

# HOW TO READ A CALL NUMBER

## Call Numbers

A call number is the number on the spine label of a library item, which shows where it is shelved. It often consists of a class number, a book number and often a location symbol.

## Breakdown of a Call Number

<b>VIDEO</b>	→ Location symbol
<b>QA</b>	→ Represents the subject (Mathematics)
<b>445</b>	→ Subdivides mathematics more specifically to geometry
<b>B73</b>	→ An alphanumeric figure constructed to further arrange the material on the shelf (within the subject) alphabetically by author. <b>The numbers here are always read as decimals</b>
<b>1998</b>	→ Is the date of the publication
<b>v. 2</b>	→ Is the volume number of the publication
<b>c.3</b>	→ Is the copy number

## Variations of Call Numbers

The call number can be written in different ways, some are shown in the examples below. Each variation is correct, but the first example is how our library is currently formatting call numbers.

<b>QA</b>	QA76	QA	QA 76.7 S36 1994
<b>76.7</b>	.7	76	
<b>S36</b>	.S36	.7	
<b>1994</b>	1994	.S36	
		1994	

When the numbers include decimals they can present more problems. It is important to remember that since these numbers are decimal-fractions, a number like .16 is smaller than .9 and therefore .16 will be shelved first.

The following are examples in the order in which they would appear on the shelves.

L	L	L	L	L	L
581.12	581.2	581.31	581.4	581.498	581.5
D4	E73	A4	A47	R3	J6

**Notice that .12 files before .2 and .498 files before .5 because they are the smaller decimals.**