

ORGANIZING THE BOOK COLLECTION



Topics

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Special collections

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Shelf work



Classification is the organization of library materials into groups or classes based on some common characteristic. Materials are commonly sorted by format, subject and the age of the intended user. Arranging library materials in a logical way encourages and facilitates use. This section of the *Sourcebook* deals only with books. Materials such as audiovisual items, pamphlets and periodicals are discussed in a separate section of the *Sourcebook*.

NON-FICTION

The type of classification which serves the needs of users most effectively is one which arranges materials according to their subject content. There are a variety of subject classification methods available for use in libraries including the Dewey Decimal Classification system.

The advantages of using a classification system are as follows:

- materials are arranged in a logical and orderly manner
- materials on the same subject are shelved together to facilitate browsing, and related materials are located nearby
- materials are assigned a classification number based on subject content and this number serves as a location symbol or “address”, allowing materials to be retrieved quickly and reshelfed accurately
- new items which have been added to the collection can be interfiled at the appropriate place
- the method can be used with material in any format



Dewey Decimal Classification

The classification system used most widely in North American public libraries is the Dewey Decimal Classification. The latest edition, the 20th, of this classification system was published in 1989 as a four volume work entitled *Dewey decimal classification and relative index*. In this section, the Dewey Decimal Classification system will be referred to as DDC or DDC20. A one volume abridged edition is also available. The current abridged version is the 12th edition.

The advantages of using the DDC system are:

- o this system is in use in public libraries across North America and is constantly monitored and revised
- o since this system is widely used, both readers and staff are familiar with it

Schedules

In DDC, all knowledge is grouped by discipline into ten main classes. These ten classes are divided into 100 divisions which can be further divided into 1000 sections.

The classes, divisions and sections are outlined in three summaries. The detailed breakdown of the classification system is provided in the schedules contained in Volumes 2 and 3 of DDC20.

The ten main classes, defined by the DDC system, are as follows:

000	Generalities (works whose subject content is too general to fit elsewhere)
100	Philosophy and psychology
200	Religion
300	Social sciences
400	Language
500	Natural sciences and mathematics
600	Technology (Applied sciences)
700	The arts
800	Literature and rhetoric
900	Geography and history



When each class is divided into ten divisions, the result is the 100 divisions depicted in the following chart:

The 100 Divisions

000	GENERALITIES
010	Bibliography
020	Library & information sciences
030	General encyclopedic works
040	
050	General serials and their indexes
060	General organizations & museology
070	News media, journalism, publishing
080	General collections
090	Manuscripts & rare books
100	PHILOSOPHY & RELATED DISCIPLINES
110	Metaphysics
120	Epistemology, causation, humankind
130	Paranormal phenomena
140	Specific philosophical schools
150	Psychology
160	Logic
170	Ethics (Moral philosophy)
180	Ancient, medieval, Oriental philosophy
190	Modern Western philosophy
200	RELIGION
210	Natural theology
220	Bible
230	Christian theology
240	Christian moral & devotional theology
250	Christian orders & local church
260	Christian social theology
270	Christian church history
280	Christian denominations & sects
290	Other & comparative religions
300	SOCIAL SCIENCES
310	General statistics
320	Political science
330	Economics
340	Law
350	Public administration
360	Social services; association
370	Education
380	Commerce, communications, transport
390	Customs, etiquette, folklore



400	LANGUAGE
410	Linguistics
420	English & Old English
430	Germanic languages German
440	Romance languages French
450	Italian, Romanian, Rhaeto-Romanic
460	Spanish & Portuguese languages
470	Italic languages Latin
480	Hellenic Classical Greek
490	Other languages
500	NATURAL SCIENCES & MATHEMATICS
510	Mathematics
520	Astronomy & allied sciences
530	Physics
540	Chemistry & allied sciences
550	Earth sciences
560	Paleontology Paleozoology
570	Life sciences
580	Botanical sciences
590	Zoological sciences
600	TECHNOLOGY (APPLIED SCIENCES)
610	Medical sciences Medicine
620	Engineering & allied operations
630	Agriculture
640	Home economics & family living
650	Management & auxiliary services
660	Chemical engineering
670	Manufacturing
680	Manufacture for specific uses
690	Buildings
700	THE ARTS
710	Civic & landscape art
720	Architecture
730	Plastic arts Sculpture
740	Drawing & decorative arts
750	Painting & paintings
760	Graphic arts Printmaking & prints
770	Photography & photographs
780	Music
790	Recreational & performing arts



