

## Choosing a tool for NJGIN metadata

Metadata for NJGIN must be in ArcGIS format, style FGDC-CSDGM. There currently are three metadata editors provided by Esri that can produce it: ArcCatalog; ArcGIS Pro; and ArcGIS Online (AGO). All require a license. ArcGIS xml files produced by any can be used by all.

On the Metadata Support page of NJGIN (under “Sharing”) there are help documents with specific instructions for creating NJGIN Core (bare bones) metadata both with ArcGIS Pro and with ArcGIS Online. A field list is available for ArcCatalog.

Potential contributors to NJGIN who do not use Esri products should see the NJGIN links to free editors, and contact the NJ Office of GIS staff ([njgin@oit.nj.gov](mailto:njgin@oit.nj.gov)) for assistance with a work-around to produce ArcGIS metadata.

The chart below suggests some criteria for making a choice between Esri editors. Below the chart is a brief write-up of some of the characteristics of each editor.

The best editor is the one you’ll use!

User/Status	Use this metadata editor
New data, no metadata	Pro or AGO.
Existing data, no metadata	Are you sure? Check first!
Item for ArcGIS Online that isn’t data	Any. AGO bounding box tool helpful.
Existing data, old FGDC metadata needs update	ArcCatalog. Manage Process Steps.
Existing data, has ArcGIS metadata, needs update	Pro or ArcCatalog.
Existing data with metadata, for template source	Pro template tool.
New user, no metadata experience	AGO or Pro.
Experienced ArcCatalog user	ArcCatalog, but start learning Pro.
Pro wiz	Pro.
Small collection managed by one person	AGO or any.
Large collection managed by a group	Pro or ArcCatalog. Keep a repository.
Data has bad metadata, need complete over-write	ArcCatalog Metadata toolbox.

## ArcGIS Online Metadata Editor

- ◆ Runs in a web browser; no custom software install.
- ◆ Deeply-nested interface can be confusing.
- ◆ Metadata stored in Esri cloud.
- ◆ User must have editor- or above licensed access to ArcGIS Online site, configured for metadata.
- ◆ Metadata automatically attached to an AGO Item.
- ◆ Works only with ArcGIS format metadata.
- ◆ Item owner can download ArcGIS xml copy of the metadata.
- ◆ Public user sees only metadata in stylesheet specified by site style.
- ◆ No full-view stylesheet of ArcGIS metadata.
- ◆ Minimal validation.
- ◆ Item metadata can be completely over-written, but does not collect sensitive info.

## ArcGIS Pro Metadata Editor (2.8 and above)

- ◆ Custom PC or Windows Server install.
- ◆ Editor Interface works smoothly; Saves without closing.
- ◆ Metadata can be synchronized with data.
- ◆ Metadata stored with data; standalone xml can be edited.
- ◆ Software must be licensed.
- ◆ Publish data and metadata seamlessly to AGO, or upload metadata to AGO Item.
- ◆ One-button Save As ArcGIS xml file and as nicely formatted full html.
- ◆ One-button Export to xml in Standard FGDC or ISO.
- ◆ One-button ArcGIS template creation from existing metadata.
- ◆ Viewer stylesheet for full ArcGIS metadata.
- ◆ No stylized display of Standard metadata.
- ◆ Commonly shows incorrect validation errors.
- ◆ No complete-overwrite function; must configure Project to avoid collection of geoprocessing steps.
- ◆ Minimal Upgrade function.
- ◆ No Metadata Toolbox – additional functions require ArcPy or ArcObjects programming.
- ◆ No catalog listing of files Pro does not work with (e.g. html, zip).

## ArcCatalog Metadata Editor (10.5.1 and above)

- ◆ Custom PC or Windows Server install.
- ◆ Editor interface clunky; closes on Save, re-opening slow.
- ◆ Metadata can be synchronized with data.
- ◆ Metadata stored with data; standalone xml can be edited.
- ◆ Software must be licensed.
- ◆ Pass-through of metadata from data to layers is limited.
- ◆ Fewer “one-button” functions, but has Metadata Toolbox; tools require configuration.
- ◆ Manual template creation.
- ◆ Viewer stylesheet for full ArcGIS metadata and FGDC-CSDGM metadata.
- ◆ Commonly shows incorrect validation errors.
- ◆ Complete overwrite function with Metadata Importer tool (looks like a hammer).
- ◆ Upgrade from FGDC to ArcGIS xml has tools to deal with leftovers.
- ◆ Can list any Windows file type.
- ◆ Headed for retirement in 2026.