

## **Building call numbers**

The whole idea when creating a call number is to label your items clearly and consistently to make them easy to locate for both patrons and staff. Think of a call number as the item's address in your library, which gives directions as to how to locate it.

Call numbers are created from Dewey classification (mostly nonfiction) and from their catalog record main entry, usually the author's name, but occasionally the title when the author's name is not the main entry.

1. If your item is not an adult nonfiction book, it's a good idea to use a prefix. Some examples:

Adult fiction:	FICTION Fleming, Thomas J. or FIC Fleming
Blu-ray movies:	Blu-ray Avatar
DVD movies:	DVD Christmas story
Easy fiction:	E FIC Aylesworth or EASY FICTION Aylesworth
Graphic novels:	GRAPHIC Djian or GN Djian
Juvenile nonfiction:	J 001.94 P
Mystery fiction:	MYSTERY Albert, Susan Wittig or MYS Albert

Labeling by title alone for fiction will confuse patrons, since they often will look for more titles by the same author in the same place they found the last one by that author.

2. Keep call numbers as short as possible; add only what is necessary to shelve or locate the item.
3. Be consistent. If your formula for adding fiction titles is: FICTION <Last name>, <First name>, make it the same for all fiction titles. Don't make some F <Last name>, <First name> and others FIC <Last name>, and still others FICTION <Last name>.

Someday, you'll need a shelf list order report run for your collection, and the inconsistencies will be readily apparent then.

4. For purposes of shelving titles in a series together, you could build the call number on the series. This is especially helpful for multi-author series, if you want to shelve them together.

Always use the author's name first, if s/he has written the whole series:

FICTION Albright, Beth: Sassy belles

J FIC Hunter, Erin: Warriors or J FICTION Hunter: Warriors

For a multiple-author series, use the series title:

PAP Harlequin intrigue or PB Harlequin intrigue

FIC Sugarcreek Amish mysteries #3 or FICTION Sugarcreek #3

5. Use a title as a call number only as a last resort.

FICTION More than words

6. If you must use a title as call number, and the first word is "A", "An" or "The", drop it from the call number, and use the second word of the title, instead. I sincerely hope no one would shelve titles under "The" or "An".
7. Be accurate. The number of careless misspellings I see is appalling. Take another look before you click "print" or "save".
8. Remember: it's important to keep your collection's call numbers as concise, clear, and consistent. It will help both library staff and patrons to locate your materials on the shelves.

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