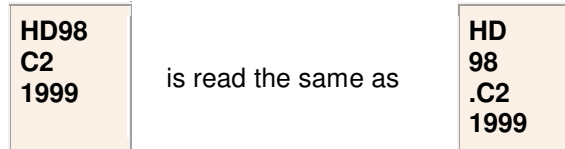


How to Read a Call Number/How to Find a Book

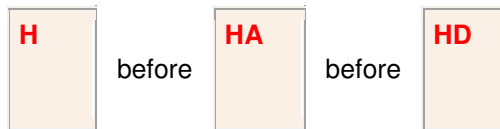
at Dyersburg State Community College
Fall 2015

Each book in the LRC/Library has a unique **call number**. A call number is like an address: it identifies where the book is located. Call numbers appear on the spine of books, and sometimes on other library items in the collection. This LRC, like many college and university libraries, uses the Library of Congress Classification for call numbers. This system uses a combination of letters and numbers to arrange materials by subjects, and may appear in two different formats as seen below.



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

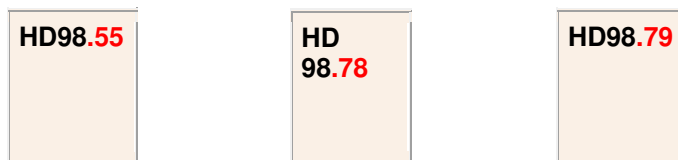
The **first part** of a call number contains letters. These letters are read **alphabetically**:



The **second part** of the call number contains numbers which are read as a **whole number**:



This second part of the call number **may or may not** contain a decimal component:



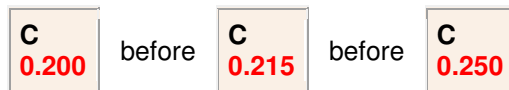
But the **third part** is the only real tricky part. It consists of letters and then a sequence of numbers.

Point # 1. Items are placed first in **alphabetical** order by the letter, then **numerically** according to the sequence of numbers.

Point # 2. All numbers in this line are treated as if they were preceded by a **decimal**: see examples.

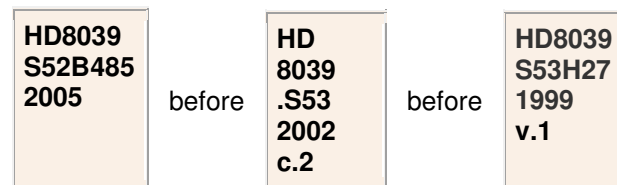


This makes sense if you read the numbers as decimals, because:



200 then .215 then .250

The **fourth part**: The final lines of the call number may include dates, volume indicators, issue numbers, copy numbers, and other annotations. These annotations are read after the call number.



Note: It is important to be sure to write down the COMPLETE call number! Do not leave any parts of the number out.

Location Prefixes:

Some call numbers are preceded by a location prefix indicating that the item is shelved in a specific location. For example:

Ref - Reference item located on the Reference shelves in Reference section.

Oversize – The item is too tall to fit on the regular shelving unit and is shelved in a special section of shelving.

AARC – Items part of the African American Resource Collection and shelved in a special section. If you have any questions about locating any item in the LRC, contact any LRC staff member or the DSCC Help

Desk for assistance.

Borrowed and updated August 21, 2015 by Susan J. Charley

