

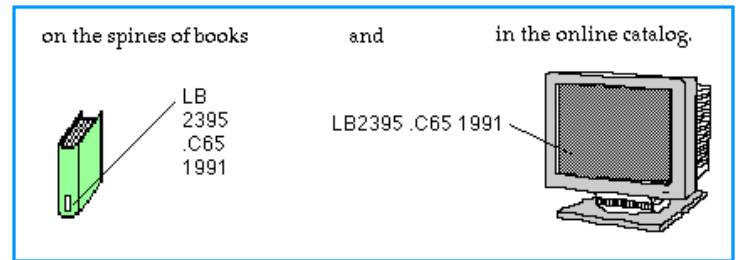
# UNDERSTANDING CALL NUMBERS

## What is a Call Number?

A call number is like an address: it tells us where the book is located in the library. Each book in the library has its own unique call number.

Note that the same call number can be written from top-to-bottom, or left-to-right.

Call numbers appear:



## Reading Call Numbers

Rio Hondo College Library uses the Library of Congress Classification System for call numbers. This system uses a combination of letters and numbers to arrange materials by subject.

An abbreviated guide to the letters on the first line of LC call numbers can be found on the reverse side of this handout.

Read call numbers line by line:

LB  
2395  
.C65  
1991

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

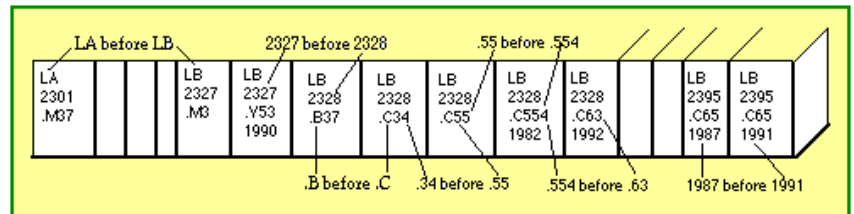
Read the second line as a whole number:  
1, 2, 3, 45, 100, 101, 1000, 2000, 2430 ...

The third line is a combination of a letter and numbers.  
Read the letter alphabetically.  
Read the number as a decimal, e.g. .C65 = .65 .C724 = .724  
(Some call numbers have more than one combination letter-number line.)

This is the year the book was published.  
Chronological order: 1985, 1987, 1991, 1992 ...

## Finding Call Numbers on the Shelf

To understand how call numbers are put in order in Library of Congress Classification, look at each section of the call number:



## Understanding Call Numbers

The first 2 sections of the call number represent the subject of the book. The next section, beginning with a letter, usually represents the author's last name. The last line gives the year the book was published.



Title: *What You Need to Know About Developing Study Skills. Taking Notes & Tests. Using Dictionaries & Libraries*

Author: Coman, Marcia J.

Call number LB2395 .C65 1991

The first two lines describe the subject of the book.  
LB2395 = Methods of Study, in Higher Education

This line often represents the author's last name.  
.C65 = Coman

The year the book was published.

LB  
2395  
.C65  
1991