

# Understanding Call Numbers

## The Library of Congress (LC) Classification System

jc 10/00

Call numbers appear like this, from top to bottom,  
on the spines of books:

**LB**  
**2395**  
**.P3**  
**1993**

and like this, from left to right, in the online catalog:

**LB2395 .P3 1993**

### Reading a Call Number

Read a call number by sections, line-by-line:

**LB**  
**2395**  
**.P3**  
**1993**

**LB** – Read in alphabetical order

A, B, BF, C, D ... K, KF, KFS, L, LA, LB, LC, M ...

**2395** – Read as a whole number

1, 2, 3, ... 23, ... 200, 230 ... 2000, 2300, 2390, 2395, 2400

**.P3** – Read the letter alphabetically

A, B, C, D, ... P, Q, R, ... X, Y, Z

Read the number as a decimal

e.g. P3 = .3

P34 = .34

P345 = .345

**1993** – Read this chronologically, this is the date the book was published  
1979, 1985, 1992, 1999 ...

### The following Call Numbers are in Order:

LA2301 .M37

LB1771 .K55

LB1771 .T47 1987

LB2301 .E38

LB2301 .N2

LB2301 .N27

LB2301 .N271 1948

LB2325 .K43 1963

LB2325 .K43 1972

(LB comes after LA)

(Both start with LB1771, T comes after K)

(2301 comes after 1771)

(N comes after E)

(.N27 comes after .N2)

(Decimal 271 comes after 27)

(Same call number except for date, 1972 comes after 1963)

## What the Call Numbers Mean

Like many other academic libraries, Clemson uses the Library of Congress Classification System, which arranges materials by subject. The first section of the call number (letter or letters) represents the broad subject category of the book. The second section of the call number (letter and number) often represents the author's last name. The last section of the call number represents the date of publication. Consider the example we've been using:

Title:	How to Study in College	◆ <b>LB2395</b>	Subject of the book: Study Skills
Author:	Walter Pauk	◆ <b>.P3</b>	Pauk, the author's last name
Call Number:	LB2395 .P3 1993	◆ <b>1993</b>	The publication year

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### **The following chart lists the general subject categories of the LC Classification Scheme:**

A	General Works	PS	American Literature
B	Philosophy-Religion-Psychology	PT	Germanic Literature
C	History (Civilization)	Q	Science
D	History (Except America)	QA	Mathematics
E	American History	QB	Astronomy
F	Local American, Latin American History	QC	Physics
G	Geography-Anthropology	QD	Chemistry
H	Social Sciences	QE	Geology
J	Political Science	QH	Biology
K	Law	QK	Botany
L	Education	QL	Zoology
M	Music Scores	QM	Human Anatomy
ML	Music (Literature of Music)	QP	Physiology
N	Fine Arts	QR	Microbiology
P	Linguistics	R	Medicine
PC	Romance Languages	S	Agriculture
PD	Germanic Languages	T	Technology
PE	English Language	U	Military Science
PQ	Romance Literature	V	Naval Science
PR	English Literature	Z	Bibliography Library Science

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Because books are classified by subject, you can often find other helpful books on the same shelf, or on nearby shelves. For example, within the call number used in the examples above, (LB2395) there are other guides to study skills:

LB2395 .A34	Getting good grades : how to succeed in college
LB2395 .C6 1991	What you need to know about developing study skills
<b>LB2395 .P3 1993</b>	<b>How to study in college</b>
LB2395 .S93 1990	The college student's handbook for better grades, job search, and career success
LB2395 .T4 1991	Teaching reading and study strategies at the college level

## Locating a Book in Cooper Library

The library's online catalog record indicates both a location and call number for materials. If the location is simply "Cooper Library", then the first letter of the call number determines the floor where the item will be shelved. Consult the chart below to determine whether the material is on Level 1, 2, 5, or 6 of Cooper Library. If the material is in a special location, check the location chart below the call number chart to determine its location.

A – K	Level 1
L – P	Level 2
Q – R	Level 5
S – Z	Level 6

Architecture Library	112 Lee Hall
Chemistry Library	205 Hunter Chemistry Building
Federal Documents	Public Documents, Cooper Library, Level 3
Juvenile	Cooper Library, Level 2
Popular Reading	Cooper Library, Level 4
Reference	Reference Collection, Cooper Library, Level 4
Reserves and Media	Cooper Library, Level 2
Special Collections	Strom Thurmond Institute
S.C. State Documents	Public Documents, Cooper Library, Level 3

## Locating a Magazine or Journal in Cooper Library

All of our periodicals (magazines and journals) are arranged by call number. Each title has its own unique call number, and the call number is the same regardless of format: e.g. *Science* is call number Q1 .S41 for current issues, bound volumes, and microfilm.

Generally, *bound periodicals* (magazines or journals which have hard covers, like a book) are arranged by call number just as if they were a regular book. Therefore, the first letter of the call number of the periodical determines where it is located. Check the chart above to see which call numbers are shelved on which floors.

These are listed in the online catalog as *Library Has*.

e.g. LIBRARY HAS: v.1 (1984) – v.10 (1993)

*Current issues* of periodicals (magazines or journals) are those that are not yet bound into hard covers. These loose issues are also arranged by call number. Most often, these current issues are located in the Current Periodicals Area on Level 4.

Occasionally, current issues of heavily used magazines are kept in the Reserve Room on Level 2. Current issues are listed in the online catalog, with a note telling the location.

e.g. CURRENT ISSUES: v.3:no.12 (2000:Dec.)

Current Issues in Periodicals Area, Level 4

*Microfilm* and *microfiche* issues of periodicals are arranged by call number in the Reserve and Media Room on Level 2.