This tip will help you:
When you find a useful book, look at the other books near it on the shelf. Since call numbers are organized by subject, many related books will be nearby.

What are call numbers?
Call numbers are codes that tell you what subject the book is about, and the name of the author. They’re located on a label on the book’s spine (or sometimes the front cover if the spine is too skinny).

Library of Congress vs. Dewey Decimal System
• These are the two types of call numbers. The UR Libraries use Library of Congress.
• 2 important differences:
  → Dewey uses only numbers; Library of Congress uses numbers and letters
  → Dewey uses all decimals; Library of Congress call numbers have a whole number on the first line

What do they mean?
• The top line says what subject the book covers. The number in this line is a whole number.
• The next line (or two) says the author and title. The numbers in these lines are decimals.
  → That means they’ll be in order like this, for example: .G4 | .G43 | .G5 | .G61
• The last line is the publication date. It might not be included.

Find a book by its call number:
LINE 1: Start with the letters in the top line. They go in alphabetical order (P, PA, PB, PC...). Then look at the numbers. They go in whole-number order (1, 2, 3...)

LINE 2: Same as above, but remember that these numbers are decimals and go in decimal order (.1, .13, .2, .276, .31, .4...)

LINE 3: Same as above. These numbers are decimals, too, even though the decimal point may not be showing.

LINE 4: The year usually isn’t necessary for finding the book, unless you’re distinguishing between two editions.

QUESTIONS? VISIT THE REFERENCE DESK!
Or, text us at (585) 678-5839 • call us at (585) 275-4478 • or catch us on chat on the library website: www.library.rochester.edu/chat
For more cheat sheets, visit www.library.rochester.edu/midnight-researcher

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