

# Citi Money Gallery label style guide

Each label in the Citi Money Gallery has 4 main components:

Header	(always one line or less – should not wrap onto a second line)
Place and date	(usually one line, occasionally two)
Body label text	(usually up to 50-55 words)
Object details	(each object begins on a new line)

The header provides a link to the object(s) – if possible giving a visual link to them so that the visitors can link the two quickly and easily together. It should always be one line. For example:

Two Islamic gold coins  
or One pound note

The place and date information is as brief as possible – and is intended to give non-specialist visitors a sense of where and when the object(s) are from. This will often involve giving broad geographical categories or broad date ranges for a group of objects. This should where possible be on one line only, but can wrap to two lines if it is impossible to give the essential information in one line. For example:

Turkey and Iran, 1600s-1700s  
Barbados, 1895

The Body label text gives the commentary on the object(s), focussing on the key messages of the section rather than trying to give all the information there is about the object(s).

The object details at the bottom of the label are where all the specialist information, and provenance are found. Registration numbers are not included, nor are provenance details for purchases

## *Denominations*

There are many different denominations in the Citi Money Gallery, and visitors coming from around the world have different languages and background knowledge. Because of this, all coin denominations go in italics as foreign words. So, for example, it is *stater* or *tetradrachm*, despite the fact that those words are commonly used in English by numismatists. The only exceptions to this are:

Dollar  
Ducat  
euro (NB: no capital letter in any context)  
Florin  
Groat  
Penny  
Pound  
Shekel  
Shilling  
Sovereign

In addition to putting the denomination in italics, the words 'coin', 'token', 'note' or similar are used to clarify. For example, 'gold *stater* coin' or 'two silver *tetradrachm* coins'

Denominations are only given in the plural if the plural form is the same in English. So, for example, it should be 'two silver *denarius* coins' and not 'two silver *denarii*'.

Denominations are not usually hyphenated, so it should be 'five pound note'. However, a notable exception is '8-*reales* coin' which is hyphenated, for clarity.

### ***Dates***

Where possible, dates are given as figures rather than in words, with BC or AD as appropriate for dates before 1000AD.

Dates that are approximate should be given as a range, or a date with 'about' (not circa). So, it would be:

44 BC  
or about 45 BC  
or 50-40 BC

### ***Place names***

For all regions or cities, it is important to give visitors the information to locate where those places are. This information is given in brackets, for example:

Siena (Italy)

Where the country in which a city or region is found today did not exist or is not meaningful in the context of the label or section, the word 'modern' is added. This is minimized as far as possible, so for example in the example above it is Siena (Italy) and not Siena (modern Italy), because although Italy wasn't in the 1500s united, 'Italy' was a widely-understood geographical name and concept.

Where places have changed their name, the place is given as:

Constantinople (modern Istanbul, Turkey)

When in doubt, you can check other labels in the gallery – most place names appear there somewhere!

### ***Rulers***

In general, the names of rulers are only given in the object details at the bottom of the label, and not in the place and date information in the header. If a ruler is named, dates should be given for their life or reign, along with enough basic information to enable visitors to understand who they were.

### ***Foreign language words***

Inscriptions from coins are only quoted when that is essential to the message of the label. Any words or phrases in a foreign language need translating, and words in a foreign language should be italicized, with single quotation marks if necessary, like this if it is an inscription '*kaiyun tongbao*' (when the same words are used as the denomination, it would be *kaiyun tongbao* without the quotation marks).

### ***Writing style***

Keep your sentences active and certain. Where possible, make positive statements and avoid vagueness. Make sure that the label refers to the object, and works outwards from there to the broader contextual points.

The language of the labels should be as simple as possible to convey the main message – many visitors to the British Museum do not speak English as a first language. Be particularly aware of technical or numismatic terms, which may seem very familiar to museum staff, are not necessarily comprehensible to the majority of our visitors. For example, 'mint', 'struck', 'obverse', 'reverse', 'denomination', 'die'.

If a technical term is unavoidable, it should be defined in the label text, either by making it clear in context, or by adding a brief definition in brackets after the technical term.

### ***Object numbering***

Where possible, objects do not have numbers, and the grouping of objects on the board makes clear which object is which. If there are two very similar coins, they should share a single number, if necessary with (left) and (right) or similar, to clarify.

### ***Images***

Image labels have a short caption of around 20 words, with copyright credit if necessary.

### ***Maps***

Maps should be as simple as possible, and where possible, avoid showing borders where those are uncertain or potentially politically sensitive. Where necessary, check boundaries, labeling, or place names with the relevant specialists, and in very problematic cases, add:

'The names and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the British Museum'

Place names are labelled so that ancient place names are in italics, if necessary with the modern name in brackets afterwards.