800	LITERATURE & RHETORIC
810	American literature in English
820	English & Old English literature
830	Literatures of Germanic languages
840	Literatures of Romance languages
850	Italian, Romanian, Rhaeto-Romanic
860	Spanish & Portuguese literatures
870	Italic literatures Latin
880	Hellenic literatures Classical Greek
890	Literatures of other languages
900	GEOGRAPHY & HISTORY
910	Geography & travel
920	Biography, genealogy, insignia
930	History of ancient world
940	General history of Europe
950	General history of Asia Far East
960	General history of Africa
970	General history of North America
980	General history of South America
990	General history of other areas

Each of the 100 divisions is further divided into ten sections. The result is a total of 1000 sections.

In main class 300, for example, the division for education (370) is divided into ten sections as follows:

Class 300 SOCIAL SCIENCES

Division 370 Education

Section 371	School management; special education
372	Elementary education
373	Secondary education
374	Adult education
375	Curriculums
376	Education of women
377	Schools & religion
378	Higher education
379	Government regulation, control & support



Beyond the decimal point

Classification numbers can be expanded beyond the class, division and section to express specific aspects of a topic through the addition of a decimal point and one or more numbers to the right of the decimal. The full DDC schedules indicate that the classification number for secondary education (373) can be expanded as follows:

300 SOCIAL SCIENCES

370 Education

373 Secondary education

- .1 Organization and management of secondary education; curriculums
- .2 Types and levels of secondary education
- .22 Public and private
- .222 Private schools
- .224 Public schools
- .23 Levels of secondary schools
- .236 Lower level
- .238 Upper level
- .24 Academic and vocational schools
- .241 Modern academic
- .242 Classical
- .243 Military schools
- .246 Vocational schools
- .2463 Agriculture
- .2464 Home economics
- .2465 Business and commerce
- .2467 Industrial arts

The abridged edition of DDC has a smaller expansion. From the number 373, the breakdown is:

373 Secondary education

- .1 Organization and management of secondary schools; curriculums
- .2 Types and levels of secondary education
- .24 Academic and vocational schools
- .246 Vocational schools
- .3 - .9 Secondary education and schools by specific continents, countries and localities

Classifiers work with schedules which contain a detailed breakdown of the classification scheme and instructions for the building of classification numbers.



Index

The DDC system provides an index to assist the user to locate an appropriate number. In DDC, there is no single place for any subject. Marriage, for example, has aspects which fall under several disciplines such as music, philosophy, sociology and the law. The index of DDC is called a relative index because it gives both the number for the topic and shows the relationship between topics. For example, the entry, **Labour economics** refers to the number 331 in the schedules. The DDC index is organized alphabetically by subject.

Auxiliary tables

Volume 1 of the four volume DDC system contains special tables. These tables specify numbers that can be used in combination with the numbers in the schedules to provide more detailed specifications. Instructions are given in the schedules as to the use of these tables. The tables in DDC20 are:

1. Standard sub-division
2. Geographic area, historical periods, persons
3. Subdivisions for individual literatures, for specific forms
 - 3a. Subdivisions for works by or about individual authors
 - 3b. Subdivisions for works by or about more than one author
 - 3c. Notation to be added where instructed in Table 3b and in 808-809
4. Subdivisions of individual languages
5. Racial, ethnic, national groups
6. Languages
7. Groups of persons

Theoretically, up to 18 digits can be added. However, lengthy classification numbers are confusing and physically difficult to accommodate on the spines of books. Classification numbers should be no longer than absolutely necessary to meet the needs of a given library.

