



How to Read a Superintendent of Documents (SUDOCs) Call Number

The SuDocs classification system for numbering government documents is based on the agency which published the material rather than on the publication's subject. Thus all publications from the Agriculture Department have a call number beginning with the letter "A" and are shelved together. Each office or bureau within the department has its own number to follow the "A" such as "A 1" for publications from the office of the department's secretary, "A 13" for Forest Service publications, etc.

Unlike the decimal-based numbering system (Library of Congress) used for books on the fourth floor, the SuDocs system consists of letters and only whole numbers separated by punctuation. There are no decimals.

THINK WHOLE NUMBERS

Example of the correct order of documents on the shelf or in the microfiche cabinets:

A 1.2:

A 1.3:

A 1.21:

A 1.21: comes after the A 1.3: because 21 is a larger whole number than 3. It is not a decimal .21 that would file between .2 and .3.

The distinctive mark of every SuDocs number is the colon (:) in the middle. **If a call number has a colon in it, it is a government document;** no colon indicates a Library of Congress Classification (LC) call number.

If you don't find a document on the shelf, remember that it may be in the microfiche cabinets on the west side of the third floor (or vice versa).

If you have any problems locating documents, please ask a librarian!