



# Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)

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# LC Subject Headings

- ▶ Listed in Classification Web:  
<http://www.classificationweb.net/> (Updated weekly—most current and easiest way to see the subject-heading structure)
- ▶ Also in the online authority file in OCLC with tag sp: (Quickest way to check the form of a known heading).
- ▶ Controlling headings in Connexion also controls subject headings.



# LC Subject Headings

Also published annually in print—Government Documents  
in CAM has a current set

(Useful to read the introduction)



# Characteristics of Library of Congress Subject Headings

Although the original intent of LCSH was that subject headings would follow a dictionary plan instead of an alphabetic-classed plan, the list reflects a reluctance to disperse related entries. Many headings were originally constructed in a manner that placed the name of a class first through the use of subdivisions, through inversion, or through parenthetical qualifications.

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- ▶ Subject headings may consist of one word or several. A one-word heading is usually a noun--Viscosity, Dogs, or Schools, for example. Concepts are normally named in the singular and objects in the plural, though exceptions may be found.



# Examples



- a. Simple nouns: Children; Dogs; Libraries
- b. Compound nouns: Bioengineering; Electrometallurgy
- c. Nouns with parenthetical qualifiers: Seals (Animals); Crack (Drug)
- d. Phrases with prepositions: Teachers of gifted children; Photography of dogs; Photocopying services in libraries
- e. Compound phrases: Children and animals; Comic, books, strips, etc.
- f. Complex phrases: Names carved on trees; Infants switched at birth
- g. Topical name or form/genre headings with subdivisions: Taxation—Effect of inflation on; Woodwind trios (Bassoon, clarinet, flute)—Scores and parts

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- ▶ Two-word headings usually contain an adjective and a noun. These may appear in normal word order, as with Nuclear physics, Local taxation, and Pumping machinery; or in inverted form.
  - ▶ Inversion is common with adjectives describing language or nationality, such as Lullabies, Urdu; Songs, French; Art, American.
  - ▶ Other types of headings may also be inverted in order to bring the noun into the initial position, such as Love, Maternal and Injections, Intramuscular.



# Natural Language in Topical Subject Headings

- ▶ The current policy is to use normal word order for topical headings except for headings with language, nationality, or ethnic adjectives, headings qualified by time period, such as Art, Medieval, headings qualified by artistic or musical style, headings with the word Fossil, and certain music headings.
- ▶ Names of geographic features have traditionally been inverted in order to place a significant word in the initial position instead of the generic word. For example, Lake Erie is formulated as Erie, Lake so that it's in the list under the distinguishing part of the name, Erie.

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- ▶ In the past many were established in inverted form, for example, Chemistry, Analytic.
  - ▶ In 1983 a decision was made to create most new headings in direct form using natural language. The inverted form was retained for topical headings qualified by languages, nationalities, and ethnic groups. Some of the older headings have been changed: Insurance, Health is now Health insurance.



# Examples

Natural language headings

- ▶ Older women not Women, Older
- ▶ Agricultural chemistry not Chemistry, Agricultural
- ▶ Anonymous art not Art, Anonymous



# Inverted headings

- ▶ Assign topical headings qualified by languages, nationalities, or ethnic groups in inverted form.
- ▶ Art, French
- ▶ Cooking, Chinese (until summer 2010 it was Cookery, Chinese)
- ▶ National characteristics, Argentine
- ▶ Revolutionary poetry, Bulgarian
- ▶ Mythology, Armenian



# Literature Headings

- ▶ Literature and the major genres are established in direct order

German literature

German fiction

Zulu literature



# Parenthetical Qualifiers

- ▶ A qualifier indicates which of the several definitions is intended for the heading in question.
- ▶ A parenthetical qualifier may be used to remove ambiguity or to make more explicit a word or phrase that is obscure or might be misunderstood. (A word or phrase is not considered obscure if it is found in a general English-language dictionary.)

Examples:

- ▶ Names of disciplines: Analysis (Philosophy), Antennas (Electronics), Slimes (Mining)
- ▶ Categories of objects: Cuffs (Clothing), Trunks (Luggage), Plates (Tableware)
- ▶ BASIC (Computer program language)



# Scope Notes



- ▶ Scope notes generally serve to limit the applicability of a heading used in the catalog, thereby helping readers determine to what extent it covers the material they seek, and making it possible for catalogers to maintain consistency in assigning the heading to new works being cataloged.
- ▶ Scope notes are especially useful under headings that represent new concepts or than employ terminology not yet firmly established in the language.



