

The order of instruments in subject headings

[Music Cataloging at Yale](#) [1] ? [Subject cataloging](#) [2]

The order of instruments is by instrument family, then within each family:

The LC *Subject Cataloging Manual* instruction sheet 1917.5, *Music form/genre headings: medium of performance*, under 2. *Solo instruments in headings: Order of solo instruments* gives the following instructions:

Assign the names of up to nine solo instruments in the following order:

1. keyboard instruments,
2. wind instruments,
3. plucked instruments,
4. percussion, electronic, and other instruments,
5. bowed stringed instruments,
6. unspecified instruments,
7. continuo.

Within each category, give the instruments in alphabetical order *with the exception* of bowed stringed instruments; give these in score order, high to low, basing the order on the range of each instrument as described in standard music reference sources.

Instrument family		Comments		Order with
Keyboard (includes electronic equivalents)		harpsichord organ piano	For a more complete list of keyboard instruments, see Keyboard instruments [3] accordion and celesta are to be considered keyboard instruments for the purposes of subject headings. (Bandoneon , bayan , and concertina are also being considered a keyboard instrument.) Continuo is given as the last element of the subject element rather than as a keyboard instrument.	alphabetical
Winds	Woodwinds	flute oboe clarinet saxophone bassoon	For a more complete list of woodwinds, see Woodwind instruments [4]	alphabetical Alphabetical before ad plural: use oboes d'amore not oboe oboes (2) because ' singular) v alphabetical "oboe d'a alphabetical
	Brasses	horn trumpet trombone baritone tuba	For a more complete list of brasses, see Brass instruments [5]	
Plucked (includes electronic equivalents)		harp guitar lute mandolin drum celeste	For a more complete list of plucked instruments, see Plucked instruments [6]	alphabetical
Percussion, electronic, and other			"Other" includes bagpipes, bandoneon, carillon, cimbalon, harmonica, hurdy-gurdy,	alphabetical

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	gong marimba vibraphone xylophone	zither, etc. Computer, electronics, synthesizer, and electronic instruments that do not have acoustic equivalents (e.g., ondes Martenot) also fall in this category. Non-musical instruments [7] (e.g., glass music, balloon, etc.) are included here. For a more complete list, see M145-M175 in Class M.
Bowed strings	violin viola cello double bass	Note: accordion and celesta are no longer considered percussion instruments for the purposes of subject headings. For a more complete list of strings, see Stringed instruments [8]
unspecified continuo		

score ord
violin, viol
double ba
Note: bas
practice, t
modern a
bowed str
instrumen
» violin, ly
viola d'am
viola da g
violone, d
» pardess
precedes
d'amore
» viola d'a
precedes
gamba
» baryton
inconsiste
practice

Accordion and **celesta** previously were considered to be percussion instruments. The Library of Congress Cataloging Policy and Support Office [Weekly subject heading list 13 \(March 31, 2004\)](#) [9] reported the change in order of accordion in sh8594021 and [Weekly subject heading list 17 \(April 28, 2004\)](#) [10] announced the change in the subject authority record for celesta (sh85-21624) from "classified as a metallophone" to "regarded by New Grove as a keyboard instrument" and "played by the pianist."

violoncello/cello: On 2/21/13, The Library of Congress Policy and Standards Division announced that they will revise subject headings that include the word "violoncello" and "violoncellos" to "cello" and "cellos" and its derivatives (e.g., Violoncello makers, Violoncellists) to reflect RDA's preference for the word "cello."

"Other" instruments:

In LC class M175.A-Z, the following instruments are among those listed under "Percussion instruments. Other instruments":

accordion, autopharp, bandoneon, dulcimer, harmonica, hurdy-gurdy, Jew's harp, musical saw

In LC class ML1083-1091, the following instruments are listed as "other":

accordion, bandoneon, concertina, glass harmonica, hurdy-gurdy, Jew's harp, mouth organs (including harmonica)

Glass harmonica, hurdy-gurdy, and Jew's harp are consistently treated as "other":

sh 85109528 Quartets (Flute, glass harmonica, viola, cello)

sh 85109941 Quintets (Flute, oboe, **glass harmonica**, viola, cello)

97702161 Quintets (Piano, **glass harmonica**, percussion, violin, cello)

90755006 Quintets (Harpsichord, recorder, trumpet, **hurdy-gurdy**, cello)

sh 85010975 Bagpipe and hurdy-gurdy music

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sh 87002867 **Hurdy-gurdy** and violin music
sh 85092265 Nonets (Clarinets (2), horns (2), **hurdy-gurdies (2)**, violas (2), cello)
sh 86007666 Concertos (Mandola and **Jew's harp** with string orchestra)
sh2003010592 Mandola and **Jew's harp** music

However, accordion, bandoneon, and concertina are considered keyboard instruments in subject headings. In recent LC original cataloging (but not LC copy cataloging), LC consistently treats these instruments as keyboard instruments:

2005441595 Quintets (Bandoneon, piano, electric guitar, violin, double bass)
2005441519 Sextets (Bandoneon, piano, saxophone, guitar, percussion, double bass)
97702511 Octets (Accordion, piano, clarinet, flute, guitar, mandolin, percussion, double bass)
2005530240 Nonets (Bandoneon, piano, electric guitar, harp, violins (2), viola, cello, double bass)

Older LC original cataloging that was recently revised also follows this practice:

87752935 Trios (Accordion, piano, flute)
87752905 Trios (Accordion, piano, percussion)
87752935 Quartets (Accordion, piano, violin, cello)

Source URL: <https://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/instr650>

Links

[1] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music> [2] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/subject-cataloging> [3] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/instrname#keyboard> [4] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/instrname#woodwind> [5] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/instrname#brass> [6] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/instrname#pluck> [7] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/subinstr#noninstr> [8] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/instrname#string> [9] <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cps0/wls04/awls0413.html> [10] <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cps0/wls04/awls0417.html>