The Alkek Library uses Library of Congress call numbers. This system uses letters and numbers to arrange books by subject. Book on similar subjects are assigned similar letters. Call numbers are book shelf addresses, unique to a single book and indicate where a book is located in the library. All books are arranged alphabetically by the beginning letters of their call numbers. You will find the call number attached to or written on the spine of each book.

The following is a list of the subject classifications of the system. A breakdown of each class is available at the Library of Congress website

**Call letter - Subject Coverage**

A: General Works
B: Philosophy. Psychology. Religion.
C: Auxiliary Sciences of History
D: History: General & Old World.
E: History: America
F: History: America
G: Geography. Anthropology. Recreation
H: Social Sciences
J: Political Science
K: Law
L: Education
M: Music and Books on Music
N: Fine Arts
P: Language and Literature
Q: Science
R: Medicine
S: Agriculture
T: Technology
U: Military Science
V: Naval Science

To find a book, first look up its call number in the Library Catalog.

The Library shelves books with call numbers beginning with the letters:

(A–J) on the 5th floor, (K–Q) on the 6th floor, and (R–Z) on the 7th floor

Library of Congress call numbers should be read one line at a time as follows:

Example of a complete call number, DA 36 .A55:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line 1</th>
<th>Line 2</th>
<th>Line 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>.A55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. First, look at Line 1:

Books are arranged in **alphabetical order**, by the letters on the first line of the call number.

**Example:** first come all the D call numbers, then all the DA call numbers, then DB, etc.

![Bookshelves](D Da Da DB)

2. Next, look at Line 2:

Within the DA call numbers, books are arranged in **number order**.

The numbers are arranged in numerical order, from low to high.

**Example:**

![Bookshelves](DA 1 2 22 36 38)

3. Then look at Line 3:

**Line 3** of the call number has a letter and a number. The letters are in **alphabetical** order. Then read the numbers—**Beware**!

The numbers are not **whole** numbers, they are **decimal** numbers!

**Example:** A55 is read as A .55 - this is why A55 comes before A6 (A .55, A .6, A .65, etc.)

![Bookshelves](DA 36 A5 DA 36 A55 DA 36 A6 DA 36 A77 DA 36 B21 DA 36 B212)