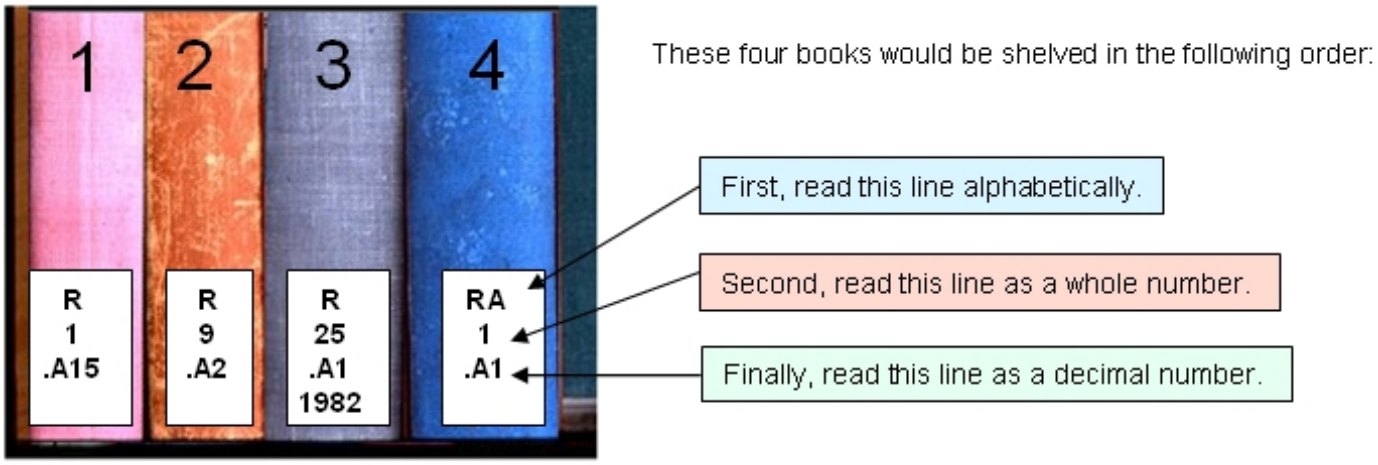
How to Read Call Numbers

The Library of Congress Classification System is a combination of *letters* and *numbers* which are the "call numbers" that are assigned to books and other items held by the William C. Jason Library.



Locate:

To locate an item on the shelf, write down the entire call number.

Library of Congress classification system:

- Gives each item in the collection a *unique* location on the shelf
- Shelves items on related subjects together

About Browsing:

Because the system is designed to bring items on similar subjects together, you can browse in a specific call number area to find information on a subject. If you need a more specific call number to browse in your subject of interest, ask a *Reference Librarian*. **Note:** Browsing is a popular information-finding strategy, but it has drawbacks that affect the quality and quantity of information found. Browsing should be used as a supplement to finding books by using the Library of Congress subject headings in the catalog.

Collections:
Remember also to write down the collection name Examples are Reference, Juvenile, and African-American Collection.

Consult the Collections Directory or Library Staff for assistance with locations or collections.

Library of Congress Subject Headings: Large, red volumes located near the Library Online Catalog (OPAC) will help identify subject headings used in the online catalog. By looking in the catalog for those terms, you will locate items that the library has on your subject(s). Consult with a Reference Librarian for help in choosing subject headings or interpreting the information given in the Subject Headings books.

In the *third* book in the example above the call number is *R25.A1 1982*

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