Using the Hartnell Library Online Catalog (available on the library homepage) you can see what books are available for you to check out or use in the library. Once you search the catalog and find a book that is of interest, write down the call number and location of the book.

What is a call number?

Each book has a unique call number designating both its subject and its place on the shelf. The call number has several parts. The first part is one or two letters (sometimes three) for the broad subject area. The second part is a number and further subdivides the general subject. The third part of the call number is a letter and number code for the author's name. Some call numbers include the date of publication on the last line. Here is an example:

- **Call number for Principles and Tools by Arthur O'Sullivan**
  - Broad subject area: Economics
  - Specific subject subdivision: Theory
  - Author: O'Sullivan
  - Date of publication

The call number appears on the spine of the book written vertically as in the above example, but it can also be written horizontally: HB 171.5 .O84 1998.

**There is no need to memorize the meaning of a call number.** Call numbers are similar to street addresses. They simply tell you where the book is located. You only need to write down the complete call number so that you will be able to find the book on the shelf.

Books are shelved by their call numbers on a line-by-line basis.

1. Alphabetically by the first line, then
2. Numerically by the second line, then
3. First alphabetically, then numerically by the third line. 
   *Note that the numbers on line three are treated as decimals*, so that .C263 comes between .C26 and .C27.
4. If there is a fourth line before the year of publication, it is sorted first alphabetically and then numerically.
5. If two call numbers are identical in all respects except for year of publication, then the books are placed in chronological order by the year of publication.
How are books arranged at the Hartnell College Library?

Books are arranged by the Library of Congress Classification System. Each subject or field of knowledge is assigned a one-, two-, or three-letter code. The letters do not stand for the first letter of the subject they represent. For instance, political science is letter J, and art is letter N. The system uses letters and numbers to further define areas of knowledge. To see an outline of letters assigned to broad subject categories look at the Library handout entitled *The Library of Congress Classification System*.

Where Are Books Shelved?

- **Circulating Collection**: These books are found on the shelves on the second floor between the Quiet Study area and the Information Competency Center. These items can be checked out and taken from the library (circulate). The online catalog lists *Book Stacks* as the location of these items.
- **Reference Books**: Books such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases, directories, and indexes are intended to be referred to rather than read from the beginning to the end of the book. Reference books are shelved in the Reference Services area on the library’s second floor. The online catalog lists *Reference Collection* for the location of these items.
- **College & Career**: This group of reference books is shelved at the beginning of the reference stacks and includes directories of colleges and universities, guides to locating scholarships and financial aid and vocational and career guides. The online catalog lists *College & Career* for the location of these items.
- **Course Reserve Books and Material**: This group includes library books, textbooks, instructors’ personal copies of material, assigned readings, and some heavily used Reference books. Course Reserve materials may be used only in the library, and are located at *Circulation Services* (first floor).

If the book is not on the shelf:

- Check the nearby shelves to see if the book has been misshelved
- Look at the books on the reshelving book truck located near the book stacks
- Ask for assistance at Reference Services
- If the online catalog indicates the book is checked out, you can place a hold on it, and you will be notified when it is returned

For more information on the Library of Congress Classification and how to read a call number:

- How to Find a Book (from the Hartnell Library) [https://youtu.be/c01k3eVMwhQ](https://youtu.be/c01k3eVMwhQ)
- How to read a Library of Congress Call Number (from the University of Arkansas Library) [https://youtu.be/4duiA5ZfOWE](https://youtu.be/4duiA5ZfOWE)
- Library of Congress Classification Outline [https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcco/](https://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcco/)