


Understanding Call Numbers

What's the purpose of call numbers?

Each book in the library has a unique call number. The call number is like an address telling us where the book is located. They are usually attached to the spine of the book and found in the library's catalogues. Each call number represents one item in the library.

What does the call number mean?

The *Library of Congress Classification System*, used by most academic libraries, arranges materials by subject. The first sections of the call number represent the subject of the book. The letter and decimal section of the call number represents the author's last name. And, as you probably can tell, the last section of a call number is often the date of publication.

 <p>Title: <i>What You Need to Know About Developing Study Skills, Taking Notes & Tests, Using Dictionaries & Libraries</i> Author: Coman, Marcia J. Call number LB2395 .C65 1991</p>	<p>The first two lines describe the subject of the book. LB2395 = Methods of Study, in Higher Education</p> <p>This line often represents the author's last name. .C65 = Coman</p> <p>The year the book was published.</p>
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Why is this important to know?

Knowing how to locate a book using its call number will save you time. As well, because books are classified by subject, you'll be able to find other helpful books on the same shelf or nearby. Each shelving unit in the Cape Breton University Library has a sign detailing the range of call numbers you can expect to see in a certain row.

Books published in the Sciences usually have call numbers beginning with the letter Q; Nursing and Health – R; Psychology - BF and Technologies – T.

See the classification number scheme in more detail: [Library of Congress](#)