The purpose of a classification number is to group materials on a topic and to provide a location device for efficient retrieval and replacement of items.



In another example, a book entitled *Home gardener 's guide to composting* will be assigned the classification number 631.875. In the progression from the general numbers to the more specific number, the number for compost in the full edition, DDC20, is created as follows:

600 TECHNOLOGY (APPLIED SCIENCES)
 630 Agriculture and related technologies
 631 Specific techniques; apparatus, equipment, materials
 .8 Use of fertilizers and soil conditioners
 .87 Vegetable manures and converted household garbage
 .875 Compost

The abridged edition of DDC only progresses to the number 631.8. With this in mind, consider a small collection with only a few items on a particular topic. The shorter, more general classification number may be more appropriate for these items. In a larger library, with an extensive collection on the topic, longer, more specific classification numbers for each aspect of the topic would be needed.

Needs differ from one library to another. For this reason, purchased catalogue products and cataloguing-in-publication (CIP) information which appears in many published books, often show DDC numbers which are segmented by marks called **prime marks**. These prime marks indicate where a classification number can be shortened without destroying the meaning of the notation.

In the example below, the classification number provided in CIP for the book, *Developing public library collections, policies and procedures* is 025.2'1874 - dc20. This classification number could be shortened at the prime mark and the abbreviated classification number created would still be a meaningful one. The code "dc20" refers to the 20th edition of DDC which was used for the classification.

The components of the classification number and their meanings, as taken from DDC20, are as follows:

025 Operations of libraries, archives, information centers
 .2 Collection development and acquisitions
 .218 Collection development in specific types of institutions
 (Add to the number 025.218 the numbers following 02 in 026-027,
 e.g. collection development in public libraries 025.21874)

If the purchased cataloguing or CIP data for an item is amended at any of the prime marks, ensure that the spine label on the actual item reflects changes made to the catalogue record.



BEYOND THE CLASSIFICATION NUMBER

A classification number assigned according to the subject content of an item is not, in itself, sufficient to identify that item for a library’s purposes. Consider a collection of items on the history of Ontario. Each will be assigned the classification number 971.3, making it difficult to quickly retrieve a particular item.

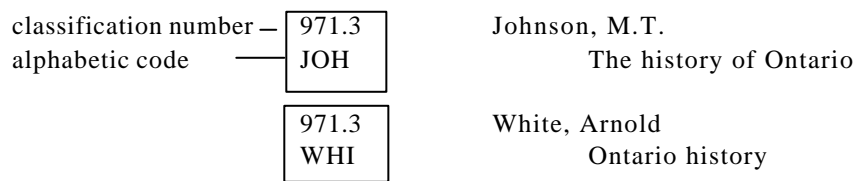
To rectify this problem, an additional alphabetic or alphanumeric code is assigned to each classified item. This code is also called a book number, an author number or Cutter number.

Charles Cutter developed a particular alphanumeric system for assigning author/book numbers and hence his name and the word “number” is associated with the process. The addition of an alphabetic code (book or author or Cutter number) to a classification number completes the call number which appears on the spine of each item and determines its order on the shelf.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{call number} &= \text{classification number} \\ &\text{plus} \\ &\text{alphabetic code (book number)} \end{aligned}$$

The purpose of the book number is to organize items which share the same classification number. The length and complexity of the book number depend on the size of the collection and the needs of the library. Generally three or five letters are used to create a book number. Usually the main entry (generally the author) is the basis for the book number.

For example, consider two books on the history of Ontario, one by Johnson and the other by White. Both share the classification number, 971.3. Once book numbers have been assigned to these items, the resulting call numbers might be as follows:



The book numbers ensure an alphabetical arrangement by author of these two items on the shelf. The call number (classification number plus book number) provides a precise locative symbol which facilitates rapid identification and retrieval of wanted items.



Reference collection

Non-fiction materials which are frequently used to answer questions are generally designated as non-circulating or reference items. Examples of reference materials include dictionaries, encyclopedias, and directories. The individual items which make up the reference collection will vary from one library to another. A book which has been designated as reference in one library may be part of the circulating collection in another. User needs and a book's usefulness in answering questions will determine whether or not it is designated as a reference item.

