

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CALL NUMBERS

An item's **call number** is a unique number assigned to it so that the item can be shelved and located efficiently. On a book, the call number is usually found on a white label on the spine.

Call numbers in academic libraries usually follow the Library of Congress classification system. Each call number begins with one or two letters that identify the subject area of the item. Those subject areas and their corresponding letter codes are listed on the back of this handout.

Books are arranged on the shelf by their call numbers in alpha-numeric order. A typical call number might look like this:

| | |
|--------------|--------|
| HG | Line 1 |
| 4057 | Line 2 |
| .A217 | Line 3 |
| 1997 | Line 4 |
| v.1 | Line 5 |

Line 1 contains the single letter or two letters that designate the item's subject area. A book whose call number begins with H is followed by books beginning with HA, HB, HC, etc.

Line 2 is a whole number from 1 to 9999. In the section for books beginning with HG, you'll find HG 1, HG 2, HG 3, etc., all the way to HG 9999. Occasionally the whole number is followed by a decimal, such as QA 76.X in computer science.

Line 3 consists of a decimal point, followed by a letter and a number. Books are shelved alphabetically according to the letter to the right of the decimal point. For example, in the section for books whose call numbers begin with HG 4057, you will find HG 4057 .A, then HG 4057 .B, then .C, etc. If two books have the same letter on the third line, then follow the decimal numbers from smallest to largest (for instance, .A217 is shelved before .A3 because .217 is a smaller number than .3).

Occasionally, after the decimal letter and number, Line 3 will have another letter and number. Read these as ascending decimals as well, starting with the letter. For instance, call number PS 3573 .A425 B45 would come before PS 3573 .A425 B9 because .45 is less than .9.

Line 4 is an item's publication year, and books that differ only in their publication year are shelved so that the earliest edition comes first. In other words, HG 4057 .A217 1997 will be shelved before HG 4057 .A217 1998.

Line 5 indicates that there are multiple volumes for a particular work. The first volume will be followed by subsequent volumes.

SUMMARY:

- ◆ Read the first line in alphabetical order: A, B, BF, C, D... L, LA, LB, LC, M, ML...
- ◆ Read the second line as a whole number: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 60, 100, 1000, 2000, 2550, 2551...
- ◆ Read the third line as a combination of a letter and a decimal number: .A2, .A25, .C65, .C7...
- ◆ If the third line has an additional letter and number, read them as decimals in ascending order: .O75 B35, .O75 B4, .O75 C65, .O75 C7, etc.
- ◆ Read the publishing year in chronological order: 1945, 1986, 1992, 1998, 2001, 2005...
- ◆ Read the volume numbers in ascending order: vol. 1, vol. 2., vol. 3...

For more practice using Library of Congress call numbers, visit Truxal Library's website at <http://www.aacc.edu/library>, click on "Tutorials," then "Start the Library Tutorial."

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CALL NUMBERS

A General Works

B Philosophy, Psychology, Religion

B Philosophy
BF Psychology
BL-BX Religion

C Auxiliary Sciences of History

CS Genealogy
CT Biography

D History: General and Old World

E-F History: America

E United States
F United States Local History, Canada,
Central & South America
175-190 Maryland History

G Geography, Anthropology, Recreation

G-GF Geography, Oceanography
GN Anthropology
GV Recreation

H Social Sciences

HA Statistics
HB-HC Economics
HD Land, Agriculture, Industry
HE Transportation and Communication
HF Commerce
HG Finance
HJ Public Finance
HM-HT Sociology
HV Social Pathology, Social and Public
Welfare, Criminology
HX Socialism, Communism, Anarchism

J Political Science

K Law

KF Law of the United States

L Education

M Music

N Fine Arts

NA Architecture
NC Drawing, Design, Illustration
ND Painting
NE Print Media
NK Decorative Arts

P Language and Literature

P Philology and Linguistics
PA Classical Languages & Literature
PB-PH Modern European Languages
PJ-PK Oriental Languages & Literature
PL Languages & Literature of Eastern
Asia, Africa, Oceania
PM American Indian Languages
PN Literary History and Collections
PQ Romance Literatures
PR English Literature
PS American Literature
PT Germanic Literature

Q Science

QA Mathematics
76 Computer Science
QB Astronomy
QC Physics
QD Chemistry
QE Geology
QH Natural History
QK Botany
QL Zoology
QM Human Anatomy
QP Physiology
QR Microbiology

R Medicine

RA Public Aspects of Medicine
RB Pathology
RC Internal Medicine, Practice of Medicine
RM Therapeutics, Pharmacology
RT Nursing

S Agriculture

T Technology

TA-TP Engineering
TR Photography
TS Manufactures
TT Handicrafts, Arts and Crafts
TX Home Economics

U Military Science

V Naval Science

Z Bibliography, Library Science