# Examples of Scope Notes

- ▶ **Artists' preparatory studies** Here are entered works on studies or sketches by artists preparatory to executing works of art in any form
- ▶ **Southwest, New** Here are entered works on that part of the United States which roughly corresponds to the old Spanish province of New Mexico, including the present Arizona, New Mexico, southern Colorado, Utah, Nevada and California.



# Name Headings vs. Subject Authority File

- ▶ Most AACR2 name headings found in the name authority file may be used not only as main or added entries, but also as subject headings. A 667 field may give information applicable to the usage of a name heading in subject cataloging in name authority records.
- ▶ Because the 667 field is also used for descriptive cataloging information, there may be more than one such field in a Name Authority Record. A field that carries subject cataloging information always begins with the words SUBJECT USAGE followed by a colon.



# Name Authority Record

- 001 n80-61038
- 040 DLC DLC
- 151 Ceylon. [AACR2]
- 667 SUBJECT USAGE: This heading is not valid for use as a subject. Works about this place are entered under Sri Lanka
- 451 Cejlon

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- 001 n79-18774
  - 040 DLC DLC DLC
  - 151 Washington (D.C.)
  - 667 SUBJECT USAGE: As a geographic subdivision, this heading is used directly.
  - 451 Washington, D.C. [old catalog heading] [do not make]
  - 451 Washinton (D.C.)
  - 451 Vashington (D.C.)
  - 451 Washintun (D.C.)
  - 670 Whitman, C. R. Capital transit guide map, 1948: t.p. (Washington, D.C.)
  - 670 Iwamoto, K. Tokyo Washington daiinbo, 1982 t.p. (Washington)
  - 670 Korionov, V.G. Vashington na pereput:e, 1982: t.p. (Vashington)
  - 670 Al-Mash:al, Ab/Aylul 1979: t.p. (Washintun)



# Reference structure: USE References

- ▶ USE references are made from an unauthorized or non-preferred term to an authorized or preferred heading. Under the heading referred to, the code UF (Used for) precedes the term not used. The codes USE and UF function as reciprocals.

- ▶ Cars (Automobiles)  
USE Automobiles

USE references are made from synonyms, variant spellings, variant forms of expression, alternate constructions of headings, and earlier forms of headings.

The terms will be 450 references in the online Authority File.



## Hierarchical Relationship: Broader Topics and Narrower Topics

- Subject headings are linked to other subject headings through cross-references now expressed as Broader Topics (BT) and Narrower Topics (NT).
- The code BT precedes a subject heading representing, according to current policy, the class of which the heading is a class member.
- The code NT precedes a subject heading representing, in most cases, a member of the class represented by the heading under which the NT appears.
- The codes BT and NT function as reciprocals.
- Both are 550 references in the online Authority File.

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- ▶ No matter the level at which one enters the hierarchy, one can follow either BTs or NTs to find the broadest or most specific heading available.
  - ▶ The making of hierarchical references creates the ability to find systematically headings that are more general or more specific than the heading being consulted.



# Associative Relationship: Related Topics

- The associative relationship, expressed by the code RT meaning Related Topic, links two headings that are associated in some manner other than by hierarchy.

For example,

- Ornithology                      Birds  
RT Birds                      RT Ornithology

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- Vehicles
  - BT Transportation
  - NT Motor vehicles
  - Motor vehicles
  - BT Vehicles
  - NT Trucks
  - Trucks
  - BT Motor vehicles
  - NT Dump trucks
  - Dump trucks
  - BT Trucks



# SUBDIVISIONS



- ▶ Library of Congress subject headings make extensive use of subject subdivision as a means of combining a number of different concepts into a single subject heading.
- ▶ Complex topics may be represented by subject headings followed by subdivisions. Only a fraction of all possible heading-and-subdivision combinations are listed in LCSH.



