

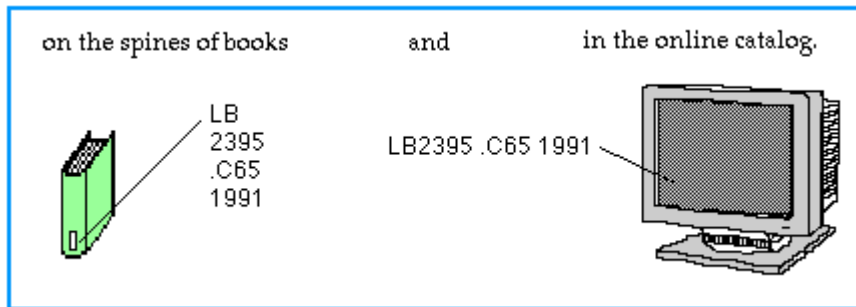
Library of Congress Call Numbers

Understanding Library of Congress (LC) Call Numbers

Our catalog uses the Library of Congress classification system for our textbooks, professional and reference materials. LC is an alphanumeric system which groups books by subject categories, or classes. Below, we explain what a call number is, how to read call numbers, the shelving and filing rules of call numbers, and LC classification.

What is a call number?

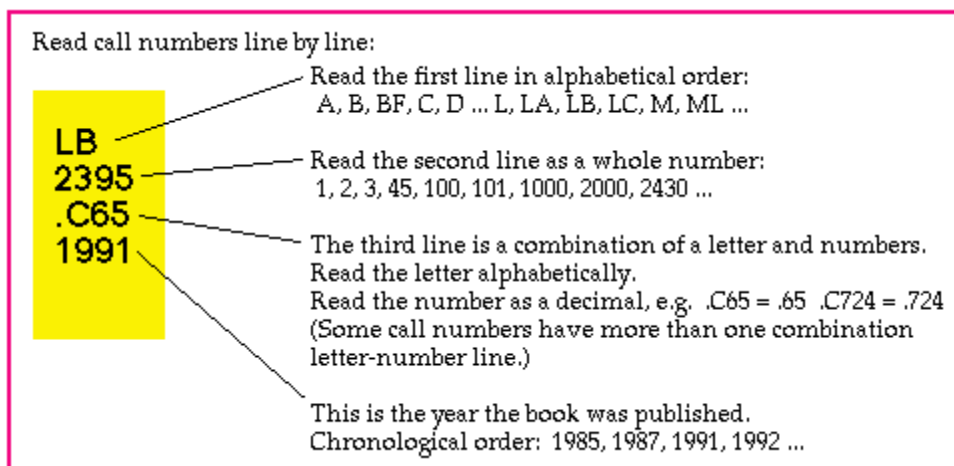
A call number is like an address; it tells you where the book is located on the shelf. Each book, CD-ROM, journal, etc., has its own unique call number which is attached to the book's spine. A book's call number also appears in the catalog entry in the library's online catalog (OPAC).



Reading Call Numbers

The Library of Congress arranges materials by subject, or 'class'. The first section of the call number represents the subject of the book. The second section often represents the author's name, and the last section is the date of publication.

In the following example of a call number for the book "What you need to know about developing study skills" by Marcia J. Coman published in 1991. LB2395 is the subject (Methods of Study), .C65 represents the author's last name (Coman), and 1991 is the year of publication.



Shelving/Filing Rules of LC Call numbers

Single letters are filed before double letters:

Q	QC	QL	R	RA
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The second part of a call number is made up of a number that may have one or more digits. This line is read numerically (as whole numbers) . A call number with a smaller number is shelved before one that has a larger number. Some of these numbers may be divided by a point: these are also read numerically (smaller numbers are shelved before larger numbers).

QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA	QA
70.5	75	76	76.15	76.16	76.17	76.2	76.25	77

The third part is the trickiest part of the call number. This part of the call number is called the "cutter". The numbers in this part are treated like decimals. Follow these general rules when dealing with cutter numbers:

1. Treat the letter of the cutter number alphabetically. For example, cutter numbers beginning with **.B** are shelved before those starting with **.E**.
2. Smaller first digits after the letter are shelved before larger ones. For example, all cutter numbers beginning with **.E3** would be shelved before all cutter numbers beginning with **.E4**, and those would be shelved before cutters beginning with **.E8**.
3. Smaller second, third, etc. digits are shelved before larger ones. For example, cutters beginning with **.E35** are shelved before cutters beginning with **.E39**. Likewise, for the third number: **.E353** is shelved before **.E355** and **.E359**.
4. Items with only one digit after the letter are shelved before items with multiple digits beginning with the same number(s). So, the cutter number **.E3** is shelved before **.E35** , which is shelved before **.E359**.

QL	QL	QL	QL	QL	QL	QL	QL	QL	QL	QL
60	60	60.4	60.5	60.5	70	70	70	70	70	83.15
.B5	.D66	.F35	.E359	.E39	.E393	.E4	.F66	.K7	.K777	.S39

Sometimes there are TWO cutter numbers in a call number. The first cutter, in these cases, is related to the subject of the work. The second cutter is related to the author. The shelving order of the second cutter follows the same four rules described above.

QE	QE	QE	QE	QE	QE	QE	QL	QL
787	787	862	862	862	862	862	84.4	84.5
.C59	.C59	.D5	.D5	.D5	.D5	.D5	.E8	.I4
C66	S27	L22	L35	L457	L46	M37	B62	B63

Sometimes, the top of the call number has the item's location: "Ref" for Reference Shelf, etc. The final lines of the call numbers may include copy numbers, issue numbers, volume indicators and other annotations such as supplement or index specifiers. For example, the call numbers below are shelved in Reference:

In the ERL, Reference materials have the location printed on the spine label - as illustrated to the right. However, we have not added location words to all of our professional materials. Instead, we have added colored tapes to the tops of the spines to designate various locations in the ERL:

Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
QL	QL	QL	QL	QL
45	45	46	46	46
.A6	.A6	.D55	.D55	.D55
2001	2001	1999	1999	1999
c.1	c.2	v.1	v.2	plates

Reference - RED
Professional materials – PURPLE
Textbooks - YELLOW
Lean Collection – GOLD

