



Library of Congress Classification System

About This Guide

This guide provides a basic overview of the Library of Congress Classification system used to organize materials at the Leatherby Libraries. *It is recommended that you also read the "How to Read a Call Number" guide for a simple breakdown of a sample call number.*

Classification

Each item in a library's collection has a unique "address" known as its call number. Classification systems are used to assign call numbers. Commonly used systems in the United States are the Dewey Decimal Classification System, primarily used at public and school libraries, and the Library of Congress Classification System, primarily used at academic libraries.

Major Classes of the Library of Congress Classification System

The system is made up of 21 major classes. A comprehensive outline of the system is available at www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsolcco. The letters and titles of the main classes are listed below:

A	-	General Works
B	-	Philosophy, Psychology, Religion
C	-	Auxiliary Sciences of History
D	-	World History & History of Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, etc.
E	-	History of the Americas
F	-	History of the Americas
G	-	Geography, Anthropology, Recreation
H	-	Social Sciences
J	-	Political Science
K	-	Law
L	-	Education
M	-	Music and Books on Music
N	-	Fine Arts
P	-	Language and Literature
Q	-	Science
R	-	Medicine
S	-	Agriculture
T	-	Technology
U	-	Military Science
Y	-	Naval Science
Z	-	Bibliography, Library Science, Information Resources (General)

This guide is one in a series of "How To" Reference and Instruction Guides created by librarians at the Leatherby Libraries. View the series online at www.chapman.edu/library/reference/guides

Author of this guide: Stacy Russo, MA, MLIS, Chair of Public Services

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Subclasses of the Library of Congress Classification System

Each class is then divided into subclasses, allowing the organization of a library's collection to become more precise. For an example, we will look at the subclasses for N – Fine Arts:

Subclass N	-	Visual Arts
Subclass NA	-	Architecture
Subclass NB	-	Sculpture
Subclass NC	-	Drawing. Design. Illustration.
Subclass ND	-	Painting
Subclass NE	-	Print media
Subclass NK	-	Decorative arts
Subclass NX	-	Arts in general

We can then look closer at Subclass NB Sculpture and conclude with an example of a book on sculpture from the Leatherby Libraries Online Catalog:

NB1-1952	-	Sculpture
NB1-50	-	General
NB60-1115	-	History
		Including collective biography
NB1120-1133	-	Study and teaching
NB1134-1134.4	-	Competitions
NB1135-1150	-	General works
NB1160-1195	-	Designs and technique
NB1199-1200	-	Restoration of sculptures
NB1203-1270	-	Special materials
NB1272-1291	-	Mobiles, color, sculpture gardens, etc.
NB1293-1895	-	Special forms
NB1293-1310	-	Portrait sculpture
NB1312-1313	-	Equestrian statues
NB1330-1685	-	Sculptural monuments
NB1750-1793	-	Religious monuments and shrines
NB1800-1880	-	Sepulchral monuments
NB1910-1952	-	Special subjects

(All information above from the *Library of Congress Classification Outline for Class N – Fine Arts* available at http://www.loc.gov/aba/cataloging/classification/lcco/lcco_n.pdf)

The Leatherby Libraries Online Catalog

Author	Eliscu, Frank.
Title	Sculpture: techniques in clay, wax, slate
Publisher	Philadelphia, Chilton Co. [1959]
Edition	[1st ed.] Photos. of processes by Conrad Brown
LOCATION	
2nd FL Fine Arts Collection Books	NB1180_E48 1959
Collation	192 p. illus. 27 cm
Series	Arts and crafts series
Subject	Sculpture -- Technique. Modeling.

Now that we have examined the NB subclass, we can better understand why a call number beginning with NB1180 was assigned to the book on the left. From the outline of the NB subclass above, we can see that this number falls within the "Designs and techniques" of sculpture. This book, *Sculpture: Techniques in Clay, Wax, Slate*, has two subjects assigned to it: "Sculpture – Technique" and "Modeling" (see circled area).

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