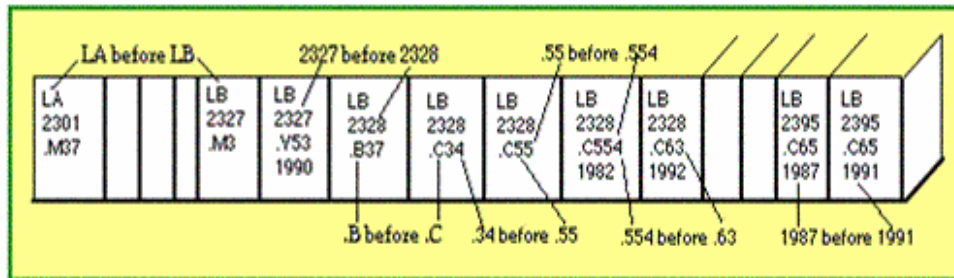




# How to Read Library of Congress Call Numbers



Library of Congress call numbers can be confusing since they contain a letter or letters followed by whole numbers, and then a letter followed by decimal numbers. In reading a call number, begin at the top line and read from left to right; then proceed to the next line reading again from left to right as if reading a book.

Starting with the letter(s) at the top left of the call number books *are arranged alphabetically*:

A                      AC                      AG                      AZ                      B                      BC                      BT

Books having the same letter(s) on the top line are all shelved together by the number group that follows the letter(s). *These numbers are arranged numerically and are read as whole numbers*:

F                      F                      F                      F                      F                      F                      F  
1                      21                      75                      101                      175                      200                      2113

When both the letter(s) and the number group that follows are the same, then books are arranged *alphabetically* by the next letter:

QM                      QM                      QM                      QM                      QM                      QM                      QM  
23                      23                      23                      23                      23                      23                      23  
.A                      .B                      .C                      .D                      .E                      .F                      .G

Books which have the same first letter(s), and the same number group that follows, and the same second letter, are then shelved by the next number group. *These numbers are read as decimal numbers, not whole numbers*:

QM                      QM                      QM                      QM                      QM                      QM                      QM  
23                      23                      23                      23                      23                      23                      23  
.E6543                      .E778                      .E88                      .E9                      .E99                      .E995                      .E999

Frequently a call number will have a fourth line which contains a letter and a number or numbers. *The letter in this line is arranged alphabetically, while the number(s) is/(are) arranged decimally*.

QM                      QM                      QM                      QM                      QM                      QM                      QM  
23                      23                      23                      23                      23                      23                      23  
.E6543                      .E778                      .E88                      .E9                      .E99                      .E995                      .E999  
A25                      C6                      F88                      F885                      F9                      H92                      K2

Note: The date of an edition frequently can be determined by its inclusion in the call number. However, the most accurate way of determining the edition date is to consult the information given in the copyright statement of a particular book.