Reference materials are shelved in a separate section from the circulating non-fiction collection. For each reference item, "R" or "REF" or "Reference" is added to the call number on the spine label and on the cards representing the item in the public catalogue and in the shelflist.

For example:

REF 629.222 EDM

To alert users and staff to these reference materials, they may also be stamped "FOR IN-LIBRARY USE ONLY".

Biographies

The standard practice is to classify biographies according to the Dewey Decimal classification scheme and interfile them with the non-fiction collection. This is a useful approach since it means, for example, that a biography of Wayne Gretzky will be found with the rest of the hockey books. The addition of "B", for biography, to the call number on the spine (and on the catalogue record) assists readers who are looking particularly for biographies.

In some libraries, biographies and autobiographies are housed in a separate section. The addition of "B" to the catalogue record would indicate that the item has been placed in a separate collection. This arrangement favours the browsing patron who just wants to read biographies.

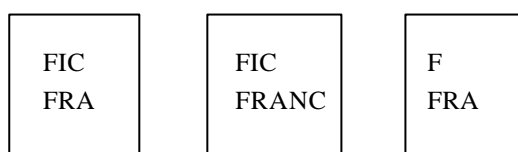
**SPECIAL
NON-FICTION
COLLECTIONS**



FICTION COLLECTION

The Dewey Decimal Classification system does designate numbers for fiction but the fiction collections in most public libraries are arranged using a different system. Most fiction collections are arranged alphabetically by the author's last name. The spine labels for fiction may bear the notation F or FIC and the first three or five letters of the author's last name.

For example, a spine label for *Bolt*, by Dick Francis would be created using either three or five letters depending on the policy of the library and would appear as follows:



Works by a given author can then be arranged alphabetically by title on the shelf, if that arrangement is used in the library.

In some libraries, popular fiction is arranged by type or genre. Genres often separated from the main fiction collection are mysteries, romances, science fiction and westerns. In these libraries, the various genres are identified by a label marked with an appropriate symbol. The romance label, for example, might have a heart on it and the westerns, a cowboy hat.

Each genre is shelved in a separate sequence. Classifying fiction by genre assists those library users who prefer to read certain types of books.

Arranging fiction material on the shelf by genre, however, is not helpful for those readers who have less specific tastes. In some libraries, the appropriate labels indicating westerns, romances, etc. are placed on the spine label of a book, but the material is interfiled on the shelf with the main fiction collection. This arrangement assists readers who like to browse through the entire fiction collection while still enabling the mystery and sci-fi buffs to easily identify a favourite genre.

Labels to indicate genre fiction are available from many library suppliers.



The children's collection is organized in the same way as the adult collection. To indicate the separate level, a "J" for juvenile is often used and appears as part of the call number.

CHILDREN'S COLLECTION

Children's collections also include picture books and easy reading (beginning to read) and board books.

Picture books are shelved separately and their special status may be indicated by the use of "JP" or "E" for juvenile picture book as part of the call number. Easy readers may also be kept in a separate area. Easy readers may be designated by the use of the letters "JE", "E" or some other symbol for juvenile easy reader. There could also be a designation for board books such as "BB". Colour-codes or dots may be used for ease of locating materials. Be sure to be consistent in the collection when assigning these designations.

In some libraries, the children's non-fiction material is integrated, or interfiled, with the adult non-fiction collection. There are benefits and drawbacks to this arrangement. Integration enables both children and adults to select material which is appropriate to their needs in terms of reading level and complexity of content. With integration, the child reading at an advanced level need not be constrained by a standard definition of children's material and the adult with a very basic vocabulary will find suitable material without embarrassment. However, integration may also mean that, without staff assistance, users could easily select inappropriate items.

The children's fiction collection is rarely integrated with the adult fiction collection. The different reading levels and reading interests of children and adults are served more effectively by maintaining separate fiction collections.

