How to Read Library of Congress Call Numbers

Kresge Engineering Library
http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/ENGI

Books and journals are arranged on our shelves according to the Library of Congress (LC) classification system. Using this system, each book or journal is assigned an alphanumeric call number based on its subject focus. This call number uniquely identifies the item and places it on our shelves near other material on the same subject.

Each call number consists of several parts. For example, consider the call number:

TK
7881.6
M29
1993

The FIRST line, **TK**, defines the class and subclass. These letters specify a broad subject area. Within Class T for technology, **TK** represents the subclass electrical engineering.

The SECOND line, **7881.6**, is the classification number. It should be read as a whole number with a decimal component to determine its location on the shelf. In combination with the class and subclass, the classification number defines the subject matter more finely. In this example, **TK7881.6** represents magnetic recording (a subdivision of TK – electrical engineering).

The THIRD line, **M29**, is called a "Cutter number." This letter-number combination usually indicates author, but it may also represent other information such as further subject subdivision or geographic area. The Cutter number is always present in a call number and may sometimes be a "double Cutter" (TK7881.6 M29 D45 1992 has a double Cutter). The numeric component of the Cutter number is ALWAYS interpreted as a decimal number when determining shelf location. Therefore, the numeric component of **M29** should be read as ".29" (and the call number **TK7881.6 M29 1993** should file BEFORE **TK7881.6 M4 1992**).

The YEAR of publication, **1993**, may also be present. Not all call numbers will include the year of publication, but most recent books will. These file in chronological order and often distinguish among varying editions of a text.

Other miscellaneous descriptors may be part of the call number. If present, these will usually differentiate the components of a work that has one title but was published as separate volumes or in parts over time.

In using a call number to locate a book on the shelf, consider each component of the call number in turn before moving on to the next segment. As an example, the following call numbers are arranged in the order they should appear on the shelves:

QA	QA	QA	T	T	T	TA	TK	TK	TK	TK
76	76	76	3	39	39	3	7881	7881.15	7881.15	7881.6
F75	F75	F8	Z37	W45	W45	Z37	L444	D2	D2	M29
v. 1	v. 2	v. 1		M226	M26		1994	1988	1995	1993
				1989	1989		v. 2			

Use the major classification headings on the reverse side as a basic guide to browse shelves in the Engineering Library. To find more specific subjects, search Melvyl using Keywords as your search type. Then, identify the call numbers for relevant books from your search and browse for other books near these call numbers.

If you have difficulty locating items on the shelves or have other questions about call numbers, please ask at the Reference Desk.

Circulation Services 642-3366 **Research Assistance 642-3339**
engi@library.berkeley.edu **www.lib.berkeley.edu/ENGI**

Major Classification Headings in the Engineering Library

from the Library of Congress Classification Outline (http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcco/lcco.html)

GB		Physical geography.
	651 – 2998	Hydrology. Water.
GC		Oceanography.
	1000 – 1581	Marine resources. Marine pollution.
Q		Science (General).
	180	Operations research.
	300 – 390	Artificial intelligence. Information theory.
QA		Mathematics.
	75 – 76	Computer science.
	801 – 939	Analytic mechanics. Fluid mechanics.
QC		Physics.
QD		Chemistry.
QE		Geology.
R		Medicine.
	856 – 857	Biomedical engineering. Electronics. Instrumentation.
	895 – 920	Medical physics. Medical radiology. Nuclear medicine.
T		Technology.
	55.4 – 60.8	Industrial engineering.
	385	Computer graphics.
TA		Engineering (General). Civil engineering.
	349 – 359	Mechanics of engineering. Applied mechanics.
	401 – 492	Materials of engineering and construction.
	630 – 820	Structural engineering. Geotechnical engineering.
	1501 – 1820	Applied optics.
TC		Hydraulic engineering.
TD		Environmental engineering.
TE		Highway engineering. Roads and pavements.*
TF		Railroad engineering and operations.*
TG		Bridge engineering.*
TH		Building construction.
TJ		Mechanical engineering and machinery.
	163	Power resources. Energy conservation.
	210.2 – 225	Robotics. Control engineering.
TK		Electrical engineering. Electronics. Nuclear engineering.
	5101 – 6720	Telecommunications.
	7800 – 8360	Electronics.
	9001 – 9401	Nuclear engineering.
TL		Motor vehicles. Aeronautics. Astronautics.
TN		Mining engineering. Metallurgy.
TP		Chemical technology.
TS		Manufacturing.
	155 – 194	Production management. Operations management.
VM		Naval architecture. Shipbuilding. Marine engineering.

*** Most campus material in this classification is in the Transportation Studies Library (412 McLaughlin).**

Rev 04/2001 bq