



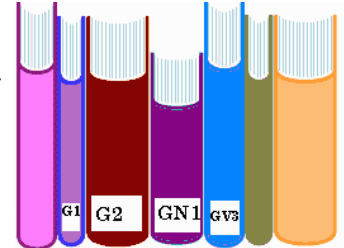
Finding Books: A Guide to Locating Books by Call Number

I found a book I want in PittCat but how do I find this book in the library?

Librarians help students find books in the library everyday. This guide will teach you the basic concept of how books are organized in the library, and how to use the call number to find the book(s) you need on the shelf.

What is a call number?

A call number is a unique number given to an item that identifies the location and subject content of materials in a library. Call numbers usually consist of two or three lines of letters and numbers; each call number is found either on the spine of the book or on the front lower left corner when the spine is too narrow.



PITTCat

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Search Request: Title = gorillas in the mist
Search Results: Displaying 3 of 3 entries

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Gorillas in the mist / Dian Fossey.

Title: Gorillas in the mist / Dian Fossey.

Author: [Fossey, Dian.](#)

Published: Boston, Mass. : Houghton Mifflin, 1983.

Physical Description: xviii, 326 p., [80] p. of plates : ill. ; 24 cm.

LC Subject Heading(s) (limits do not apply): [Gorilla--Behavior.](#)
[Mammals--Behavior.](#)

Location: Johnstown Campus Library -- General Collection

Call Number: [QL737.P96 F67 1983](#)

Status: Not Checked Out

Use the call number from the book's PittCat record to find the book on the shelf.

Reading call numbers

GV
989
.A52

In the Library of Congress system, the **first line** of a call number may begin with one, two, or three letters. These letters represent a general subject and should be read alphabetically. The **second line** is a whole number representing a specific subject and should be read numerically. The **third line** should be read first alphabetical and then numerical as if the number were a decimal. Thus, the examples below are in correct call number order.

GV
989
.A52

before

GV
989
.A6

before

PS
3
.A47

before

PS
2552
.B486

Can you put these books in call number order?

QE 352 .B64 1999	LB 2825 .S58 Suppl.	QE 352 .B699 2002	LB 2825 .J72 2004
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A

B

C

D

ANSWER: D B A C

The Library of Congress Classification System is broken into 21 primary subject classes which are represented by the first letter of the call number. These classes are:

A—General Works	H—Social Sciences	P—Language and Literature
B—Philosophy, Psychology, Religion	J—General legislative and executive papers	Q—Science
C—Auxiliary sciences of history	K—Law	R—Medicine
D—History	L—Education	S—Agriculture
E,F—History in Americas	M—Music and Books on Music	T—Technology
G—Geography	N—Fine Arts	

Why is this important to know?

Since library materials are classified by subject, you will often find related books on the same shelf or in close proximity. For example, within the same call number LB2395, there may be other guides for college study.

LB 2395.C6 1960 = *A Student's Guide to Efficient Study*, by Luella Cole

LB 2395.L447 = *Keys to College Success*, by Minnette Lenier

LB 2395.O54 1983 = *A Successful Student's Handbook*, by Rita Phipps



Location Prefixes

When a call number looks like the examples above, (e.g. LB 2395.C6 1960), the book is in the Circulating Collection and is shelved on the second floor of the library. Some call numbers, however, are preceded by a **location prefix**. For example: **Ref** AG243.G87 1992

The **Ref** prefix indicates that this book is shelved in the Reference Collection. Location prefixes mean that the book is shelved in a special place, and may have loan restrictions. Owen Library uses the following location prefixes:

Prefix	Collection	Library Location	Loan Period
[Blank]	Circulating Collection	2nd floor	28 days
Over	Oversize [a large book]	2nd floor	28 days
Ref	Reference Collection	1st floor	Library Use Only
Index	Reference Collection	1st floor	Library Use Only
Spec	Special Collections	2nd floor	Library Use Only
Atlas	Atlas Stands	1st floor	Library Use Only
Ref Desk	Reference Desk Shelf	1st floor	Library Use Only
Video	A/V Collection	1st floor	Library Use Only
Audio	A/V Collection	1st floor	Library Use Only
Curr	Curriculum Room	2nd floor	28 days
Juv	Curriculum Room	2nd floor	28 days

Please ask at the Reference Desk or Circulation Desk if you need help reading a call number or finding a book on the shelf.