Young adults are roughly between the ages of 12 and 17 years. In some libraries, material for young adult readers is separated from the other collections. If such a decision is made, the addition of "YA" to the spine label and catalogue cards will alert users and staff to the special status and location of these materials. Young adult non-fiction is often integrated with the adult non-fiction or, at least, located near the adult collection instead of the children's collection.

YOUNG ADULT COLLECTION



SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Literacy collection

Many adults in Canada cannot read or write and many new Canadians are just learning to read and write in English. The public library can be a source of reading and reference material. An up-to-date literacy collection may consist of fiction and non-fiction materials in a range of reading and interest levels; magazines, books and newsletters written for and by learners; brochures; workbooks; reference books such as dictionaries; and non-print materials.

Organizing a literacy collection represents a special challenge. Where you place a literacy collection and how you arrange, display and promote it will influence its use. It is generally accepted practice that literacy materials be marked with a sticker such as the international literacy symbol or “Adult Literacy Collection”. This collection may be housed in a separate area, often in a highly visible area near the library entrance but it may also be placed in the “regular” collection.

Whether or not to catalogue materials for adult new readers is still under debate. Some believe that the traditional way of organizing a collection can be overwhelming and that, while the material should be tracked, it should be uncatalogued. The material is arranged on the shelf under simple subject headings. Others believe that all materials should be catalogued because they will be easier to locate and that people will learn to use the catalogue. A good resource for organizing a literacy collection is *Libraries and literacy*, published by the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications in 1989.

First Nations collection

The interests and needs of a wide cross-section of the community should be reflected in the library. If there is a large native population in your community, you might consider organizing a special collection of First Nations materials. The collection might consist of material taken from the general collection of the library and material in languages which are appropriate for the community, for example, Cree or Ojibwe.

Ensure that both the item itself, and the entry in the catalogue or bibliographic database, are marked to indicate the location of the material. For example,

FIRST NATIONS 970 YOR

FIRST NATIONS FIC CULLE



Local history collection

In many communities, the library is the only place where local history materials can be stored. A local history collection may consist of pictures of interest to the community; local memorabilia and realia; a book about the community; high school yearbooks; copies of the local newspaper; or even scrapbooks of newspaper clippings.

One of the difficulties in organizing a local history collection is that the materials are usually in a number of different formats. Much of the material may be in a fragile condition and may be the only copy. For this reason, the material should be used in the library and not for circulation. Each item must be identified with the library name.

It is fairly common to integrate non-fiction books in bilingual collections. It is less common to integrate the fiction collections. Catalogues listing the French and English materials are sometimes integrated.

**BILINGUAL
COLLECTIONS**

In libraries which maintain collections of materials in several languages other than English and French, each language is usually kept in a separate, clearly labelled, sequence. Fiction and non-fiction books are also separated in each language grouping. Spine labels should bear appropriate language designators, such as "POL" for Polish materials or "ITA" for materials in Italian. The catalogue records will appear in the language of the book itself and will include translation of the title.

**MULTILINGUAL
COLLECTIONS**

The decision to integrate or separate materials in different formats, for example, magazines, pamphlets and videos, depends on user needs, available space, storage requirements and the maintenance required for each format.

**ORGANIZING
BY FORMAT**

Integration of formats has the advantage of bringing together all materials on a particular subject. Physical realities, however, frequently necessitate separation of formats, for example, pamphlets in a file cabinet, cassettes in a drawer or newspapers on a rack. Materials that are separated by format are easier to handle. Existing storage systems are designed for specific formats and frequently patrons ask for information in a particular format, such as films or periodicals.



Paperback books

Paperbacks fall into two categories -- mass market, printed on a cheap grade of paper and quality paperbacks, printed on a better grade of paper and bound by a more permanent process.

There are a number of ways to organize the paperback material in a library. In most libraries, paperback material is shelved separately from the hardcover material. Within the paperback collection, the material may be organized by genre. In a few libraries, the paperback material is interfiled with the other hardcover materials because of space restrictions or because the materials budget of the library is only large enough to purchase items in the paperback format.

