

Organisation of Materials in the Libraries

Library books and other resources are arranged in subject order by the **Dewey Decimal Classification System**, the most common Library system in the world.

The Dewey system organises books by dividing them into 10 main groups and giving each group a number - beginning at **000** and going up to **999**.

000-099	Encyclopaedias, dictionaries, directories
100-199	Philosophy, psychology
300-399	Social sciences - economics, sociology, law, education
400-499	Languages- English, French, Italian etc.
500-599	Sciences - chemistry, physics, biology, zoology, botany
600-699	Technology and applied sciences - medicine, engineering, agriculture
700-799	Arts - architecture, sculpture, painting, music, photography
800-899	Literature, novels, poetry, drama, literary criticism
900-999	Geography, history

Each of these 10 main groups (or classes) are then broken up into specialised subject areas by using a decimal point:

300	Social Sciences	330	Economics
310	Statistics	331	Labour economics
320	Politics	331.1	Labour market
330	Economics	331.2	Conditions of employment
340	Law	331.21	Wages and salaries
350	Government	331.215	Factors affecting salaries and wages
360	Social Care	331.2153	Discrimination and anti-discrimination at work
370	Education		
380	Transport		
390	Customs, folklore		

The 3 letters after the number are the first three letters of the author's surname, or if there are no authors, the first three letters of the title. This means all books with the same classification number are also arranged in alphabetical order.

The books are in continuous number order in every library, but the way the shelves are laid out will be different at each library.

- Check the number of the book you are looking for, for example 331.2153 CUS
- Find the area of shelving that begins at 3 and follow the numbers on to the ones starting 33, onto 331, onto 331.2 etc.
- Once you get to 331.2153, follow the letters alphabetically until you reach 331.2153 CUS

Remember: The books are arranged numerically, so zero is the lowest number that can appear. This means that a book with a classification number of **331.021 ABC** will come **before** a book with a classification number of **331.121 ABC**.