# Categories of Subdivisions

- ▶ Four categories of subdivisions are generally recognized (they have different MARC subfield codes) :
- ▶ topical (\$x)
- ▶ form (\$v)
- ▶ chronological (\$y)
- ▶ geographic (\$z)



# Topical Subdivisions

- ▶ Topical subdivisions are used under main headings or other subdivisions to limit the concept expressed by the heading to a special subtopic, e.g.
- ▶ Corn—Harvesting,
- ▶ Automobiles—Motors—Caburetors, and
- ▶ Women—Employment.



# Form Subdivision

- ▶ Form subdivisions represent what a work is rather than what it is about. They can generally be used under any topic, and therefore are seldom in the LCSH.
- ▶ Form subdivisions are used to indicate the form in which the material on a subject is organized and presented (e.g., congresses, dictionaries, periodicals) and as such are usually added as the last element to any headings.



# Chronological Subdivisions

- ▶ Chronological subdivisions are used to limit a heading or heading with subdivision to a particular time period. Under names of countries and other jurisdictions or regions are printed specific topical subdivisions and the chronological subdivisions that may be used with them.
- ▶ The date subdivisions given under United States—Economic conditions, United States—History, and United States—Politics and government are illustrative.



# Geographical Subdivisions



- ▶ The designation (May Subd Geog) after a subject heading or subdivision indicates that a geographic location may follow the heading or subdivision.
- ▶ The designation (Not Subd Geog) after a subject heading or subdivision indicates that a decision has been made not to divide a particular heading by geographic location.
- ▶ Omission of either designation normally means that the heading has not yet been reviewed to determine whether geographic subdivision is possible or desirable and that geographic location should not therefore be used.

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- Generally, if the single geographic entity is the name of a country or is larger than a single country, the established name is placed immediately after the heading or subdivision that has the code (May Subd Geog). Labor supply (May Subd Geog) means that place follows the subject, as in Labor supply—France.

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- ▶ If the geographic entity is the name of a region, the name of a geographic feature, the name of a state or province, or the name of a city within a country, then the name of the country precedes the name of the smaller geographic locality. The result of this practice is to gather localities as further subdivisions under the name of the country, as with Labor supply—France—Paris

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- ▶ Three countries—the United States, Great Britain, Canada—do not serve as gathering devices for smaller jurisdictions or geographic entities. The names of states, constituent countries, and provinces, instead of the country name, serve as gathering devices for the smaller jurisdictions or geographic areas.

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- ▶ If a heading contains both a geographic subdivision and topical or form subdivisions, the location of the geographic subdivision depends on which elements can be subdivided by place.
  - ▶ As a general rule, geographical subdivision follows the last element that can be divided by place.



Construction industry (May Subd Geog)

- Finance

- — Law and legislation (May Subd Geog)

- Government policy (May Subd Geog)

- Mathematical models

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will result in these combinations:

Construction industry—Italy

Construction industry—Italy—Finance

Construction industry—Finance—Law and  
Legislation—Italy

Construction industry—Government  
policy—Italy

Construction industry—Italy—Mathematical  
models

Finance and Mathematical models do not  
have (May subdivide geog) after them.



# Free-floating Subdivisions

- ▶ In 1974 it was decided that many subdivisions of subject headings would in the future be constructed according to rules or patterns instead of being authorized specifically, and the term free-floating subdivision was coined.
- ▶ Free-floating subdivisions are assembled in building-block fashion by the cataloger at the time of assigning subject headings to a work being cataloged.
- ▶ Most subdivisions are accessible in LCSH either through a general see also (SA) reference under the heading that is the same as a subdivision or through a general USE reference.

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- ▶ In addition, guidelines for the use of many subdivisions appear in the notes and references under the corresponding generic headings or references in the text of LCSH.
  - ▶ Subdivisions may be searched in both the online Authority File and ClassificationWeb. They have their own records, indicating what kind of headings they can be used with)
  - ▶ Catalogers should refer to various lists in the *Subject Cataloging Manual: Subject Headings* in order to combine elements correctly. Online version is in Cataloger's Desktop (not ClassificationWeb). The full list is at H1095 and gives the subfield codes.



# ClassificationWeb

How to access Classification Web at UIUC:

<http://www.classificationweb.net>

Login: uiuclib

Password: saka23

Basic information on using it is at

<http://www.library.illinois.edu/cam/training/lctoolsintro.html>