

The Dewey Decimal System

I. Introduction

A. Who is responsible?

1. Background of Melvil Dewey
2. Origination of the Dewey Decimal System

B. The Dewey Decimal System

1. What is it?
2. How is it used?
3. Who uses it?

II. Structure of the Dewey Decimal System

A. Components of the Dewey Decimal System

1. All Dewey Decimal numbers have only three digits before the decimal point.
2. There are three summaries in the Dewey Decimal System.
3. Each digit represents a summary.

B. The First Summary

1. The first summary is broken into *10 main classes*.
2. *Main classes* cover the most general topic categories.
3. The first digit in the Dewey Decimal number represents the *main classes*.
(Ex. 292, 553, or 973.6)

C. Second Summary

1. The second summary is broken into *100 divisions*.
There are *10 divisions* for each of the *10 main classes*.
2. *Divisions* break down the classes into more specific topics.
3. *Divisions* are represented by the second digit in the Dewey Decimal Number.
(Ex. 292, 553, or 973.6).

D. Third Summary

1. The third summary is broken into *1000 sections*.
There are 100 *sections* for each of the ten main classes.
2. *Sections* break down the divisions into even more specific topics.
3. *Sections* are represented by the third digit in the Dewey Decimal Number
(Ex. 292, 555, or 973.6).

E. After the Decimal...

1. The classification process begins until the appropriate level of specificity is attained.

III. The Dewey Decimal System – The 000's

- A. The 000's of the Dewey Decimal System cover what is known as the *generalities*. The *generalities* cover general information, as well as information pertaining to the “unexplained”, computer science, and journalism.
- B. Resources that cover a little of everything (encyclopedias and almanacs) will be found here. Resources that classify, group, and organize information (indexes, directories, and catalogs) are also found here.

Below is a list of the resources we will cover in this class:

1. World Book Encyclopedia*
2. Encyclopaedia Britannica*
3. Books in Print
4. Play Index
5. Short Story Index
6. Encyclopedia of Associations*
7. Guinness Book of World Records
8. Standard Periodical Directory
9. Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media
10. Famous First Facts
11. World Almanac
12. Bowker's Complete Video Directory
13. Directory of Libraries in the St. Louis Area
14. American Library Directory
15. Writer's Almanac

* Denotes sources available in print and online through the library

1. World Book Encyclopedia – Encyclopedias geared toward both children and adults. Range covers basic topics found in general encyclopedia. Contains many illustrations.
2. Encyclopaedia Britannica - Encyclopedias geared toward adults. Contains very scholarly, in-depth articles. Distinctly British with a more international scope of topics.
3. Books in Print – Online database that includes information on titles and their publishers, book reviews, forthcoming books, and more.
4. Play Index – Listing of plays by titles and playwright and where to find them. Also lists plays by subject and number of characters.
5. Short Story Index – Listing of short stories by title and author and where to find them. Also lists them by subject.

6. Encyclopedia of Associations - Listing of various U.S. associations (separate volume for international associations). Information available on individual associations (eg.address, phone number, officers, etc.).
7. Guinness Book of World Records – Listing of world records in various categories (sports, human feats, fine arts, etc.).
8. Standard Periodical Directory – Listing of addresses, phone numbers, publishers, and subscription information for periodicals (Ulrich’s Directory offers international coverage of periodicals).
9. Gale Directory of Publication and Broadcast Media – Lists publications and media (newspapers, magazines, newsletters, television and radio stations) specific to each American city.
10. Famous First Facts – Lists notable firsts in the U.S. according to subject. Also comes in an international edition which covers the world.
11. World Almanac – Contains quick reference facts categorized by subject.
12. Bowker’s Complete Video Directory – Listing of films available on video or DVD and where they can be purchased. Also includes actors and a brief summary of each film. Multi-volume set includes entertainment, special and educational films.
13. Directory of Libraries in the St. Louis Area – Listing of libraries (special, public, and academic) in the St. Louis metropolitan area.
14. American Library Directory – Listing of all libraries in North America and Canada. This listing includes government, special, public, and academic libraries.
15. Writer’s Market – Lists publisher addresses, phone numbers magazines, agents and more. Contains vital information for authors seeking to be published.