlays sometimes seen on metal-faced buttons (both one-piece and two-piece). Inlay materials will often be identified using a microscope. For example, semiprecious stones will look quite different from glass or "paste" jewels under a microscope. Paste jewels scratch easily, and look very dull over time.

If you have a button with a jewel or inlaid material, the decoration might look like this:

Decorative Technique	Jewel/Inlay Material	Decorative Technique Color	Decorative Motif
"Jewel Setting"	"Glass"	"Red"	This glass inlay is round in shape and set in the middle of the copper alloy button face.

3.4 DECORATIVE TECHNIQUE COLOR

Use the **Basic Colors** section of the DAACS Color Book to describe any applied color associated with a decorative technique. This field is most commonly used to describe plating as "Silver/Tin" or "Gold." This field should also be used to describe the color of jewel settings and any painting or transfer-printing. If a button has more than one decorative color, enter separate records for each color. This field should be "No Applied Color" for any decorative technique, such as engraving or molding, which usually do not have any applied color.

3.5 DECORATIVE MOTIF

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. If no description is necessary (as with plating, for example), leave this field blank.

4. TWO PIECE INFO

4.1 BUTTON FACE MATERIAL

"Button Face Material" is used for two-piece buttons, including two-piece linked buttons ("Linked 2-Piece Button"). These buttons often have insets – the main material is that which

comprises the back and sides of the button, and the inset material is the Button Face Material. For example, a copper alloy button with a glass inset on the face has Button Material as “Copper Alloy,” and Button Face Material as “Glass.” 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 Material field described above.

4.2 BUTTON FACE MANUFACTURING TECHNIQUE

This field records the manufacturing technique of the button face. The faces of two-piece buttons were shaped by hammering into a molded cavity; therefore, record manufacturing technique for most metal faces of two-piece buttons as “stamped” (this includes domed and semi-domed buttons as well). For buttons without a separate face material (e.g. 1-piece buttons), this field should be “Not Applicable” (default value). Choices for this field are the same as those for Manufacturing Technique.

4.3 BUTTON JOIN METHOD

This field describes the manner in which the front and back of a 2-piece button (including two-piece linked buttons) are joined together. Options include “Crimped,” “Braided,” and “Unidentifiable.” Default is “Not Applicable”

5. CONDITION

5.1 BURNED

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

5.2 POST-MANUFACTURING MODIFICATION?

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

Post-Manufacturing Modification is a field seen in all of the different artifact categories. Use this field when an artifact appears to have been physically modified in order 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.

5.3 CONSERVATION

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. EXAMPLES FOR CATALOGING VARIOUS BUTTON TYPES

6.1 BONE BUTTONS

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	"Bone"
Manu Tech:	"Cut/Carved"
Button Type:	Usually "1 Piece." These are the buttons that typically have 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.
Button Shape:	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
Eye:	Note how many holes the button had originally.
Shank Information:	All fields should be recorded as "Not Applicable."

These protocols also apply for most Wood, Shell, and Ivory buttons.

6.2 CERAMIC BUTTONS

6.2A Prosser Molded Porcelain Buttons

These buttons are typically white, but may be other colors such as black, brown, or blue. They typically have 2 to 4 holes rather than shanks. Patented in 1840, Prosser molding can be discerned by small pinhole-like impressions on the back of the button. In DAACS, the material type for Prosser molded buttons is "Porcelain."

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	"Porcelain"
Manu Tech:	"Prosser Molded"
Button Type:	Usually "1 Piece," but may be part of a "2 Piece" button
Button Shape:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view
Button Color:	Identify the color range of the button using the Basic Colors section of the DAACS Color Book
Button Metal Color:	"Not Applicable"
Decoration?:	As appropriate

Eye: Record how many holes in button. If the button has a shank, enter "Not Applicable" in this field.

Shank Information: "Not Applicable" for all shank fields if no shank present.

6.2B Other Porcelain Buttons

Other porcelain non-prosser molded buttons include buttons with bird-cage shanks. These buttons are typically white, but may be other colors such as black, brown, or blue.

Completeness: As appropriate

Material: "Ceramic"

Manu Tech: Typically "Molded"

Button Type: Usually "1 Piece," but may be part of a "2 Piece" button

Button Shape: Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view.

Button Color: Identify the color range of the button using the **Basic Colors** section of the DAACS Color Book.

Button Metal Color: "Not Applicable"

Decoration?: As appropriate

Eye: Note how many holes in button. If the button has a shank, enter "Not Applicable" in this field.

