



Understanding call numbers

Most college and university libraries use the Library of Congress Classification System (LC) to organize materials. Every item in our collection is assigned a unique call number, or address - based on the subject and publication details. Library materials are shelved in call number order, and other titles on a similar topic will be shelved nearby.

Read the call number top-to-bottom, line by line

The first line will tell you if the book is located in a specific collection area in the library. REF indicates that the book is shelved in the Reference section.

2nd line: Most call numbers begin with one or two letters. The first letter represents the major division or "class" within LC. Ex. Q = Science. The second letter represents a subdivision within the class. Ex. QH = Natural history (general). For more information about LC classification, visit www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsolcc. In some areas of LC, call numbers begin with three letters. Read this line in alper order,