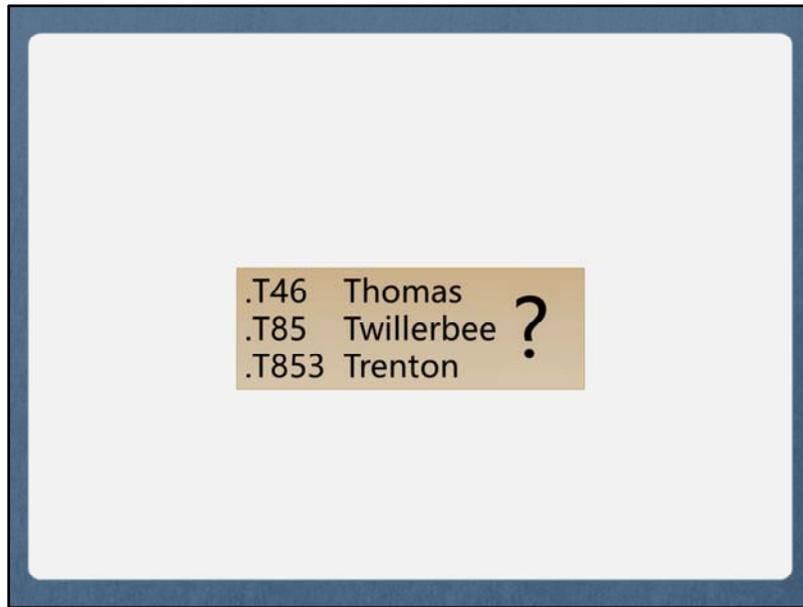


In the previous module, we showed how the Cutter Table works. In reality, though, when shelflisting a resource, the first step is to consult the catalog, *not* to consult the Cutter Table.

The reason is this: the cutter assigned to any given resource depends on what cutters have already been assigned in that classification number in the library's catalog. In fact, the book number – the cutter assigned for the author or title – tends to be the element of the bibliographic record that is unique to a particular library. Sometimes even libraries that accept copy cataloging without review will check and revise cutter numbers in order to make sure that the cutters do in fact create an alphabetical arrangement on the shelf.



It does not matter if the Cutter Table says that the name Twillerbee should be assigned the cutter .T85 if assigning .T85 means that Twillerbee would file incorrectly between Thomas and Trenton.

Creating Relative Cutters

Example

D125.J34	Jagger, Joanne
	Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
D125.K66	Kooper, Angus

The procedure is to determine where in the catalog the resource should be filed, and what cutters are around that location.

Let's say that Heidi Joseph writes a book on medieval antiquities, the meaning of the classification number D125. Joanne Jagger and Angus Kooper's books are already cuttered at .J34 and .K66 respectively. Heidi Joseph has to fit between them. Now, and only now, should we consult the Cutter Table.

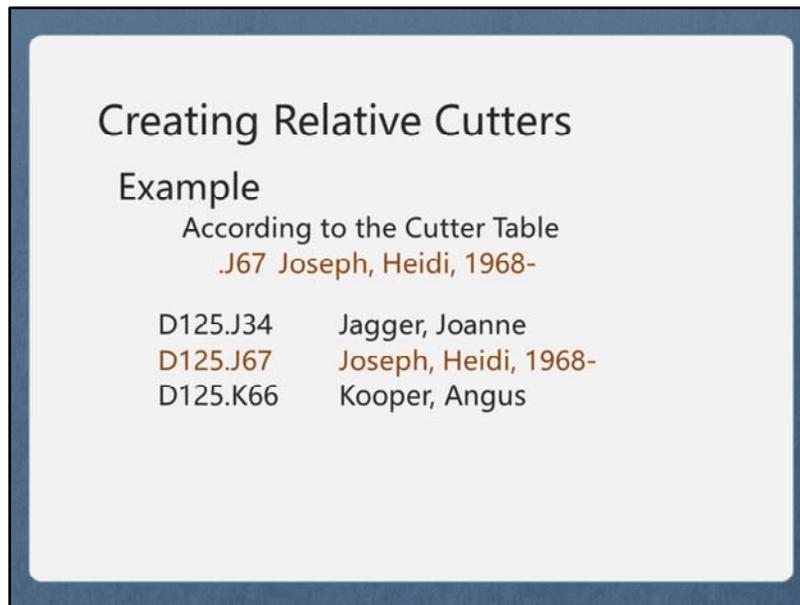
## Creating Relative Cutters

Example

According to the Cutter Table  
.J67 Joseph, Heidi, 1968-

D125.J34	Jagger, Joanne Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
D125.K66	Kooper, Angus

According to the Cutter Table, Joseph should have the cutter .J67.