Shank Information: If a ceramic button has a metal shank, indicate that the Shank Style is "Wire Eye." If shank resembles a hollow cone with two or four slits enter "Bird Cage". If there is no shank for the button, enter "Not Applicable" for all shank fields.

6.2C Other Ceramic Buttons

Other ceramic buttons include buttons made of earthenware. These buttons were typically 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 be part of a "2 Piece" button

Button Shape: Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view.

Button Color: Identify the color range of the button using the **Basic Colors** section of the DAACS Color Book.

Button Metal Color: "Not Applicable"

Decoration?: As appropriate

Eye: Note how many holes in button. If the button has a shank, enter "Not Applicable" in this field.

Shank Information: If a ceramic button has a metal shank, indicate that the Shank

Style is “Wire Eye.” If shank resembles a hollow cone with two or four slits enter “Bird Cage”. If there is no shank for the button, enter “Not Applicable” for all shank fields.

6.3 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 in the Decoration table.
Button Type:	Usually “1 Piece,” but may be part of a “2 Piece” button.
Button Shape:	Note the shape of the button as seen from a plan/overhead view.
Button Color:	Identify the color range of the button using the Basic Colors section of the DAACS Color Book.
Button Metal Color:	“Not Applicable”
Decoration?:	As appropriate
Eye:	Note how many holes in button. If the button had a shank, record “Not Applicable” into this field.
Shank Information:	If a glass button has a metal shank, indicate that the Shank Style is “Wire Eye.” If there is no shank for the button, record “Not Applicable” for all shank fields.

6.4 METAL BUTTONS

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	“Cu Alloy” (yellow/green metal), “Tombac,” “Iron,” or “Pewter”
Manu Tech:	Usually “Cast,” “Spun Back cast,” or “Stamped.” Copper Alloy buttons tend to be stamped and Tombac buttons tend to be cast, although this is not always the case.
Button Type:	Could be all types.
Button Shape:	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 on Button Metal Color for a detailed description of this field.
Decoration?:	As applicable
Eye:	Note how many holes in button. If the button had a shank, put “Not Applicable” into this field.
Shank Style:	Identify the shank style. If the shank is missing and you can’t determine the style of the shank, enter “Missing” into this field. 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. See the section 1.12 on Shank Styles for detailed descriptions of shanks.

6.5 BUTTON SHANKS

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

Completeness:	“Shank Only”
Material:	“Unidentifiable”
Manu Tech:	“Unidentifiable”
Button Type:	“Unidentifiable”
Button Shape:	“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.

6.6 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 two-piece button
Button Shape:	Record the shape of button
Button Color:	Record color if glass or porcelain
Button Metal Color:	As appropriate based on color of button face
Decoration?:	As appropriate
Eye:	As appropriate if applicable; otherwise enter “Not Applicable”
Shank Material:	If button had shank, enter “Missing”
Shank Style:	If button had shank, enter “Missing”
Shank Condition:	If button had shank, enter “Missing”
Button Measurements:	Record Weight and Diameter as appropriate; Do not record Height.
Button Face material:	As appropriate
Button Face Man Tech:	As appropriate
Button Join Method:	Unidentifiable

6.7 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 Shape:	Record the shape of button
Button Color:	Record color if glass or porcelain
Button Metal Color:	"Unidentifiable"
Decoration?:	"Uni"
Eye:	As appropriate if applicable; otherwise enter "Not Applicable"
Shank Material:	As appropriate
Shank Style:	As appropriate
Shank Condition:	As appropriate
Button Measurements:	Record Weight and Diameter as appropriate; Do not record Height.
Button Face material:	"Missing"
Button Face Man Tech:	"Unidentifiable"
Button Join Method:	"Missing Information"

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

How to catalog a button ring when the fabric/thread is missing (note: we have never found one with fabric/thread intact):

Completeness:	As appropriate
Material:	As appropriate (usually Copper Alloy)
Manu Tech:	"Cast"
Button Type:	"Ring"
Button Shape:	"Round"
Button Color:	"Not Applicable"
Button Metal Color:	"Not Applicable"
Decoration?:	"N/R"
Eye:	"Not Applicable"
Shank Material:	"Not Applicable"
Shank Style:	"Not Applicable"
Shank Condition:	"Not Applicable"
Button Measurements:	Record Weight and Diameter as appropriate; Do not record Height.
Button Face material:	"Not Applicable"
Button Face Man Tech:	"Not Applicable"
Button Join Method:	"Not Applicable"

Note: Button rings should also be imaged

7. REFERENCES

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