

SHELVING AND SORTING BOOKS

A call number is the notation used to identify and locate a particular publication in the library. The collection of the **Health Professions Division Library** has been cataloged using the **National Library of Medicine Classification System**. It is based on the Library of Congress Classification System and utilizes the QS-QZ and W-WZ schedules. HPD Library has a few books that are cataloged with LC call numbers.

Call numbers are read one line at a time. Compare each line of a call number with the same line of the next call number until you reach a line where they differ. The following rules determine the proper order of the call numbers.

The first line is usually a letter or combination of two letters. The order is strictly alphabetical (**QS, QT, ...WY, WZ**). So, books with call numbers starting with “**QU**” in the first line would be filed before books that have “**QW**” in the first line. For example:

QS	QS	QT	QV
130	130	4	825
C156	C641	B525	J52

The second line is normally a number and is read numerically. For example:

WW	WW	WW
145	200	722
S648	E55	B658

The third line is called the Cutter Line. The Cutter Line is a letter and number combination (**C246, D25**). It may be a combination of two letter and number combinations (**C3H58, D5M32**). The letters are filed alphabetically but the numbers are filed as decimal numbers. The reader must remember the “imaginary decimal point” because the decimal points are not typed on “spine labels.” For example:

WB	WB	WB	WB	NOTE: Imaginary decimal point has been added
100	100	100	100	
.T3535	.T354	.T355	.T3556	

OR

WU	WU	WU	WU	WU
17	17	17	17	17
B512	B512c	B512d	B555p	B919a

WD	WD	WD	WD	WD
184	184.36	184.5	184.51	184.7
O6k	O6m	O6r	P7b	P7e

Note: In an online catalog, call numbers may appear with or without decimal points.
 Some examples: WX218.Z226 1998 or WX 218 Z226n 1998

Often a date appears in the call number's last line, usually the forth or fifth line. File chronologically.

WI	WI	WI
218	218	218
F825	F825	F825
	1988	1994

The third line may be a number or will start with a number. These numbers are filed in numerical order, and if they match, compare the next line. For example:

WG	WG	WR	WR	NOTE:
850	850	488.5	488.5	This call number
1910d	D6	OR	4Q380s	type is very rare
			A4f	

Items that differ only by copy or volume number are kept in volume, then in copy order. If an item does not have a copy number designation it is assumed to be copy number one. For example:

WU	WU	WW	WW	WW	WW	WW	WW	WW
500	500	3664	3664	3664	3664	3664	3664	3664
E57	E57	C591	C591	C591	C591	C591	C591	C591
1978	1978	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994	1994
pt.2	pt.2	v.1	v.1	v.1	v.2	v.3	v.3	v.4
v.1	v.3		c.2	c.3		c.2	c.5	

NOTE: Most books have a volume designation and then a copy designation but there are many other abbreviations.

The rule of thumb is to follow line by line because this system of notation allows for a wide variety of letter and number combinations.

SHELVING AND SORTING BOOKS: A QUICK REVIEW

Call numbers are arranged alphabetically and numerically. Call numbers are read from left to right and from top to bottom.

Letters in the first line of the call number are alphabetical:

QS	QT	QY	QZ
45	155	21	13
E37	A5	A33	S47
1984	1991	1982	1990

The first set of numbers of the call number are in numerical order:

W	W	W	W
53	785	1201	1246
D476	L44M66	B44W64	R66
1990	1997	1988	

The second set of letters is alphabetical:

WD	WD	WD	WD
240	240	240	240
B265	C538	S795	T38
1988	1989	1990	1999

The second set of numbers of the call number is in decimal order. It is important to remember that there is an “invisible” decimal point between the letter (line 2) and the number (line 3).

WZ	WZ	WZ	WZ	WY	WY
901	901	901	901	161	161
C33	C34	C34a	C343p	B963	B963q
	1991	1990	1990	1998	1998

If there is an additional line of letters and numbers, they will also be in alphabetical and decimal number order. The last line of a call number may be a year and indicates publication date. This line may be followed by volume and copy designations.

In an online catalog, the numbers may be written with or without the decimal points, and they would look like this: WZ901.C37d 1998 or WZ 901 C343 1990

Instructions: Place each row of call numbers in the proper order on the shelf. Mark your answers in the spaces provided under each row.

Row 1:

WU	WU	WU	WU	WU	WU
480	480	480	480	480	480
P3696	P3696	P3696	M429f	F514c	F4667
1994	1994	1995	1963	1988	
c.4					
—	—	—	—	—	—

Row 2:

QV	QV	QV	QU	QV	QV
18.2	18	18.2	18	18.2	18.2
C641c	C641m	C641b	G559b	W749a	C641p
1993	1995	1993	1995	1995	1995
	c.3		c.2		
—	—	—	—	—	—

Row 3:

WU	WU	WB	WM	WH	WU
400	400	400	100	121	400
P964c	P964c	D319b	S992	H487	P964c
1993	1993	1994	1994	1990	1993
c.3		c.4		c.3	c.4
—	—	—	—	—	—

Row 4:

WB	WB	WC	WB	WB	W
940	940	680	100	100	76
J77s	J2251s	M292m	T355	T355	F636
1995	1998	1982	1996	1996	1992
v.1			v.1	v.1	
			pt.3	pt.1	
—	—	—	—	—	—

Row 5:

QZ	QZ	QZ	QZ	QZ	QZ
4	4	4	4	4	4
W66b	W66b	W66a	W666b W66b	W66b	
1995	1995	1995	1995	1995	1995
v.1	v.10	v.2	v.4	v.1	v.4
c.2				c.5	c.5
—	—	—	—	—	—