A bibliographic collection is a collection of bibliographic records, each of which references a publication (or a work in preparation for publication). Examples of bibliographic collections include a collection of the bibliographic records of all the publications that a single individual has authored, or a collection of those bibliographic records to be included in a paper, expressed as a reference list.

A bibliographic collection is realized through bibliographic lists only and cannot be part of other bibliographic collections. Moreover, it can contain only bibliographic records. A bibliographic record is realized through bibliographic references only, which contain some or all of these entities.

A bibliographic list is always a realization of a bibliographic collection. Moreover, it can contain only items referring to bibliographic references. A bibliographic reference is a realization of a bibliographic record. Moreover, it can contain only items referring to elements contained by the bibliographic record it realizes.

The Bibliographic Reference Ontology (BiRO) is a vocabulary, structured according to the FRBR model, to define bibliographic records (as subclasses of FRBR:Expression), and their compilation into bibliographic collections and bibliographic lists, respectively.