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Identifying the Printing Technique

ExLibris Abbreviations

The International Federation of Societies of Lovers of Ex Libris - F.I.S.A.E.

(Federation Internationale des Societes d'Amateurs d'Ex Libris) was founded in 1953.

Over the years it has established an international standard for the labeling of bookplates that will help ex libris collectors identify the **printmaking process** used in the creation of the plate through a series of **abbreviated codes** that are often written in pencil on the reverse of the ExLibris.

Intaglio printing techniques - **Original**

- C - Intaglio printing (blank); embossing
- C1 - Steel engraving
- C2 - Burin (graver or gouge) engraving, notably on copper
- C3 - Etching, including direct (brush) etching
- C4 - Dry point, including crayon manner and stipple engraving
- C5 - Aquatint
- C6 - Soft-ground or sugar etching
- C7 - Mezzotint
- C8 - Intaglio engraving on linoleum, plastic or other materials

Reproductive

- P3 - Heliogravure (manual line and tone photogravure), Photogalvanography
- P4 - Commercial photogravure, rotogravure
- P10 - Etched steel printing (die-printing)

Relief printing techniques - **Original**

- X - Relief printing (blank)
- X1 - Woodcut
- X2 - Wood engraving
- X3 - Linocut
- X4 - (Chinese) stone stamp
- X5 - Relief-printed engraved or etched metal plates, notably metal cut
- X6 - Relief-printed engraving of other materials, notably plastic

Reproductive

- T - Typography, letterpress
- T1 - Linotype, monotype, indirect letterpress
- T2 - Photoxylography, facsimile wood engraving
- T3 - Commercial rubber stamp / timbre en caouchouc commercial
- P1 - Line block (cliché) with or without photography



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- P2 - Half-tone, photo zincography
- Flatbed, stencil and electronic printing techniques - Original
- L1 - Auto lithography
- L2 - Autography (transfer lithography)
- L3 - Zincography
- L4 - Algraphy
- P9 - Original photograph
- S - Stencil
- S1 - Original serigraphy (silkscreen)
- S2 - Mimeography (dye stencil)
- S3 - Katazome and Kappa (oiled-paper stencil)
- CGD - Computer generated design

- P - Photographic reproduction
- P5 - Collotype
- P6 - Photolithography, process transfer lithography
- P7 - Offset, including duotone
- P8 - Serigraphic reproduction (photo silkscreen)
- CRD - Computer reproduced design
- Y - Photocopy, electrostatic screen printing

Other abbreviations

- MT - Mixed technique, used when component techniques are not known
- B - Braille
- U - Technique not listed above, including Frottage, Chinese rubbing, Cyanography and Collography
- Number preceding the technical symbols - Number of plates used
- / number after the technical symbols - Number of colors used
- / mon. - Monotype
- / col. - Hand colored

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References: <http://www.exlibris-art.com/ex-libris-abbreviations/>

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