

B. How to read Library of Congress call numbers

Library of Congress call numbers are alphanumeric — a sequence of alternating letters and numbers. The dot (.) in the middle of the sequence is a decimal point and numbers that follow that point are read decimally. Also, most call numbers have the year of publication added at the end. The table below describes how to read each component of a call number.

Call Number Components	How to read the component	Sequence until you reach	Component
NA	Read alphabetically	A, B, C,...N	NA
502	Read numerically	1,2 400, 500.....	502
.F37	Read letter alphabetically (.F)	A, B, C, DF
	Read number decimally (.37)	.3, .31, .315, .3543, .36, .369...	37
1985	Read chronologically	1982, 1983, 1984.....	1985

Below is an example of a series of call numbers in correct Library of Congress call number order. Pay particular attention to the line with the decimal and the order of that call number segment.

