

Info-byte:  
**Tracking Systems: the Main Considerations**

What are tracking systems?

- A tracking system allows you to locate your records
- In the paper world tracking systems can be card catalogues or registers which document where records are located and where they have been temporarily removed to e.g. out to users, in exhibition or being conserved
- In an automated environment the tracking system will probably be an integral part of the database with fields identifying the location and the borrower of the records
- It is common to replace a box, or file, with a sheet of paper containing key identifying information. This remains in the vacated space to physically flag up the absence of records

Why are they important?

- Good records management practice dictates that all records are accounted for at all times to ensure the integrity of records: tracking systems are the mechanism for achieving this
- A tracking system allows records staff to control the physical location of records
- Tracking systems allow for the gathering of records management programme statistics, such as retrieval rates and user profiles, which can be used to justify the records management operation as well as to adjust retention schedules as appropriate

