

Just Dewey It: the Basics of Dewey Decimal Classification

Mary Cornell, CMC Cataloger

Online with the CMC: September 11, 2025





Agenda:

- What is the Dewey Decimal System?
- Vocab Lessons
- Pieces of a Dewey Number
- Classes of DDC
- Dewey Tables
- Choosing a Number
- A Little Number Building and Class Examples
- Resources



Dewey Decimal System

Keep similar
items together

Separating
items into
subjects

Creating ease of
access for users



Dewey Decimal System, cont.

Conceived by Melvil Dewey in 1873 and published in 1876.

Currently published and all copyright rights are owned by OCLC.



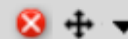


Vocab Lesson

Parts of Dewey:

- Schedules
- Tables
- Manual
- Relative Index

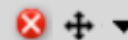
LC Subject Headings



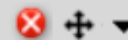
[Quakers](#)

[Society of Friends](#)

MeSH



Relative Index Terms (English)



[Friends \(Religious society\)](#)

[Quakers](#)

[Society of Friends](#)

Additional Terminology Sources





Vocab Lesson Cont.

Other terms:

- Disciplines
- Subjects
- Hierarchy
 - Structural
 - Notation

230-280

Christianity

[230](#) ▼ Christianity

[240](#) ▼ Christian practice & observance

[250](#) ▼ Christian pastoral practice & religious orders

[260](#) ▼ Christian organization, social work & worship

[270](#) ▼ History of Christianity

[280](#) ▼ Christian denominations



Vocab Lesson Cont.

Structural Hierarchy

743.4 *Drawing human figures

[743.4/2](#) *Portraiture

[743.43-743.45](#) ▼ Specific kinds of people

[743.4/6](#) *Bones (Skeletal system)

[743.4/7](#) *Muscles (Muscular system)

[743.4/9](#) *Anatomy for artists

Notation Hierarchy

Children—psychology

100 Philosophy, parapsychology and occultism,
 psychology

150 Psychology

155 Differential and developmental psychology

155.4 Child psychology



Pieces of a Dewey Number

Division

- [310](#) ▼ Statistics
- [320](#) ▼ Political science
- [330](#) ▼ Economics
- [340](#) ▼ Law
- [350](#) ▼ Public administration & military science
- [360](#) ▼ Social problems & social services
- [370](#) ▼ Education
- [380](#) ▼ Commerce, communications & transportation
- [390](#) ▼ Customs, etiquette & folklore

Section

-
- [370](#) ▼ Education
 - [371](#) ▼ Schools and their activities; special education
 - [372-374](#) ▼ Specific levels of education

Notation

- [373.1](#) ▼ Organization and activities in secondary education
- [373.2](#) ▼ Secondary schools and programs of specific kinds, levels, curricula, focus
- [373.3-373.9](#) ▼ Secondary education in specific continents, countries, localities



Classes of DDC

The DEWEY DECIMAL SYSTEM



000
GENERAL
KNOWLEDGE



100
PHILOSOPHY &
PSYCHOLOGY



200
RELIGION



300
SOCIAL
SCIENCES



400
LANGUAGES



500
SCIENCE



600
TECHNOLOGY



700
ART &
RECREATION



800
LITERATURE



900
HISTORY &
GEOGRAPHY



Dewey Tables

- There are eight different Dewey tables, T1-T6:
 - T1: Standard Subdivisions
 - T2: Geographic Areas, Historical Periods, Biography
 - T4: Subdivisions of Individual Languages and Language Families
 - T6: Languages



Dewey Tables, Cont.

- T3A-T3C: Arts & Literature:
 - T3A: Subdivisions for Works by or about Individual Authors
 - T3B: Subdivisions for Works by or about More than One Author
 - T3C: Additional Notation for Arts and Literature
- T5: Ethnic and National Groups



Choosing a Number

- Determine subject
- Translate subject
 - Determine discipline
 - Use relative index if needed
 - Read instructions
 - Author's intention
 - Follow basic rules.



