

FINDING BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

A GUIDE TO CALL NUMBERS ON BOOKS

The call number tells you where to find the book on the library's shelves. All library materials have a label with a call number. The library's computer catalogue lists these items and can be searched by title, author, subject and other ways too. You will need the call number listed in the catalogue to find the item on the shelf. It's like using an address book to find a house address.

There are different ways to find books in fiction and non-fiction.

FICTION BOOKS

Fiction books are first organized by the genre. A genre is a type of fiction – such as general fiction, mysteries, science fiction, romance, westerns, inspirational and graphic novels. After being placed by genre, the books are organized by the author.

For example, here are general fiction books:



Here's an example of mysteries. 'MYST' is short for mystery:



Organizing the books this way means all books of the same genre are in one place. And finding an author is easy – just look alphabetically.

NONFICTION BOOKS

Nonfiction books are arranged on the shelves in call number order. The call numbers for nonfiction books use Dewey Decimal Classification.

The Dewey Decimal System

There are ten major subject divisions in the Dewey system:

- 000 – General Knowledge (almanacs, encyclopedias)
- 100 – Philosophy and Psychology
- 200 – Religion
- 300 – Social Science and Folklore
- 400 – Language and Grammar
- 500 – Math and Science
- 600 – Medicine and Technology
- 700 – Arts and Recreation
- 800 – Literature
- 900 – Geography and History

Each category is then subdivided into more specific subject areas. For example, 400 – 499 is for Language and Grammar. These areas are further subdivided into subsections by 10s. For example, Language and Grammar (400) further divides as:

- 410 – Linguistics
- 420 – English, Grammar
- 430 – Germanic Languages
- 440 – Romance Languages, French
- 450 – Italian, Romanian
- 460 – Spanish, Portuguese
- 470 – Latin
- 480 – Hellenic Languages, Classical Greek
- 490 – Other Languages

The Dewey Decimal system continues to divide into more specific subjects.

Books in the 900s are about Geography and History.

Books in the 970s are about North American History.

Books with call numbers 971 are about Canadian History.

Books with call numbers 971.27 are about Manitoba History.

More decimal numbers are added for more specific subjects. For example, the history of Winnipeg is 971.274. The history of floods in Winnipeg is 971.274303.

Finding books on a topic is a lot easier when they are grouped together!

Call numbers also have letters. These are usually the first letters of the author's last name. For example, a book with the call number 971 ATW comes before 971 BOR.



In the picture, you can see the books are in order numerically, then alphabetically. For example, look at the last five books:

971 INN 971 MOR 971 NEL 971.00207 FOT 971.00946 CHO

Sometimes you will also see letters on the bottom of the call number label (example: MILL, WSTN). These letters say which Winnipeg Public Library branch owns the book; they are not part of the call number.

Children's and teen books are shelved in their own area in the library. Children's books have a 'J' at the start of the call number. Books for teens have 'YA'. A children's fiction book will start 'J FICTION' and for teens 'YA FICTION'.

Children's and teen non-fiction books will look the same as the adult ones – but also with a 'J' or a 'YA'. A children's book on the history of Winnipeg is J 971.274. A teen book on the same topic is YA 971.274.

**Library staff can help you
search for call numbers and use
the catalogue. Just ask!**