

Taxonomies can take many forms

A good classification functions in much the same way that a theory does, connecting concepts in a useful structure. If successful, it is, like a theory, descriptive, explanatory, heuristic, fruitful, and perhaps also elegant, parsimonious, and robust.

(Kwasnik, 1999)

We ended our previous chapter by saying that taxonomies do not always need to be in a tree format. Our objective in this chapter is to understand the variety of forms that a taxonomy can take, and to appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of each. This grounding will give us added versatility in putting together our taxonomy development strategy later on. These are the taxonomy forms that we'll examine.

- lists
- trees
- hierarchies
- polyhierarchies
- matrices
- facets
- system maps.