

What Those Call Numbers Mean: The Library of Congress Classification System

The call number system that we use in this library, which is called the Library of Congress Classification System, is an arrangement by subject. Call numbers in this system begin with one or two letters, which represent broad subject areas. If you know what letter indicates the classification for the subject you need, you can find out what print materials we have in the library relevant to your subject. You can find reference books to help you in that field by browsing the call numbers starting with that letter in the Reference Section on the second floor. You can find out what journals we have in that subject by looking for call numbers beginning with that letter in the Periodicals Area on the first floor. You can even get a general idea of how large a collection of books we have in that field by browsing in that area in the collection of circulating books, on the third or fourth floor. In the catalog, you can do a call number search; if you put in the first part of a call number, it will pull up all of the items with call numbers which begin with that. This brochure contains a general outline of the call number system (it lists only the subjects we think you will most likely be looking for). If you want to see a more detailed outline of the call number system for a field of study that you are interested in, go to:

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/catdir/cpsolcco/lcco.html> on World Wide Web.

When you are searching the computer catalog of the library and you find a book that seems to be just what you want, look at other books near it on the shelves (i.e., other books with similar call numbers). They will be about the same subject.

A General

- AE Encyclopedias
- AI Indexes
- AY Almanacs

B Philosophy; Psychology; Religion

- B Philosophy (general)
- BF Psychology; Occult
- BL-BX Religion

C Background Disciplines for History

- CT Biography

D History: General; Europe; Asia; Africa

E History: United States

- E 185 African-Americans

F History: Individual States and Other parts of North and South America

F 281-295 Georgia

G Geography and Anthropology

G Atlases
GR Folklore
GT Customs
GV Sports and Recreation

H Social Sciences

HA Statistics
HE-HJ Economics and Business
HM-HX Sociology and Social Issues

J Political Science and Government

JF-JQ Political Institutions and
Public Administration
JX International Law

K Law

L Education

LB Theory and Practice
LC Special Education
LD, etc. Higher Education

M Music

N Art

P Language and Literature

PE English Language, including dictionaries
PN Literature (general)
PR English Literature
PS American Literature

Q Science

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

QR Microbiology

R Medicine

RC Psychiatry

RT Nursing

S Agriculture

T Technology

TX Family and Consumer Sciences

U-V Military Sciences

Z Books, Libraries, and Bibliography

A library classification is a system of coding and organizing library materials (books, serials, audiovisual materials, computer files, maps, manuscripts, realia) according to their subject and allocating a call number to that information resource. Similar to classification systems used in biology, bibliographic classification systems group entities that are similar together typically arranged in a hierarchical tree structure (assuming none-faceted system). The Library of Congress didn't want to develop a universally applicable system, but to make the classification of its own collection more efficient for users to access it. Why was the goal of the Library of Congress different from the goal of the DDC? Philosophical and universal. Despite the fact that LCC was designed for one library, the collection of the Library of Congress was so large and acquisitions were so diversified that the resulting scheme can be, and is, widely used by other libraries. Who are the primary users of LCC? The scheme is best suited to larger collections. After the decimal, numbers are treated as decimals, which means that a call number such as Z675.M94 A53 will file before Z675.M94 A6. After the decimal, what are numbers treated as? A call number is like an address: it tells us where the book is located in the library. Call numbers appear from top to bottom, on the spines of books: LB 2395 .C65 1991 and, from left to right, in the online catalog: LB2395 .C65 1991. Honolulu Community College Library, like many academic libraries in the U.S., uses Library of Congress Classification for call numbers. This system uses a combination of letters and numbers to arrange materials by subjects. Reading Call Numbers. Read a call number by sections, or line-by-line. What does the call number mean? Remember that Library of Congress Classification arranges materials by subjects. The first sections of the call number represent the subject of the book.