Creating Relative Cutters

Example

According to the Cutter Table  
.J67 Joseph, Heidi, 1968-

D125.J34	Jagger, Joanne
D125.J67	Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
D125.K66	Kooper, Angus

.J67 fits the catalog, so it should be assigned to Heidi Joseph. It fits well because the cutters for Jagger and Kooper were both assigned according to the Cutter Table. If your catalog is large, like LC's, this happens only in lightly used or new classification numbers. It is more common that the cutter derived from the Cutter Table does not fit precisely where the table would place it.

**Creating Relative Cutters**

**Example**

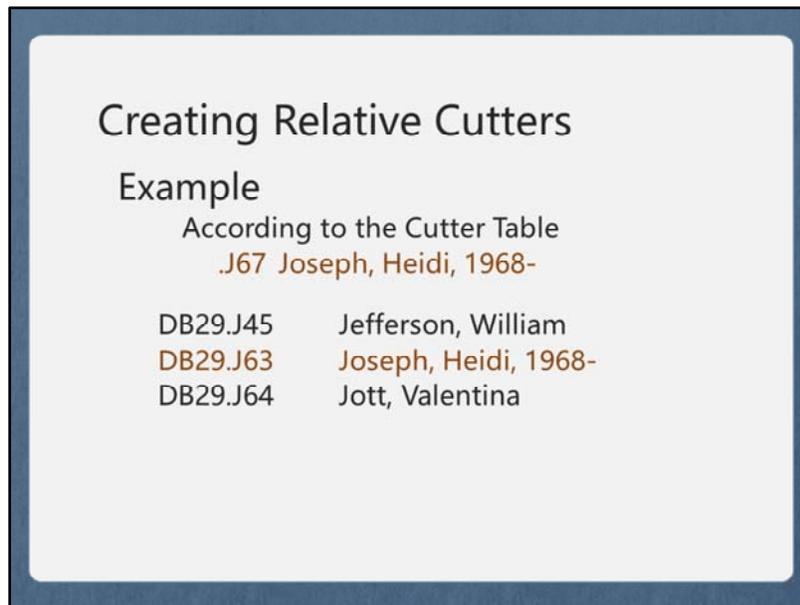
According to the Cutter Table  
.J67 Joseph, Heidi, 1968-

DB29.J45	Jefferson, William Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
DB29.J64	Jott, Valentina

Now Heidi Joseph writes a book about the antiquities of Austria.

This time, her book has to be filed between Jefferson at .J45 and Jott at .J64. Assigning .J67 as the Cutter Table indicates would place Joseph after Jott, not before.

Therefore, we have to make up a cutter. It is best to follow the Cutter Table as closely as possible.



