

**Read Call Numbers**

Libraries use classification systems to organize the books and videos on the shelves. Most public libraries use the ***Dewey Decimal Classification System (DDC)*** and most academic libraries (including Reynolds Libraries) use the ***Library of Congress Classification System (LC)***.

You may be more familiar with the Dewey Decimal system, which uses only numbers to arrange materials on the shelves. The LC system uses a combination of letters and numbers to arrange materials on the shelves.

These classification systems allow each book and video in the library to be assigned a unique ***call number.***  A call number is like an address: it indicates where the book is located on the library shelves.

**Anatomy of a Call Number**





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A call number label is attached to each book and video spine or front cover. Every item record in the library catalog also includes a call number. When searching the library catalog (Reynolds Libraries use *Primo*), you want to be sure to jot down the complete LC call number in order to locate the item on the shelf.



If you have a general subject in mind, you can also browse the shelves if you know the beginning *Library of Congress classification* letters for that subject (e.g., BF – Psychology books; L - Education; PS – American Literature; R – Medicine). Since materials are arranged by subject, browsing books located closely on the shelf can also yield results.