Number Building: T3A

[820](#) ▼ English & Old English literatures

821-828 Subdivisions for specific forms of English literature



821 English poetry



 **821/.8** English poetry--1837-1899, . . .



[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939](#)
[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939--Aesthetics](#)
[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939--Criticism, Textual](#)
[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939--Criticism and interpretation](#)
[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939--Friends and associates](#)
[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939--Knowledge--Folklore](#)
[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939--Knowledge--Literature](#)
[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939--Knowledge--Occultism](#)
[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939--Poetic works](#)
[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939--Political and social views](#)
[Yeats, W. B. \(William Butler\), 1865-1939--Technique](#)

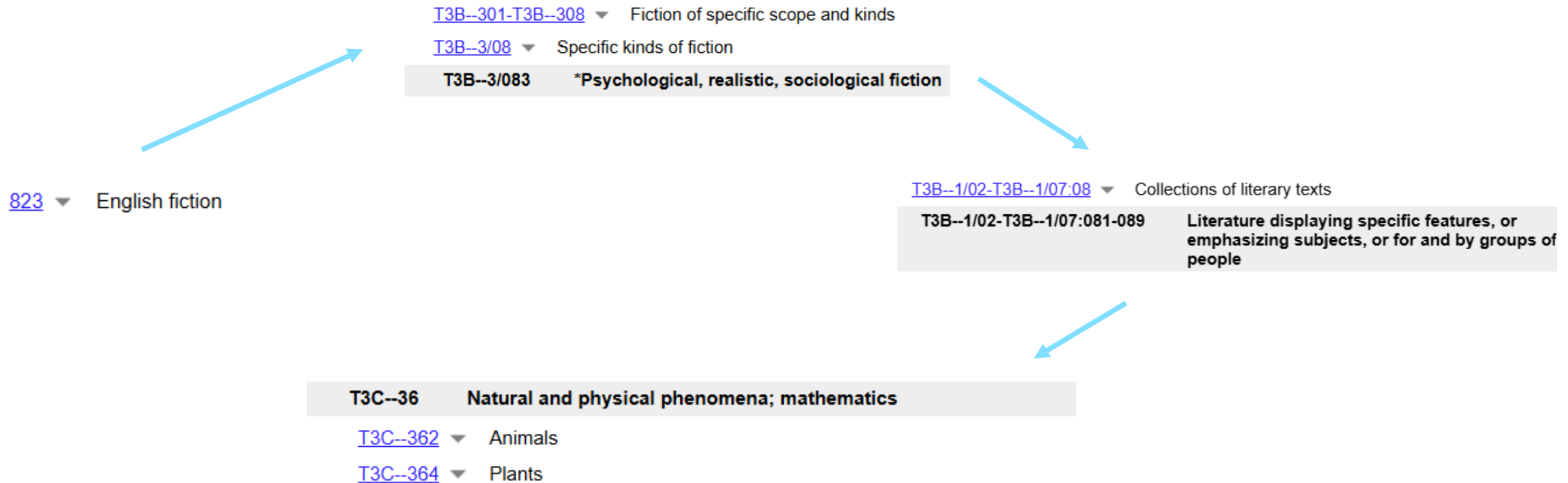


Number Building: T3B





Number Building: T3C





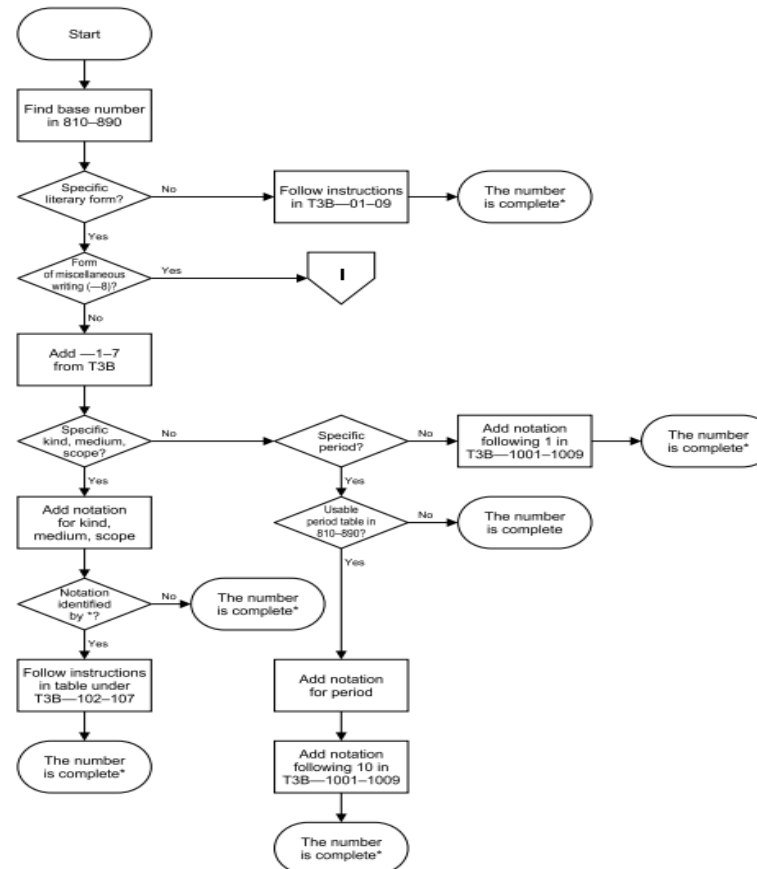
Number Building Table 3 Flowchart



CATALOGING
MAINTENANCE CENTER

Statewide Cataloging Support

Flow chart B: Works by or about more than one author



*If appropriate, standard subdivisions may be added



Class Examples

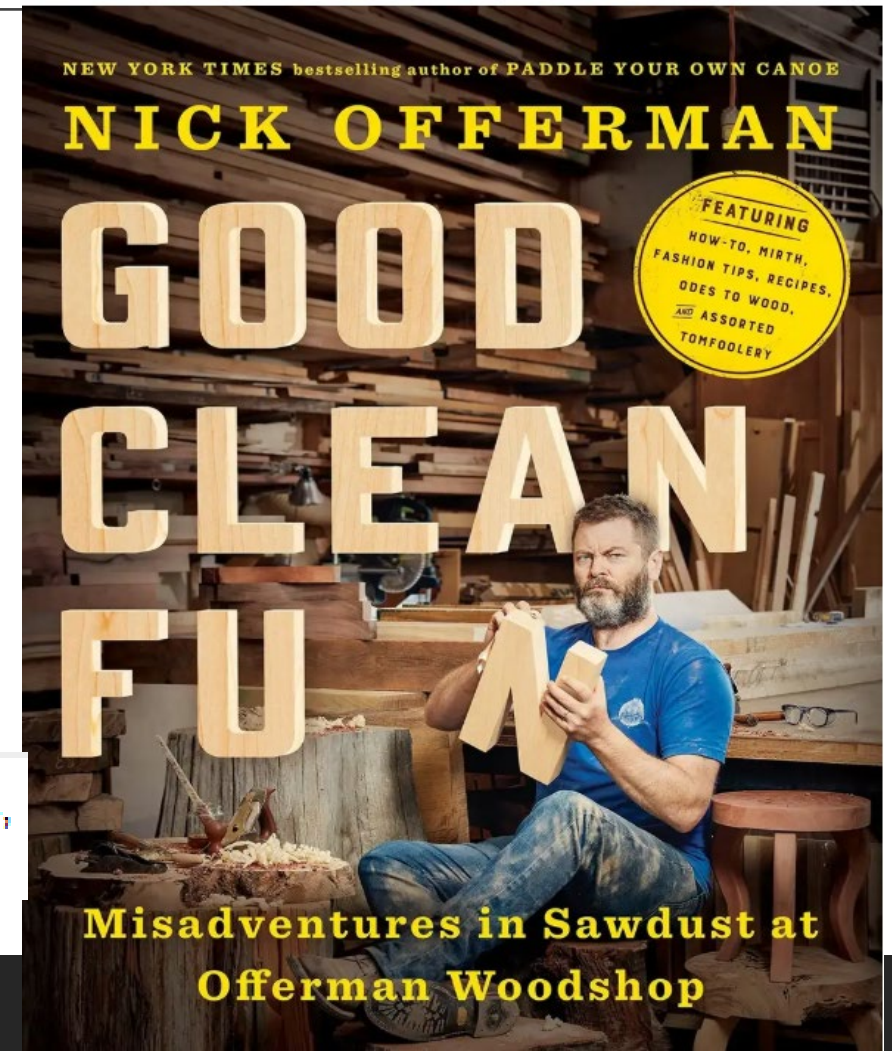
- Woodworking
 - Woodworking \$v Anecdotes.
- Offerman Woodshop
 - Offerman Woodshop \$v Anecdotes.
- Humor or anecdotes

684/.08

Woodworking

[T3A--8/1-T3A--8/9:02](#)

Anecdotes, epigrams, graffiti, jokes, jests, quotations, riddles, tongue twisters





Class Examples

- Banks and banking
 - 332.1
- Coin changing machine
- Grayville, Illinois
- Equipment

T1--0 ▼	Table 1. Standard Subdivisions
T1--09 ▼	History, geographic treatment, biography
T1--093-T1--099 ▼	Specific continents, countries, localities; extraterrestrial
T1--093-T1--099:/09 ▼	History and geographic treatment
T1--093-T1--099:/093-/099	Specific continents, countries, localities; extraterrestrial worlds