**Creating Relative Cutters**

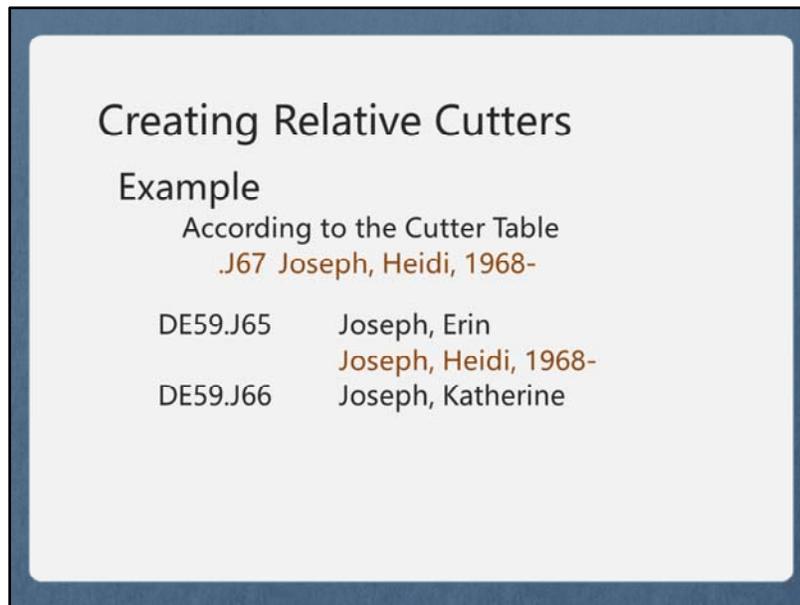
**Example**

According to the Cutter Table  
.J67 Joseph, Heidi, 1968-

DB29.J45	Jefferson, William
<b>DB29.J63</b>	<b>Joseph, Heidi, 1968-</b>
DB29.J64	Jott, Valentina

An O after an initial consonant other than an S or a Q is assigned the digit 6. Since J-O for Jott was assigned .J6, we will keep J-O for Joseph at .J6. We then choose a second digit that allows Joseph to file before Jott. A 3 works well, because S, the third letter of Joseph, is the letter directly before T, the third letter of Jott.

Joseph's cutter in DB29 is .J63.



**Creating Relative Cutters**

**Example**

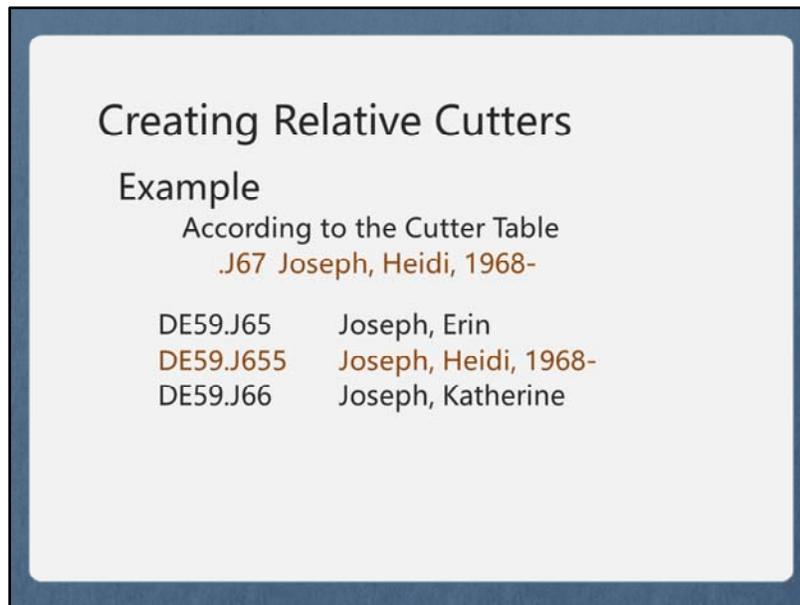
According to the Cutter Table  
.J67 Joseph, Heidi, 1968-

DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine

Now Heidi has written a book about antiquities of the Greco-Roman world, which was classed at DE59.

This time her name has to fit alphabetically between two other people with the last name Joseph. Because the last names are identical, we use the part of the name heading that follows the comma. Heidi has to file between Erin and Katherine.

Erin was assigned the cutter .J65 and Katherine was assigned .J66.



**Creating Relative Cutters**

**Example**

According to the Cutter Table  
.J67 Joseph, Heidi, 1968-

DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin
DE59.J655	Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine

Two consecutive two-digit numbers were assigned, so we will need to use three digits for Heidi's cutter. E, H, and K are relatively close together, so let's split the difference and assign .J655.

The practice of adding digits to cutter numbers to make them fit between other cutters allows for infinite expandability.