The material may be catalogued with the designation "PB" in the call number. In this way the location of the item is identified by the call number since PB indicates a separate location. In other cases, the material may be arranged as a browsing collection without bibliographic records being created for these items.

Large print books

Large print books are shelved separately to facilitate ease of use. The spine label should be in large typeface. The designation "LP" is added to the call number. Large print books are shelved in the same manner as fiction and non-fiction.

Oversize books

Some books are so large that they cannot be accommodated on regular shelving. This problem is solved in some libraries by shelving all oversized items together in a separate, clearly marked, location where the shelving can be adapted. Oversized items should be shelved flat to minimize damage.

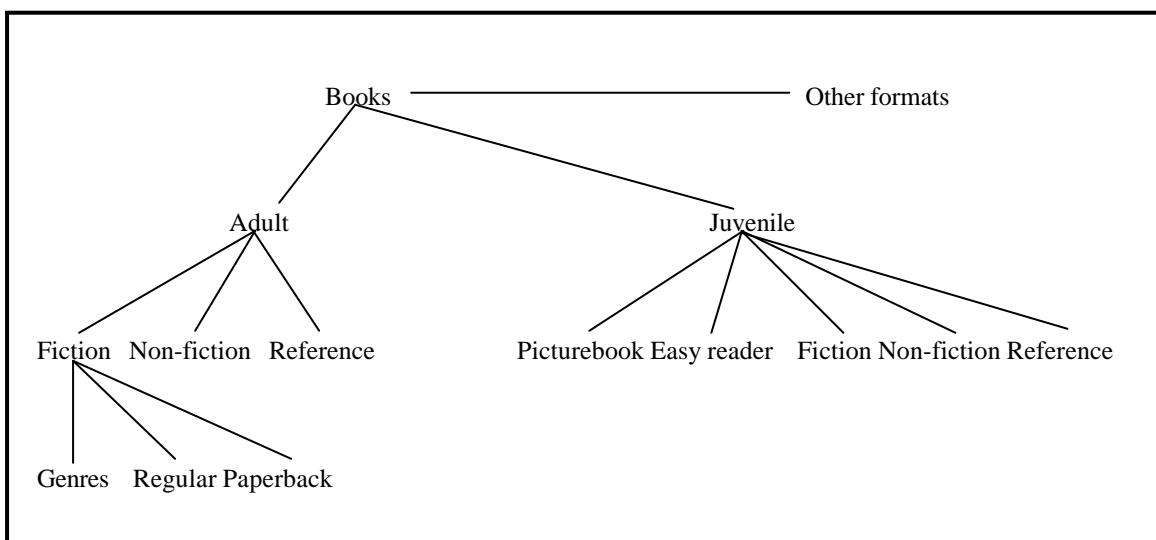
When oversized items are separated from the rest of the collection, the spine labels and catalogue records must indicate the location. The addition of "O" or "Oversize" above the call number helps users locate oversized items and ensures that the items are reshelved in the appropriate spot.



The books to be shelved are sorted into individual collections found in the library, such as:

- o adult non-fiction
- o juvenile non-fiction
- o reference
- o adult fiction (may be sub-divided into genres such as science fiction, mysteries, romance)
- o juvenile fiction
- o picture books
- o easy readers
- o multilingual
- o large print

ARRANGEMENT OF THE COLLECTION

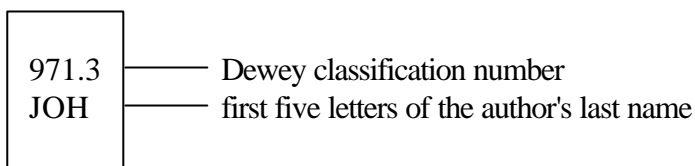


Each of the individual collections is then arranged according to the procedures outlined on the pages which follow:



Adult non-fiction

Symbol on the spine:

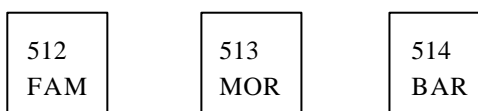


Arrangement on the shelf:

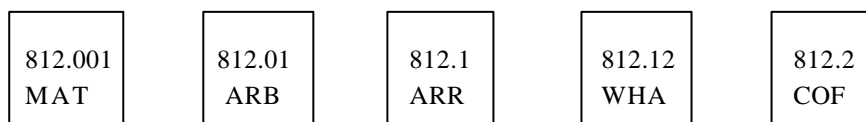
Shelving books classified according to the Dewey Decimal classification scheme is straightforward once the basic principles are understood. These principles are outlined below.

