

How to...

# Understand shelfmarks & find books faster

The shelfmark on SOLO looks like this:

**HA155.75.C3.HUB 2018**

The same shelfmark on the spine of the book looks like this:

HA  
155  
.75  
.C3  
.HUB  
2018

HA  
155  
.75  
.C3  
.HUB  
2018

These letters represent general subject areas and are arranged alphabetically. Single letters are shelved before multiple letters, eg J, JC, K, KGF ...

These numbers represent a specific subject area. This is a **whole number** – the order on the shelf is 1, 2, 10, 15, 150, 1200 ...

Some books have another number to indicate a sub-topic. This is a **decimal number** – the order on the shelf is .75, .8, .85, .8572, .9 ...

If there is a letter followed by numbers, consider the **letter first and read the numbers as decimals** – the order on the shelf is .A7, .C3, .C337, .C4, .D1 ...

The first three letters of the author's name, or sometimes the title – arranged alphabetically.

Publication year – arranged in chronological order.

The SSL uses the **Library of Congress Classification Scheme** to create shelfmarks for books.

Books on the same or similar subjects are shelved close together.

To find the shelfmark for a specific subject check our **Subject Browsing Guide** available above the New Books Display or on our website.

Here is an example of the shelf order for a range of shelfmarks

HA  
154  
.GLO

HA  
155  
.GLI

HA  
155  
.D75  
.GIB

HA  
155  
.75  
.C3  
.HUB  
2018

HA  
155  
.8  
.INT

HA  
156  
.BAR  
1999

HA  
156  
.BAR  
2012

**Can't find a book?**  
Please ask staff for help