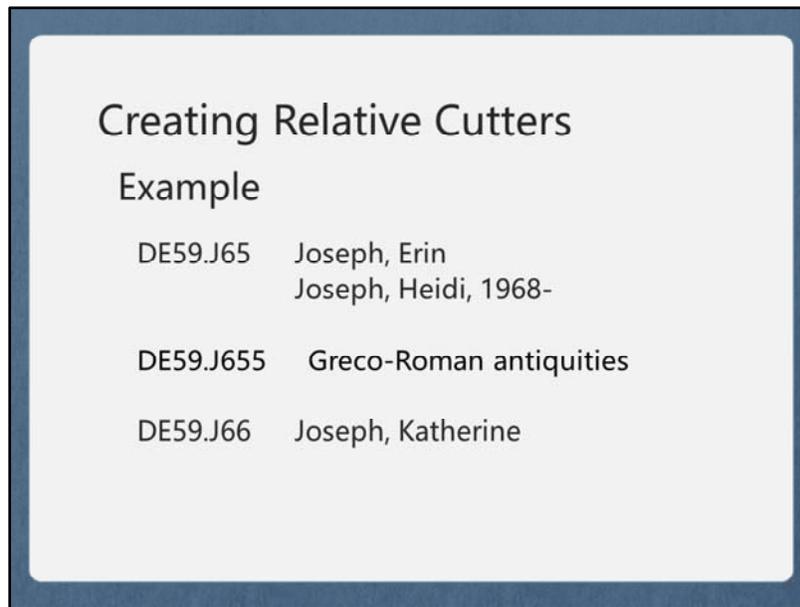
I've seen cutter numbers as long as ten digits long in very crowded areas of LC's catalog – recall that LC has the largest collection of materials in the world – but that situation is quite rare. It is not so unusual, though, to have five- or seven-digit cutters in some areas.

### Creating Relative Cutters

- Multiple works by the same author in the same class number
  - File alphabetically
  - Assign a unique cutter number to each

There is one more situation to discuss, and that is when there is more than one work by the same author classified in the same number. This situation may also happen when a work is entered under title – perhaps an edited book of essays by multiple people.

Each of those works should be assigned a unique cutter number, and the cutter numbers assigned need to allow the works to file alphabetically.



Creating Relative Cutters

Example

DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
DE59.J655	Greco-Roman antiquities
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine

Let's take another look at Heidi Joseph. The book to which we assigned a cutter a few moments ago was titled *Greco-Roman Antiquities*. It received the cutter .J655.

## Creating Relative Cutters

Example

DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin Joseph, Heidi, 1968- <i>Artifacts from Greece and Rome</i>
DE59.J655	Greco-Roman antiquities
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine

.J650  
.J651  
.J652  
.J653  
.J654

?

Now she has written another book about Greco-Roman antiquities, which is titled *Artifacts from Greece and Rome*.

Remember that the first step to assigning a book number is to check the catalog. When we do, we see the title that is already there. The word artifacts comes alphabetically before Greco-Roman, so we have to fit *Artifacts from Greece and Rome* before *Greco-Roman Antiquities*.

We have to fit the cutter between .J65 and .J655. The cutter will be three digits long. What are the possible choices? .J650 is not an option, because a zero at the end of a decimal number is meaningless.

## Creating Relative Cutters

Example

DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin
	Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
DE59.J653	Artifacts from Greece and Rome
DE59.J655	Greco-Roman antiquities
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine

The digit 1 is also not a good idea, because it could force you to use a zero in the future. If you assigned .J651 to *Artifacts from Greece and Rome*, and then she published yet another book that was classed in this number and it had to fit alphabetically before *Artifacts from Greece and Rome*, say, *Ancient Artifacts from Greece and Rome*, you would be forced to use a zero in the cutter for *Ancient Artifacts from Greece and Rome*. We are not supposed to use a zero, so do not use a 1 at the end of the cutter, and you might be able to avoid the situation altogether.

The digit 2 is also a bad idea for the final digit of a cutter, but not quite as bad as a 1. So why is a 2 a bad idea? First, when used as the last digit on a book number it has a special meaning: an abridgment. We will discuss abridgments in more detail in a different module. Plus, if you use .J652 for *Artifacts from Greece and Rome* and she later publishes *Ancient Artifacts from Greece and Rome*, you will be forced to use a 1 for that book, and if she publishes another one that has to file before *Ancient Artifacts from Greece and Rome*, you may be forced to use a 0 for that one. In other words, when assigning book numbers we always need to be thinking about the future.