Principles in arranging Dewey classification numbers:

1. Numbers to the left of the decimal point are filed in numeric order.
For example:



2. Numbers to the right of the decimal point are considered to be decimal-fractions. When shelving, smaller fractions precede larger ones. In the next example, the decimal “001” files before “01” because it is smaller. The following call numbers are arranged in the order in which they would appear on the shelves:





When library staff are learning to shelve classified materials, it is sometimes helpful to compare the decimal portion of the call numbers digit by digit. The smaller in such a comparison always files first. For example, in a digit by digit comparison of the decimal portion of 512.02 and 512.2, “0” is compared with “2” and since it is smaller, 512.02 files first.

Alternatively, when faced with a series of call numbers with decimals, one can mentally extend each with zeros until all are the same length. Then the smallest of the resulting “whole numbers” files first. For example, in determining correct shelving order of

512.02	512.2	512.21
--------	-------	--------

mentally add a zero to 512.2 so that all three call numbers are the same length. Upon examination of the result -- 512.02 -- 512.20 -- 512.21 -- it is easy to see that “02” files before “20” which files before “21”.

3. When the first lines of a series of call numbers are identical, drop to the second line and file alphabetically.

For example:

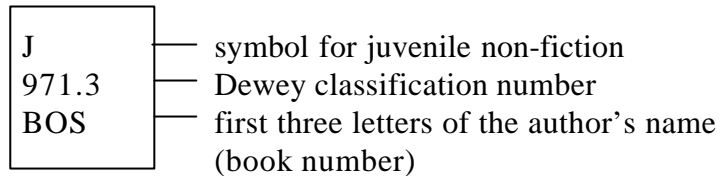
512 BAR	512 BAT	512 CRA
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Since the first line in these three call numbers is identical, filing order is determined on the basis of the second line.



Juvenile non-fiction

Symbol on the spine:

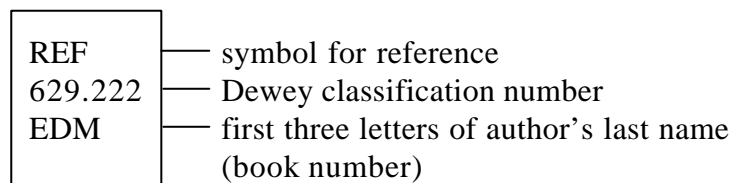


Arrangement on the shelf:

The books are arranged in the same manner as the adult non-fiction collection.

Reference

Symbol on spine:



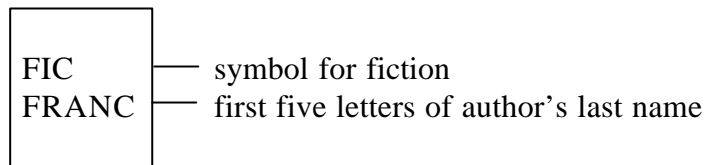
Arrangement on the shelf:

The books are arranged in the same manner as adult non-fiction but shelved in reference section.



Adult fiction

Symbol on the spine:

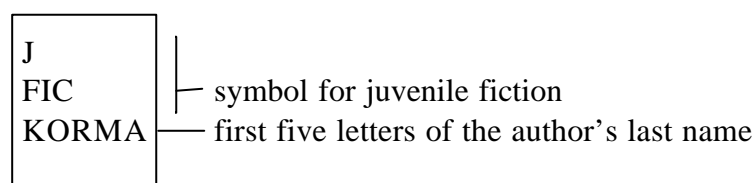


Arrangement on the shelf:

The books are arranged alphabetically by the author's last name, and among books by the same author, the books may then arranged be alphabetically by title.

