

How to Read Call Numbers

- What is a **Call Number**?

Each item in the library (book, DVD, CD) has its own unique number, a **Call Number**. These numbers are assigned based on the item's **subject**, or what it is about. Items are arranged on the shelves using these numbers.

- Why do I need to know how to read call numbers?

The call number is what will get you from the catalog to the actual book on the shelf. It's like an address, telling you where to find a given item.

- Once you find an item in the catalog, how can you locate it in the library?

Let's take a closer look:

Ghost world /	
Title:	Ghost world / Daniel Clowes.
Main Author:	Clowes, Daniel.
Subjects:	Teenage girls--United States--Comic books, strips, etc. Graphic novels.
Publisher:	Seattle, Wash. : Fantagraphics Books, 2007, c1998.
Description:	14th softcover ed. 80 p. : chiefly ill. ; 26 cm.
Notes:	"Now a major motion picture." Cover title.
Summary:	A collection of eight interconnected stories follows the friendship between two teenage girls, Enid and Rebecca.
Holdings Information	
Location:	North Campus Circulating Collection (second floor)
Call Number:	<u>PN6727.C56G6.2007</u>
Number of Items:	1
Status:	Available

On the shelf, this number will be on several lines.

Note: Items whose call number begins with “REF” will be in the **reference collection** on the first floor.

Finding your book

To find the book on the shelves,
decode the call number line by line:

1. PN
2. 6727
3. .C65G6
4. 2007

1. PN

Read the first line in alphabetical order: A, B, BF, C... L, LA, LB, LC, M, ML...

2. 6727

Read the second line as a whole number: 1, 2, 45, 100, 101, 1000, 2000, 2430...

3. .C56G6 → .C56, G6

The third line has both a letter and numbers; some items have more than one set.

Read the letter(s) alphabetically: A, AZ, B...

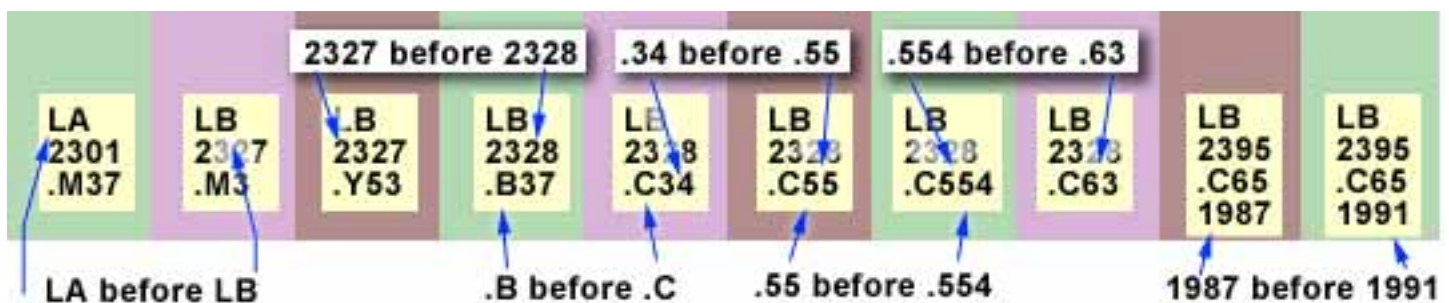
Read the number(s) as a decimal: C624 = .624, C65 = .65.

Question: Would C624 or C75 come first on the shelf?*

4. 2007

The last line is the year the book was published. Read in order: 1985, 1991...

Need more? Here is a shelf of books with the call number order explained:



(picture from http://www.usg.edu/galileo/skills/unit03/libraries03_04.phtml)

*Answer: .C624. Why? 624 is bigger than 65, but .65 is bigger than .624.