So, we have two options left: .J653 and .J654. Both are valid. There are no prohibitions on using a 3 or a 4 as the final digit of a cutter. So which is better? Probably .J653, because it leaves space. Heidi has already published two books that are classed in this number, and A is a bit of a distance from G. It's not a large distance – not like the distance between G and U, for example – but it makes sense to leave a bit of space between *Artifacts* and *Greco-*

## Library of Congress Classification: Module 7.2

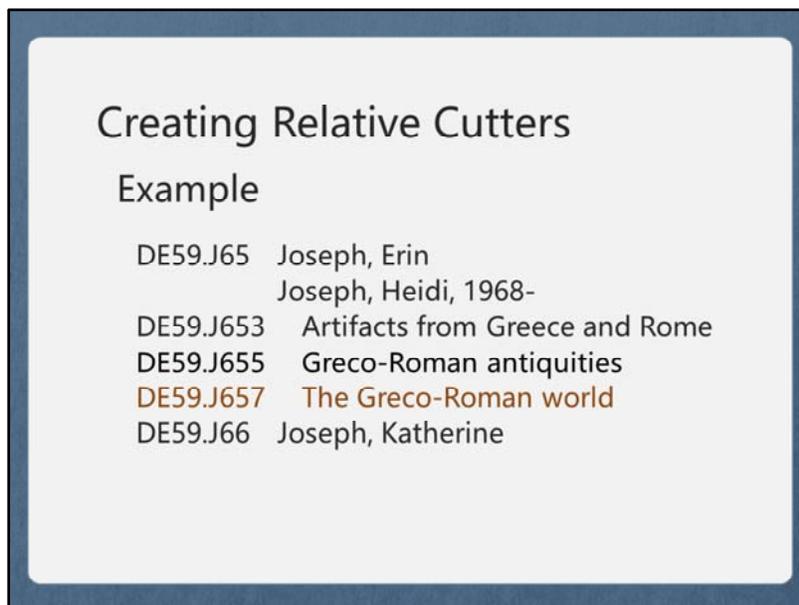
*Roman*, for future books.

## Creating Relative Cutters

### Example

DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin
	Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
DE59.J653	Artifacts from Greece and Rome
DE59.J655	Greco-Roman antiquities
	The Greco-Roman world
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine

Using .J653 does that. If she publishes yet another book on the topic, called *Greece and Rome*, it could then be assigned .J654.



Creating Relative Cutters

Example

DE59.J65 Joseph, Erin  
Joseph, Heidi, 1968-

DE59.J653 Artifacts from Greece and Rome

DE59.J655 Greco-Roman antiquities

DE59.J657 **The Greco-Roman world**

DE59.J66 Joseph, Katherine

Well, she did publish another book called *The Greco-Roman World*. Recall that we skip initial articles, so we are alphabetizing on Greco-Roman. Alphabetically, the new title comes after *Greco-Roman Antiquities*, so its cutter has to fit between .J655 and .J66. Again, we will need a three-digit cutter. There are no prohibitions on using 6, 7, 8, or 9 as final digits of cutters, so we simply have to choose what we think is best.

To do that, we have to consider the context. The classification number is for resources about Greco-Roman antiquities, and Heidi has now published two books that begin with the phrase Greco-Roman. The two that she has published are at opposite ends of the alphabet, A and W, based on the next word in each title. Might she publish another one that needs to fit between them? She does seem to be awfully prolific!

We do not want to leave *too* much space, because we do not know what other authors – or titles – might need to be filed between Heidi Joseph’s *The Greco-Roman World* and Katherine Joseph.

A good cutter would be .J657, because it leaves a bit of space for titles that have to be filed between *Greco-Roman Antiquities* and *The Greco-Roman World*. It also leaves space for other authors or title that have to be filed after *The Greco-Roman World* and before Katherine Joseph.

## Creating Relative Cutters

### Example

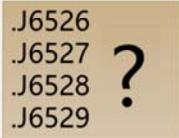
DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin
	Joseph, Gavin
	Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
DE59.J653	Artifacts from Greece and Rome
DE59.J655	Greco-Roman antiquities
DE59.J657	The Greco-Roman world
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine

Let's take it a step further. Now we are cataloging a book about Greco-Roman antiquities by Gavin Joseph.

He has to fit between Erin and Heidi. Because we used .J653 for Heidi's *Artifacts from Greece and Rome*, we have to use a 2. Remember, though, that is never a good idea to use a 2 as the final digit of a cutter used as a book number – unless there are specific instructions to do so, such as for an abridgement. There are no such instructions here. What should we do?