Juvenile fiction

Symbol on the spine:



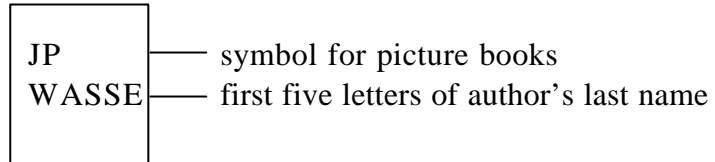
Arrangement on the shelf:

The books are arranged in the same manner as the adult fiction collection.



Picture books

Symbol on the spine:

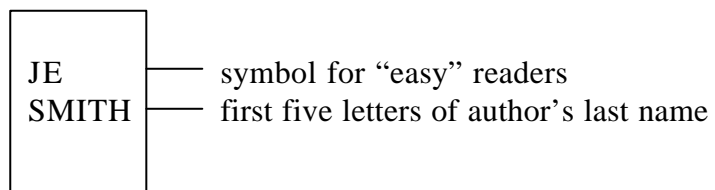


Arrangement on the shelf:

The books are arranged in an alphabetical grouping by first letter of the author's last name in the picture book section.

Easy readers

Symbol on the spine:



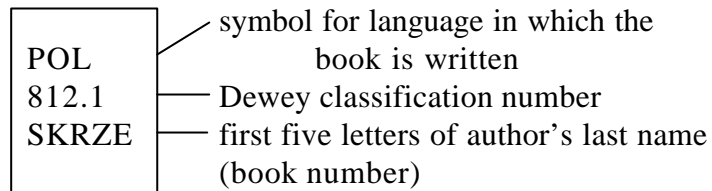
Arrangement on the shelf:

The books are arranged in an alphabetical grouping by first letter of the author's last name in the easy reading section.



Multilingual books

Symbol on the spine:

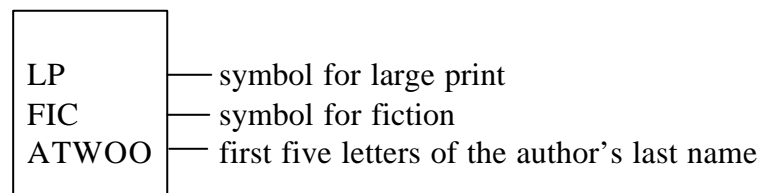


Arrangement on the shelf:

The books are arranged alphabetically by the language symbol, then sub-arranged in numerical order by the classification number and then alphabetically by the first five letters of the author's name.

Large print

Symbol on spine:



Arrangement on the shelf:

The books are arranged in the same manner as fiction but are shelved in a separate large print collection.



SHELF WORK

The principal activities which comprise shelf work are shelving and shelf reading. Shelf work is designed to keep the collection neat, in proper order and attractive to the public.

Shelving

An efficient shelving operation consists of the following steps:

- o pre-sort items according to category.
- o as the items are being sorted, damaged material is set aside. The decision to repair or discard can be made later.
- o as the items are being shelved, some shifting from shelf to shelf may be necessary. Ideally shelves should be two-thirds full because it is difficult to remove books from overfilled shelves.
- o on each shelf, books should be held upright with book-ends.

Shelf reading

Shelf reading, or checking the order of items on the shelves, involves examining the call number of each item to verify that each is in its proper place on the shelf.

Regular shelf reading ensures that all items in the library are in the proper place and easy to find. Heavily-used portions of the collection will need the most shelf-reading. Shelf reading should be part of the weekly activities in a library.

Use a shelf reading schedule to assign responsibility for reading specific sections within a specific time to ensure that the entire collection is read regularly. Frequent brief shelf reading sessions are preferable to a single long session.

REFERENCES

Dewey decimal classification and relative index. 12th abridged edition. Albany, New York : Forest Press, 1991.

Dewey decimal classification and relative index. 20th edition. Albany, New York : Forest Press, 1989.