



Dare to know

Understanding the Library of Congress Classification System

The Barton Library arranges the majority of its collections according to the [Library of Congress \(LC\) Classification](#) system. This classification schema arranges works by subject so the “call number” indicates the subject matter of the work and its specific location. There are twenty-one main classifications, and within these are numerous sub-classifications. Each book in the Barton Library possesses a unique call number, which is a combination of letters and whole numbers. These call numbers are located on or near the spine of the book, and each call number contains three, four, or five lines.

LC call numbers are read from left to right, and from top to bottom. The letters at the beginning of the call number are alphabetical. The numbers immediately following are read as whole numbers: 1, 23, 46, 152, 1255, 2625, 2852, etc. The Cutter numbers may be first sorted by the number as a decimal, then by the letter, or vice versa.

Anatomy of a Library of Congress Call Number

Book title: *The fellowship of the ring : being the first part of the lord of the rings*

Author: J. R. R. Tolkien

Call number: PR6039 .032 L6 1986 pt. 1

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- The first line describes the subject of the book.
 - Two or three letters define the general subject class and the subclass [P = Language and literature; PR = English literature].

- The classification number is a set of numbers that define a narrower subtopic within the specified subclass [6039 = books of this subclass that were published between 1900-1960].
- The second line represents the Cutter number, which indicates the author's name and/or the title of the work.
 - Numbers are treated as decimals.
 - .032 = Tolkien.
 - L6 = this particular work.
- The third line represents the chronological date of publication.
 - 1986 = The year of publication for this edition of the volume; in other examples, the year may be the original copyright date.
- The fourth line indicates the part or volume number.
 - pt. 1 – This work is the first part in a set of books.
 - v. 1 would indicate the first volume of a series.
 - Another option for the fourth line is a copy number
 - c. 1 – If the Library has multiple copies of the same book, these will be identified by a copy number.

Call Number Prefixes

Some call numbers in the Barton Library collection are preceded by a prefix indicating the item is shelved within a special collection and may have loan restrictions.

AV – DVDs, mostly of an educational nature, with a few feature films, located in the Audiovisual Collection in the northeast alcove of the Library (seven-day circulation period for all patrons).

Coll – Materials in the College Life Collection that explore the experience of students in higher education; located in the northwest alcove of the Library (twenty-one-day circulation period for all patrons).

Current – Ready reference material located in the Current Issues Collection in the southwest alcove of the Library (fourteen-day circulation period for all patrons).

Fiction – Novels located in the Fiction Collection on the east side of the Library.

Graphic – Full-length fiction or non-fiction works published in comic-strip format; located in the Graphic Novels Collection adjacent to the Fiction Collection (twenty-one-day circulation period for all patrons).

J – Junior materials located in the Children's Collection in the southwest alcove of the Library (twenty-one-day circulation period for all patrons).

- Kan** – Fiction and non-fiction materials that feature Kansas as a setting and/or theme; located in the northeast alcove of the Library (twenty-one-day circulation period for all patrons).
- Multi** – Works published in languages other than English and located in the Multilingual Collection adjacent to the Fiction and Graphic Novels collections (twenty-one-day circulation period for all patrons).
- Oversize** – Works that will not easily fit on the shelves of the main collection; located in the northeast alcove of the Library (twenty-one-day circulation period for all patrons).
- Prof** – Works in the Professional Collection that discuss the topics of academia, assessment, and instruction; located in the northeast alcove of the Library (twenty-one-day circulation period for all patrons).
- Ref** – Reference material in the Reference Collection in the northwest alcove of the Library (seven-day circulation period for students and Faculty/Staff only).
- RW** – Materials located in the Research and Writing Collection in the northwest alcove of the Library (twenty-one-day circulation period for all patrons).