### Creating Relative Cutters

Example

DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin	
	Joseph, Gavin	
	Joseph, Heidi, 1968-	
DE59.J653	Artifacts from Greece and Rome	
DE59.J655	Greco-Roman antiquities	
DE59.J657	The Greco-Roman world	
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine	

We will add another digit, to make a 4-digit cutter. As we have already seen, we need to consider context. Sometimes we can just use a 5 because it splits the difference. However, G (for Gavin) is ever-so-slightly closer to H than it is to E.

We could assign .J6526, .J6527, or .J6528. However, .J6529 would not be a good idea, because if we later have to fit something between .J6529 and .J653, we will have to use a five-digit cutter. We do want to try to avoid adding digits unnecessarily whenever possible.

So we have narrowed our choices to .J6526, .J6527, and .J6528.

## Creating Relative Cutters

### Example

DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin
DE59.J6527	Joseph, Gavin
	Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
DE59.J653	Artifacts from Greece and Rome
DE59.J655	Greco-Roman antiquities
DE59.J657	The Greco-Roman world
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine

Let's choose .J6527, because it leaves space on either side.

### Creating Relative Cutters

Example

DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin	.J658 .J659 ?
DE59.J6527	Joseph, Gavin	
	Joseph, Heidi, 1968-	
DE59.J653	Artifacts from Greece and Rome	
DE59.J655	Greco-Roman antiquities	
DE59.J657	The Greco-Roman world	
	Joseph, Ignatius	
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine	

Now an author named Ignatius Joseph has to be classed here. He has to fit between Heidi's *The Greco-Roman World* and Katherine. We essentially have two choices: .J658 and .J659. Let's look at the consequences of each.

If we assign .J658 and something else has to be filed between Heidi's *The Greco-Roman World* and Ignatius, the cutter will have to be four digits long. However, if something has to be filed between Ignatius and Katherine, the cutter can be three digits: .J659.

If we assign .J659, the opposite is true. If something else has to be filed between Heidi's *The Greco-Roman World* and Ignatius, it can be assigned .J658. But if something has to be filed between Ignatius and Katherine, the cutter will have to be four digits long.

## Creating Relative Cutters

### Example

DE59.J65	Joseph, Erin
DE59.J6527	Joseph, Gavin
	Joseph, Heidi, 1968-
DE59.J653	Artifacts from Greece and Rome
DE59.J655	Greco-Roman antiquities
DE59.J657	The Greco-Roman world
DE59.J658	Joseph, Ignatius
DE59.J66	Joseph, Katherine

Therefore, there is no better option here. Just assign one or the other.

## Summary

- When assigning book numbers
  - Search the catalog first
    - Assign a cutter number relative to the resources already in the classification number
    - If the cutter that is created according to the Cutter Table fits, use it
  - Extend the cutter by a digit when necessary

In summary, when you are assigning book numbers, it is important to search the catalog first, because cutter numbers are assigned relative to the resources that are already in the classification number.

Consult the Cutter Table only after you have consulted the catalog. If the cutter indicated by the Cutter Table fits the catalog, use it. If not, then just create a cutter that fits.

If the cutter number needs to be extended by a digit in order to fit, then go ahead and do it.

## Summary

- Cutters are decimal numbers
  - Zero ( 0 )
    - Do not use unless absolutely necessary
    - Never as the final number of a cutter
  - One ( 1 )
    - Unless instructions tell you otherwise
      - Do not use unless absolutely necessary
      - Never use as the final number of a cutter
  - Two ( 2 )
    - Avoid if at all possible

And finally, remember that cutters are decimal numbers, and that there are restrictions on using 0, 1, and 2 in a cutter.

Do not use a zero unless it is absolutely necessary – and it almost never is. If you have to use a zero, never use it as the final digit. Instead, add another digit after it.

Avoid using a 1 unless specifically instructed to do so in the schedules or in the CSM. If you find that it is absolutely necessary, never use it as the final digit of a cutter because you might have to use a zero in the cutter for the next resource. Instead, add another digit.

And finally, avoid using a 2 if at all possible. Using a 2 can force the use of a 1, which can force the use of a 0. There are times, though, when using a 2 as the final digit is required by the instructions.

## Exercises

*Click when you are ready to begin*