

Shelflisting and cuttering in Class M

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Filing 'M' (Music) Shelflist Cards

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As music cataloger at the University of Oklahoma in 1992, I prepared the following guide to filing M shelflist cards at the request of a staff member who supervised the student filers. Some of the information may be peculiar to the University of Oklahoma shelflist, but provides a model for other libraries. I would like to thank the late Virginia Gifford for providing me with the Library of Congress' filing order in M, and Donna Arnold and Judy Weidow for reading the document and offering suggestions.

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I. Definitions of terms

1) Cutter number: An alphanumeric symbol that represents a name, title, etc.

M	Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827.
23	[Sonatas, piano]
.B414	(represents "Beethoven")

The purpose of cutter numbers is to alphabetize by composer, author, etc.

2) Double cutter numbers: 2 alphanumeric symbols that represent names, titles, etc.

M	Fiocco, Joseph Hector, 1703-1741.
25	[Pieces de clavecin. Selections]
.F53	(represents "Fiocco")
P5	(represents "Pieces de clavecin")

3) Opus number: A number assigned to a musical composition, indicating the order of composition.

M	Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827.
23	[Sonatas, piano, no. 8, op. 13, C minor]
.B414	(represents "Beethoven")
op.13	(opus number)

4) Serial number: Enumeration of a musical composition, indicating the order of composition and/or publication.

M	Asturias, Rodrigo.
23	[Sonatas, piano, no. 4]
.A88	(represents "Asturias")
no.4	(serial number)

5) Thematic index: A list of a composer's works with the theme given for each composition, or for each section of large compositions. Thematic index number: A unique number assigned by the compiler of a thematic index to each composition in the index.

M	Bach, Johann Sebastian, 1685-1750.
111	[Concertos, harpsichord, string orchestra, BWV 1053, E major; arranged]
.B3	(represents "Bach")
BWV1053	(thematic index number)

II. Thematic index numbering conflicts

For a list of work numbers (other than or in addition to opus numbers) for composers, see [Work numbers for composers](#) [3]

Bach, Carl	H and
Phillip	W
Emanuel	BWV

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Bach, Johann and S
Sebastian K and
Beethoven, WoO
Ludwig van B and
Handel, HWV
George H and
Frideric M
Haydn, Joseph K and
Mozart, K. Anh.
Wolfgang F, RV
Amadeus and R
Vivaldi,
Antonio

III. Filing order

1. Single cutter no. M
23
.B414
2. Single cutter no. + date of composition(1982) The date of composition is 322
always enclosed in parentheses, in order to .L63
avoid confusion with the publication date. (1982)
3. Cutter no. + opus no. M
23
.B414
op.27
4. Cutter no. + opus no. + serial no. M
23
.B414
op.27
no.1
5. Cutter no. + opus no. + 2nd cutter no. M
23
.B414
op.27
B7
6. Cutter no. + opus no. + serial no. + 2nd cutter no. M
23
.B414
op.27
no.1
B7
7. Cutter no. + thematic index no. M
1111
.B3
BWV1053
8. Cutter no. + thematic index no. + 2nd cutter no. M
1111
.B3
BWV1053
K4
9. Cutter no. + serial no. M
23
.A88
no.4
10. Cutter no. + key of composition M
1010
.R22
Gmaj.
11. Double cutter no. M

	25
	.F53
	P5
12. Triple cutter no.	M
	1520
	.S915
	H4
	K3

Most call numbers will contain the date of publication as the last element of the call number. When call numbers are identical except for the date of publication, file as follows:

1. Call no. without date	M	
	23	
	.B414	
	B95	
2. Call no. + date	M	M
	23	23
	.B414	.B414
	B95	B95
	1894	1923

Continue filing in chronological order.

IV. Correspondence on MLA-L concerning shelflisting/cuttering

Question:

What do my fellow music catalogers prefer to use in a call number: no. or op. (catalog) number? Is there a rule anywhere or is the choice purely opinion? For example: Beethoven's Concerto for piano and orchestra in C minor. Would you use no. 3 or op. 37? In a 'perfect' Music Library, the same piece (just different publisher) would be classed together on the shelf by whatever means possible. Alas, it is not a perfect world and I have the above title classed under both no. 3 AND op. 37.

Response:

° The LC Subject cataloging manual, Shelflisting (2nd ed.), G 800 (Music materials) states that instrumental music should be shelflisted by adding the opus or thematic index number whenever they appear in the uniform title. If these numbers are not given, THEN a serial number is used. Hence, for the Beethoven Piano concerto no. 3, op. 37 is used. Of course no one is (theoretically) obligated to use LC's procedure here, but for practical purposes most (?) libraries do. I would strongly urge the use of the opus number.

° I want to share with the list a response I received from June Gifford to my inquiry about filing M shelflist cards. She asked one of LC's shelflisters what their order was, and the response was as follows:

Filing order in M

The order in which cards would be filed in a card catalog

Single cutter number
Single cutter number plus date composed
Cutter number plus opus number
Cutter number plus thematic catalog number
Cutter number plus serial number
Cutter number plus key
Double cutter

Order of cuttering in M

The order of preference for adding elements for composer and work to a class number to form a call number
See also [Cutter Numbers for Main Entry](#) [4] and [Additional Elements for Title](#) [5]
Opus number
Thematic catalog number
Serial number
Key
Date composed in parentheses
Double cutter by title
Single cutter

° I generally follow LC in this regard. A source for LC's practice -- the SCM: Shelflisting text, part G800 -- describes the classification and shelflisting of music materials. A line which refers to the topic you bring up reads: "Add the opus number or thematic index number [BWV, etc.] whenever they appear in the uniform title" (G800, page 1). A later section has the following: "If the opus number or thematic index number is not given, and the class number is specifically for the individual title or uniform title of the work, add one of the following elements, in the following order of preference: serial number, key..." (G800, page 2).

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Following this, I use an explicit serial number (i.e. no. 2, not one of those instances where you hide it in a cutter, such as H34*2*) only if it appears in the uniform title without an opus or thematic index number. In cases when the uniform title has both, I choose the opus; using both would be redundant I feel.

° According to the MLA Technical Report No. 9, Shelflisting Music, by Richard Smiraglia, the order of preference is:

1. Opus or thematic index number (with LC preferring thematic index no. when there's a conflict)
2. Serial number, when the uniform title = class number.
3. Key.
4. Date of composition.
5. Work no. for title (for works without 1-4, works whose titles don't class, and all dramatic works)

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

Links

[1] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music> [2] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/call-numbers> [3] <http://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/work-numbers-for-authorized-access-points> [4] <https://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/call-numbers-for-scores#main> [5] <https://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/call-numbers-for-scores#additional>