[T2--773](#) ▼ Illinois
[T2--773/9](#) ▼ Southern counties of Illinois
T2--773/96 White County

= 332.01977396



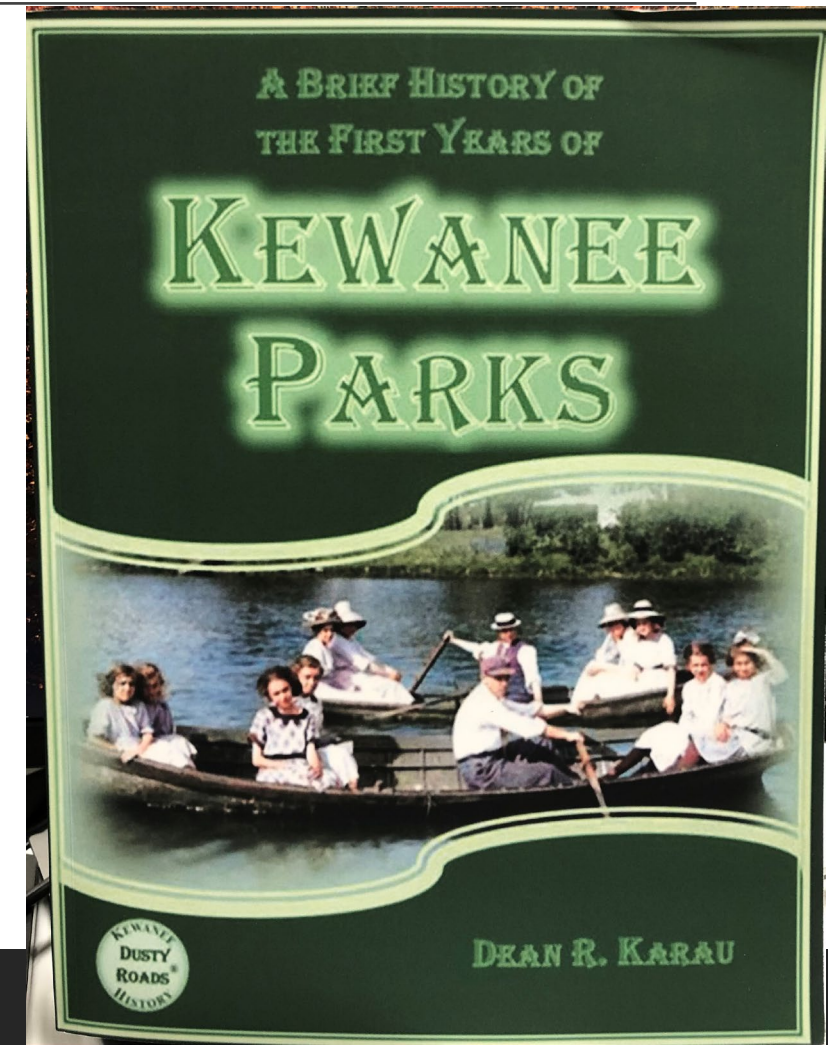


Class Examples

- Parks
 - 333.783
- Kewanee, Illinois
- History

333.78/30977338

Parks--henry County





Resources



CATALOGING
MAINTENANCE CENTER
Statewide Cataloging Support

- DDC : Dewey Decimal Classification
<https://www.oclc.org/content/dam/oclc/dewey/ddc23-summaries.pdf>
- Dewey Glossary:
<https://www.oclc.org/content/dam/oclc/webdewey/help/glossary.pdf>
- Dewey Training Courses.
<https://www.oclc.org/en/dewey/resources/teachingsite.html>
- Organizing Information From the Shelf to the Web. Library Classification.
<https://doi.org/10.29085/9781856049900.007>
- Technical Introduction to the DDC.
https://www.oclc.org/content/dam/oclc/dewey/resources/teachingsite/courses/Technical_Introduction.pdf
- Web Dewey. <https://dewey.org/webdewey>



ON THE CALL TODAY

Questions? Contact the CMC: cmc@illinoisheartland.org



Barbera Scoby
CMC Cataloger



Dr. Pamela Thomas
Bibliographic Grant
Manager



Mary Cornell
CMC Cataloger



Eric McKinney
CMC Cataloging Trainer



Kat Anderberg
Metadata Cataloger



Ryan Rafferty
Special Project Cataloger



Katie Roberts
Special Project Cataloger



Andrea Giosta
Special Project Cataloger

