Library of Congress Classification
Module 5.2
Dates in Classification Numbers

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In the previous module we discussed classification numbers whose captions consist of date spans. Those date spans sometimes refer to the time period covered in the resource, and other times they refer to the publication date of the resource. This separates older resources on a topic from newer ones. In either case, the time period is not explicit to users because it is contained in the caption.
In this module, we will discuss classification numbers that explicitly include a date. The date is usually represented by a four-digit year, and it may represent the year of the event that is discussed in the resource or the publication date of the work. Regardless, special instructions appear in the schedule.
In the next module, we will discuss a different kind of date altogether: dates that are added as the final element in call numbers.

Those dates reflect the date of publication of the resource and are used to subarrange resources within a classification number.
In this module, then, we will discuss dates that appear in *classification* numbers, while in the next module we will discuss dates that are the final element of *call* numbers. What is the difference?

Recall from Module 1.1 that a classification number represents the subject or form of the resource being cataloged. It is selected from the classification schedule. A classification number is just one piece of a call number, which usually also consists of a book number and other information such as a date and a work letter. Multiple resources can have the same classification number, but each resource must have its own call number, because the call number uniquely identifies the specific resource and is primarily used to locate the resource on the shelf.

Sometimes call numbers include two dates: one that is part of the classification number and one that is used to subarrange resources on the shelf. It is important to understand the difference between the two types of dates, so that you can build call numbers correctly.
As you know, LC call numbers are composed of several parts that usually appear in a predictable order.

The class or subclass, represented by letters, comes first.

It is followed by an Arabic numeral, which is followed by one or more cutter numbers.

In the case of monographic resources, the cutters are followed by a date.

For serials, call numbers end with the final cutter.
There are some exceptions to this rule, as you can see in this example. In this number, GV842 represents the Winter Olympics and 2014 refers to the Winter Olympics that were held in 2014. GV842 2014 is the classification number of the resource. The call number is completed by adding a cutter, .C34, and the publication date, 2017.

Call numbers such as this are constructed according to instructions provided in the schedules. In this module, we will show you some examples of those types of instructions so that you can identify them when you see them, and make accurate call numbers.

We do want to say that this module uses terminology and skills that we have not yet fully explained, including the use of cutters, dates of publication, and tables. Please do not concern yourself with understanding every step that we perform, particularly if you are new to LC classification. Doing so will only frustrate you. The goal of this module is simple: to show you how dates are sometimes included in the classification portion of a call number, and to demonstrate the importance of following special instructions that appear in the schedule.

Let’s show the examples.
Our first example is an edition of the \textit{New American Bible}, which is classified in BS192.3.A1.

The first part of the classification number is B192.3.A1, which is written in the schedule. Notice that the caption says, \textbf{Texts. By date}. The period in the caption divides the meaning of the number – texts – from instructions on how to complete the classification number. “By date” instructs us to use the publication date as part of the classification number. Therefore, the full classification number for this resource is BS192.3.A1 2018. The schedule then provides an instruction to \textit{Subarrange by place of publication}.

As you will learn in Unit 7, the default instruction for subarranging resources within a classification number is to cutter by the main entry. Here, the instruction tells us to make a cutter for the place of publication instead.
We will show you how to create cutters in Unit 7. For now, just trust us that the call number for this Bible will be BS192.3.A1 2018 .N47.

By following the instructions as provided, and in the order in which they are presented, we created a correctly formatted call number.

As we will explain in the next module, a date that is used to subarrange monographic resources within a call number is typically the final element of the call number. We do not add another date after the cutter in this call number because the publication date is already represented by the classification portion of the call number.
Now we are cataloging a resource about relief efforts after the flooding in Houston, Texas, in 2018. The first part of the classification number for individual floods is HV610, and the caption for that number reads, **By date of occurrence**. There is also an instruction that says, **Subarrange by place, A-Z, and by author, A-Z**.

Once again, we should follow the instructions in the order in which they are given.
The classification number consists of three parts: The first is HV610. The second is the date of the flood that is the subject of the resource, 2018. The third part is based on the next instruction, which says, **Subarrange by place, A-Z**. Therefore, we should assign a cutter that allows Houston to file alphabetically with other places that had floods in 2018. We chose .H68.

Therefore, our classification number is HV610 2018 .H68.
Now we need to follow the instructions to complete the call number. The instructions are to subarrange alphabetically by author. This requires another cutter, T79.

Finally, we will append the date of publication to the end of the call number. We do this because this is a monograph, and there is no instruction telling us not to do it, and the date of publication is not already represented in the call number. 2018 refers to the date of the flood, not the date of the resource.

If the resource were published in the same year as the flood, 2018 would appear twice in the call number: HV610 2018 .H68 T79 2018.
Now we have a 2018 edition of a treaty that was originally signed in 1903.

As you can see, the classification number includes the word “date” in angle brackets. I hope that you recall our saying in Module 3.2 that angle brackets indicate that the number is reserved for other libraries and is not used at the Library of Congress. That’s true, except in the few cases in which information in angle brackets follows a classification that does not appear in angle brackets, as we see here.

In this case, the brackets indicate that we should insert a date into the call number. The caption indicates that the date is the date of the signing of the treaty: 1903. Notice that there is a space between KIA3.3 and the bracketed information. This means that there should be a space before the date.

This number includes an internal table that shows us how to further subarrange resources. We will discuss tables in great detail later in this training. However, for now, because we have a text of the treaty, we will follow the date with the cutter .A2.

KIA3.3 1903 .A2 is the classification number.

To finish the complete call number, we will apply the default instructions for publication dates, and append 2018. The full call number is KIA3.3 1903 .A2 2018.
This example shows another way that a date can be incorporated into a classification number.

We again see the bracketed word “date,” but this time there is not a space between the number and the opening bracket. Let’s look at the instructions. They say, “Arrange chronologically by appending the four-digit year of signature of the treaty to K3588.3 and deleting any trailing zeros.”
If we are cataloging a treaty that was signed in 2014, the classification number will begin K3588.32014; that is, K3588.3 with 2014 appended to it.
There is also a table for further subarrangement. We have an unannotated edition, so the cutter will be .A2. The instructions on that line tell us to include the date after the cutter. The date to which this instruction refers is the date of publication, and we can be sure about that because the date of the treaty is already represented in the call number.

The full call number is K3588.32014 .A2 2017.
The basic rule to follow when assigning call numbers is to read and follow the instructions in the schedules.

There are default rules that we will cover in great depth throughout the rest of this training, but special instructions printed in the schedules always override the default instructions.
Exercises

Click when you are ready to begin