

KF  
801  
.G54  
1995

KF  
801  
.K74  
2007

KF  
801  
.L27  
1980

KF  
801  
.L46  
2009

# UNDERSTANDING CALL NUMBERS

# CALL NUMBERING SYSTEMS

The easiest way to tell what type of call number you have is to see whether it starts with a letter or number. If it begins with a letter, it's probably **Library of Congress (LC)**. The LC classification system is used in most academic libraries in the United States. If it starts with a number, it's **Dewey**. The Dewey Decimal system is used primarily in public and school libraries. There's one other classification system called **Superintendent of Documents (SuDoc)** which is used for government documents. These call numbers are distinctive in that they often have colons (:), and slashes (/), where LC and Dewey do not.

**We use all three systems in the Stewart Library.**

## Library of Congress

used mostly in academic libraries

begins with a letter

Examples:

LB3621.5.D3 2000  
GV545.52.H64F35 1999

## Dewey Decimal

used in school and public libraries

begins with a number

Examples:

320.01M645p 1982  
525.J175j

## Superintendent of Documents

used to classify materials published by the U.S. government

may have colons (:), and slashes (/)

Examples:

ED 1.1/3:992  
LC 1.2:AR 7/3/2002

## HOW TO READ LC AND DEWEY CALL NUMBERS

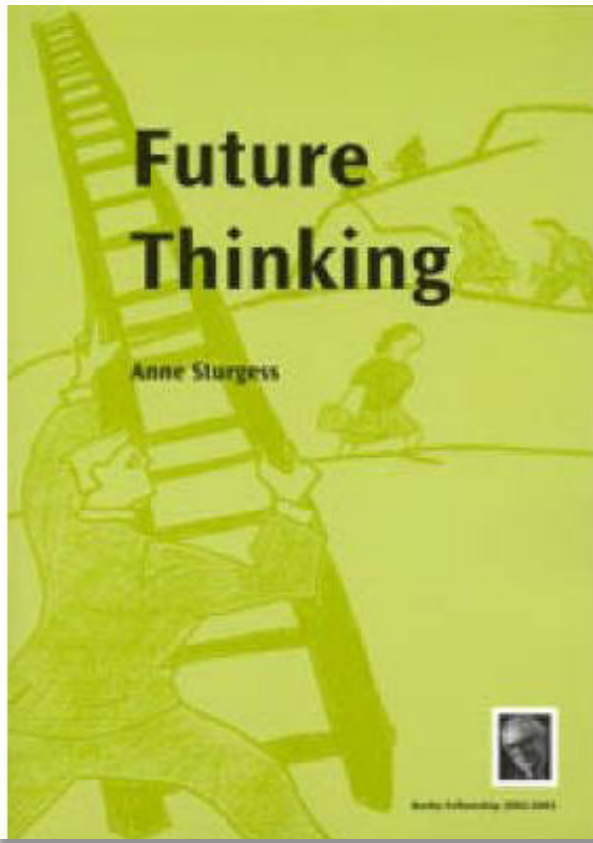


Image courtesy of Google Books

Dewey  
↓



The Dewey call number for the book *Future Thinking* by Anne Sturges is: 370.152 STU

The top number identifies that this book belongs to the category of education.

The letters below are based on the last name of the author, Sturges.

LC  
↓



The LC call number for this same book is: BF441.S79 2004

The BF identifies that this book belongs to the category of psychology. Adding the 441 focuses it more specifically on the general topic of the psychology of learning and learning strategies.

The S is based on the last name of the author, Sturges.

2004 is the year this book was published.

## PUTTING DEWEY & LC IN ORDER

All numbers in LC are read alpha-numerically. *L* comes before *LA*, which comes before *LB*. *LA1* comes before *LA 120*, and so on.

