

## Assigning Call Numbers

### What is a Call Number?

Call numbers are the map that lead your patron from the OPAC to the needed materials. Every item needs a call number. The call number should be clearly visible, i.e. on the spine of a book.

Assigning call numbers will be necessary when importing records from SmartPort, cataloging with templates, changing existing call numbers in the collection, or adding item information to vendor records.

**NOTE:** INFOhio uses the Dewey Decimal Classification System not Library of Congress call numbers. Dewey numbers begin with numerals, i.e. 973.3. Library of Congress numbers begin with letters, i.e. JK146.

### Two key guidelines:

1. Be consistent:
  - Make building or district decisions regarding cataloging practices and follow those guidelines when assigning call numbers, i.e. biographies of sports figures are cataloged with sports rather than in the biography section.
  - When receiving new materials, check call numbers assigned to items in your vendor records to be certain they are consistent with your guidelines.
2. Keep your patron in mind:
  - Some materials can legitimately be cataloged in several ways. Choose the one most appropriate to the curriculum and the conditions in your school.
  - Always put a cataloged item in a section where it will get maximum usage.

### How to select a call number:

- A. Nonfiction items: follow the Dewey Decimal Classification System. Details below.
- B. Everything else: follow the established guidelines for your school. A typical call number will have a prefix indicating the item group (B, FIC, MAG, etc.) followed by 3 letters of the author's or subject's name. Consistency is important. Your ITC provider will be glad to help you determine the pattern in use by your school.

### Using the Dewey Decimal Classification System:

The Dewey Decimal Classification System is not a perfect system; not all books fit neatly into one number.

1. **Content** determines the call number of an item but some materials may be appropriately cataloged in more than one area.  
For example:
  - A biography of a baseball player may be in Biography (B, 92,921), or in Nonfiction (796.357 for *sports – baseball*).

- Little Red Riding Hood could be cataloged in Fiction, Picture books, Easy Fiction or Nonfiction - *Folklore / Legends* (398s).
  - Nonfiction materials dealing with narcotics/drugs could be in the *social sciences* (300s) or *health* (600s).
  - A book titled *Math in Computing* could be cataloged in *math* (500s) or in *computers* (005s).
2. **Use the 082, 090 or 092 tag in the MARC record** to locate the Dewey call number.
- a. Both Dewey Decimal and Library of Congress call numbers may appear in these tags. Use Dewey Decimal call numbers only.
  - b. It may contain more than one so you should select the one that best represents your collection.

For example, a call number in the MARC record may look like this: 523.5'1, 523.5/1, 523.5 1 or 523.5|222

- The correct form for this particular call number is either 523.5 or 523.51
- The ' or / or the **space** in the suggested Dewey number indicates a logical breaking point in the call number.
- **|a** indicates separate call number choices.
- In Sirsi the first **|a** is assumed and does not display.
- **|2** indicates edition number not call number.

Remove any brackets [ ] that appear in call numbers, i.e. [Fic].  
Follow your school library policy for call number format for Easy, Fiction and Biography items.

- a. Examples of 082, 09X tag information and call number options:

| In the MARC record:      | You should make it:                       |
|--------------------------|---|
| a362.29/5 222            | 362.29<br>362.295                         |
| a344/.73/0545            | 344<br>344.73<br>344.730545               |
| a[Fic] 222               | FIC                                       |
| a551.6 a[E] 220          | 551.6<br>E                                |
| a973.7/092/4 a92 aB      | 973.7<br>973.7092<br>973.70924<br>92<br>B |
| a345.73/0277 a347.305277 | 345.73<br>345.730277<br>347.305277        |

**NOTE:** *If you assign a call number other than one found in MARC record, do not change the content in the 082 or 09X tag in the MARC record!*

3. **Check your library database** for call numbers of materials on the same topic.
4. **Check the OPACs of other schools** or your public library.

**Tips when entering your own call numbers:**

- A decimal point is the only punctuation in a call number.
- Do not end a call number in a 0 - i.e. 796.50 would be 796.5
- Do not let the width of your book spine determine the size of your call number.

For further assistance:

- Contact your ITC provider

Use any of the following online sites for call number suggestions

**Dewey Number sites:**

<http://www.loc.gov/marc/authority/ecadhome.html>

<http://classify.oclc.org/classify2/>

<http://library.thinkquest.org/5002/Alien/alien.htm>

<http://www.apl.org/libcats/dewey.html>

<http://www.deweybrowse.org/>

<http://www.kidsclick.org/>