



Library of Congress

Subject Headings & Classification System

The Library of Congress Subject Headings are standardized words or phrases used to identify materials on the same topic. A list of these headings can be found in a manual called *Library of Congress Subject Headings* known as "the big red books" located in the Ready Reference shelves near the reference desk (an online version is available at <http://authorities.loc.gov/>, but the interface could be tricky for the non-librarian user.) The Library's online catalog uses these standardized subject headings as a way of drawing together under a consistent heading all the material available on a particular topic.

For example:

A keyword search of the library catalog, using the phrase "multinational corporations" returns 28 items.

If you consulted the LCSH you would find the following entry:

Multinational corporations
Use International Business Enterprises

This means the term "multinational corporations" is not used as a subject heading. The library has instead classified books on "multinational corporations" under the heading "International Business Enterprises."

A subject search for heading "international business enterprises" in the online catalog returns 294 items, not only more items, but more relevant items.

By looking in the **LCSH** you can often avoid frustration, save time, and locate useful terms that might not have occurred to you. The LCSH entry for "International business enterprises" would include the following:

International business enterprises

UF Business enterprises, International
Corporations, International
International corporations

BT Business enterprises
Corporations

RT Joint ventures

NT Corporations, Foreign

UF = used for (these terms are not used)

BT = broader term

RT = related term

NT = narrower term

An alternative to consulting the LCSH would be to use the trial and error method in the online catalog-try a keyword search and check results for relevant subject headings by viewing the full records of relevant items in your results list. In the online catalog all subject headings are hypertext. If you click on a heading, the catalog will return all the books that have been assigned that exact subject heading. The library does not own material for every subject heading listed and it may be necessary to experiment with possible headings.

Once you locate a relevant item(s) check the call number range for other useful items. If you are unsure of how to interpret call numbers, ask a librarian or consult the "Finding Books" handout.

****Call Numbers****

A-HJ First Floor

HM-Z Second Floor

If you have any questions, please consult the reference librarian.

The Library of Congress Classification System organizes material in libraries according to twenty-one branches of knowledge (listed below). The 21 categories (labeled **A** to **Z**, but missing **I**, **O**, **W**, **X** and **Y**) are further divided by adding one or two additional letters and a set of numbers. This system is in use at most academic and research libraries in the U. S. Further breakdown of categories can be viewed online at the *LC Classification Outline* <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsol/lcco/lcco.html>

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|---|---|
| <p>A GENERAL WORKS</p> <p>B PHILOSOPHY
 BF Psychology
 BL-BX Religion</p> <p>C CIVILIZATION, ARCHEOLOGY</p> <p>D WORLD HISTORY</p> <p>E UNITED STATES HISTORY</p> <p>F HISTORY:
 U. S.- STATE & LOCAL,
 CANADA,
 LATIN AMERICA</p> <p>G GEOGRAPHY
 GN Anthropology
 GR Folklore
 GV Recreation</p> <p>H SOCIAL SCIENCES
 HA Statistics
 HB-HJ Business
 HM-HX Sociology</p> <p>J POLITICAL SCIENCE</p> <p>K LAW</p> <p>L EDUCATION</p> <p>M MUSIC</p> <p>N FINE ARTS</p> <p>P LANGUAGE & LITERATURE
 PC Romance Lang.
 PG Russian Lang. & Lit.
 PJ-PL Asian & African Lang/Lit.
 PN Literary History & Criticism,
 Quotes, Collections, Films
 PQ Spanish Lit.
 PR British Lit.
 PS American Lit.</p> | <p>Q SCIENCE
 QA Math & Computers
 QB Astronomy
 QC Physics
 QD Chemistry
 QE Geology
 QH Biology
 QK Botany
 QL Zoology
 QM Human Anatomy
 QP Physiology
 QR Microbiology</p> <p>R MEDICINE</p> <p>S AGRICULTURE
 SB Plant Culture</p> <p>T TECHNOLOGY
 TA-TK Engineering
 TD Environment
 TL Transportation
 TR Photography
 TT Arts & Crafts
 TX Home Economics</p> <p>U MILITARY SCIENCE</p> <p>V NAVAL SCIENCE</p> <p>Z BIBLIOGRAPHIES &
 LIBRARY SCIENCE</p> <p>Local use:
 X OVERSIZED ITEMS, SEU
 RELATED MATERIALS,
 CHILDREN'S COLLECTION,
 and K-12 TEXTBOOK
 COLLECTION</p> |
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