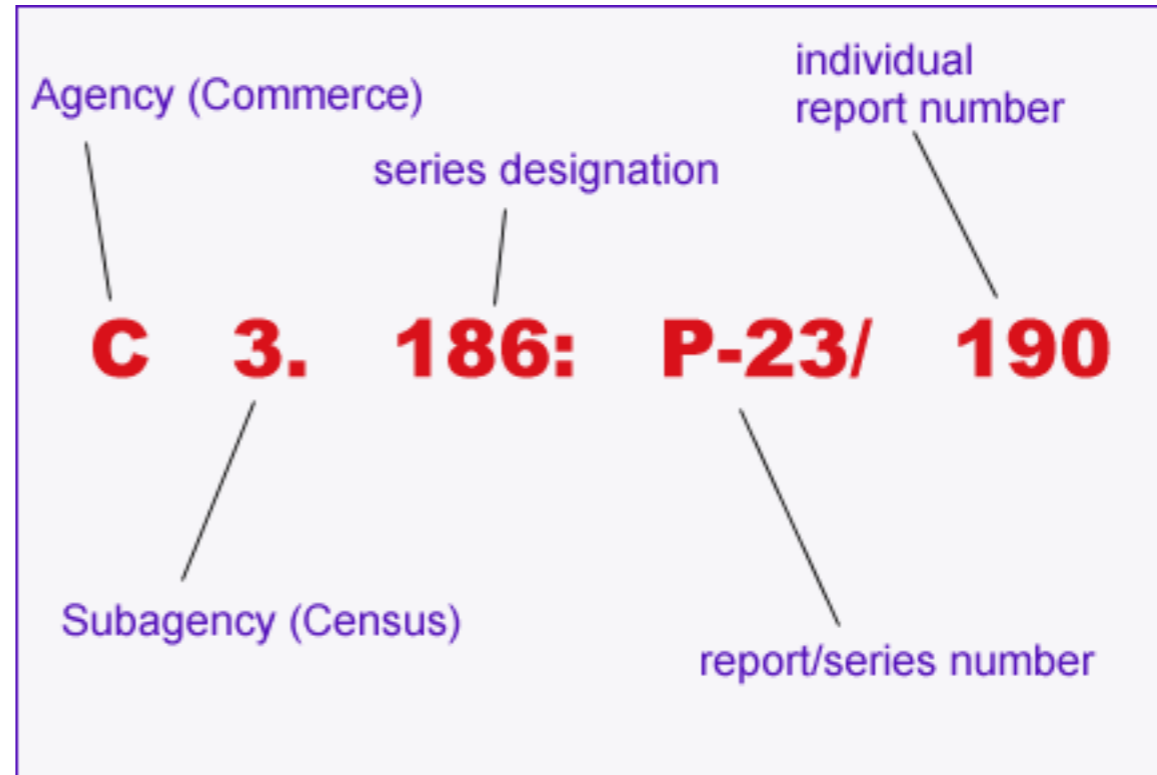
Dewey numbers begin with a number, for example *370.152 STU*. The first number (370) is read as a whole number. Treat the rest as a decimal, e.g. 370.152 would come between 370.15 and 370.16. Then work alphabetically to find the letter (*S*). Sometimes there are numbers after the letter. If this is the case, read these numbers as decimals.

1. 370.15 VAN
2. 370.152 STU
3. 370.16 MCO
4. 372.42 SP
5. 373.52 IPO

1. LA1 .P342
2. LA120 .H2 P47
3. LB247. P38 S6
4. LB348 .Z48
5. LB348 .Z56

## SUDOCs CALL NUMBERS

The SuDocs call numbering system was created for materials that are published by the U.S. Government.



The basis of this system is to group together Government Publications by author, which is the department or agency that issued the publication. For example, information produced by the Department of Agriculture is found in the A's, and information produced by the Health and Human Services Department may be found in HE.

In this example, the agency that published this source is the Department of Commerce. The subagency is the Census, and the series is 186. The report number indicates a unique publication within the series, and may consist of numbers or letters and numbers with punctuation. Punctuation includes colons, periods, slashes and dashes, all of which separate segments of the call number.



For a short video that walks you through all three call numbering systems, visit:  
<https://library.weber.edu/researchandteaching/lib1704/Videos/CallNumbers>