

Administrative Copyright Classification Systems

The classification system employed by the Copyright Office to further identify the form of a given deposit has always been an internal policy, considered part of the Office “housekeeping”, and considered not to have any bearing on the copyright itself. It can be a very useful tool in limiting searches and identifying sparsely cataloged entries with few descriptors. The system has evolved over the years; new classes were established and older designations were phased out. As a response to Revision and to make as clean a break as possible between “old law” and “new law” registrations, the Copyright Office developed the following system which went into effect on January 1, 1978:

Class TX: Nondramatic Literary Works

This category is very broad. Except for dramatic works and certain kinds of audiovisual works, Class TX included all types of published and unpublished works written in words (or other verbal or numerical symbols). A few of the many examples of “nondramatic literary works” include: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, periodicals, textbooks, reference works, directories, catalogs, advertising copy, and compilations of information.

Class PA: Works of the Performing Arts

This category includes published and unpublished works prepared for the purpose of being “performed” directly before an audience or indirectly “by means of any device or process”. Examples of works of the performing arts are: musical works, including any accompanying words; dramatic works, including any accompanying music; pantomimes and choreographic works; and motion pictures and other audiovisual works.

Class VA: Works of the Visual Arts

This category consists of published and unpublished “pictorial, graphic, or sculptural works”, including two-dimensional and three-dimensional works of fine, graphic, and applied art, photographs, prints and art reproductions, maps, globes, charts, technical drawings, diagrams, and models. Within this class are pictorial or graphic labels and advertisements, as well as “works of artistic craftsmanship”. The “design of a useful article” may be registrable in Class VA, but “only if, and only to the extent that, such design incorporates pictorial, graphic, or sculptural features that can be identified separately from, and are capable of existing independently of, the utilitarian aspects of the article”.

Class SR: Sound Recordings

This category is appropriate for registration for both published and unpublished works in two situations: (1) where the copyright claim is limited to the sound recording itself; and (2) where the same copyright claimant is seeking to register not only the sound recording but also the musical, dramatic, or literary works embodied in the sound recording. With one exception, “sound recordings” are works that result from the fixation of a series of musical, spoken, or other sounds. The exception is for the audio portions of audiovisual works, such as a motion picture soundtrack or an audio cassette accompanying a filmstrip; these are considered an integral part of the audiovisual work as a whole and are registrable in Class PA. Sound recordings fixed before February 15, 1972 are not eligible for registration, but may be protected by State law.

Class RE: Renewal Registration

This category covers renewal registration for copyrights that are already in their first term on January 1, 1978 (that is, renewals for works originally copyrighted between January 1, 1950 and December 31, 1977). Class RE is appropriate for all renewal registrations, regardless of the class in which the original registration was made.

In dealing with pre-1978 registrations, it is necessary to be aware of the administrative classes that had evolved prior to Revision. The following is a brief description of each class, along with a history of numbering systems. NOTE: None of these classes are in effect at the present time. If a class was phased out prior to December 31, 1977, the end date is indicated.

1870 – 1894

No Classification

One letter of the alphabet used before the numbers each year through the entire alphabet, omitting “J”. The letters did not indicate the class of material registered but, rather, the year.

<u>Beginning date</u>	<u>Closing No.</u>
July 1, 1870	A 1 – 5600
Jan. 1, 1871	B 1 – 12831
Jan. 1, 1872	C 1 – 14180
Jan. 1, 1873	D 1 – 15648
Jan. 1, 1874	E 1 – 16206
Jan. 1, 1875	F 1 – 14197
Jan. 1, 1876	G 1 – 14883
Jan. 1, 1877	H 1 – 15758
Jan. 1, 1878	I 1 – 15799
Jan. 1, 1879	K 1 – 18125
Jan. 1, 1880	L 1 – 20687
Jan. 1, 1881	M 1 – 21085

<u>Beginning date</u>	<u>Closing No.</u>
Jan. 1, 1882	N 1 – 22929
Jan. 1, 1883	O 1 – 25294
Jan. 1, 1884	P 1 – 26895
Jan. 1, 1885	Q 1 – 28411
Jan. 1, 1886	R 1 – 31241
Jan. 1, 1887	S 1 – 35084
Jan. 1, 1888	T 1 – 38228
Jan. 1, 1889	U 1 – 40985
Jan. 1, 1890	V 1 – 42798
Jan. 1, 1891	W 1 – 48917 <i>(prior to this year non-resident foreigners could not register claims for copyright)</i>
Jan. 1, 1892	X 1 – 54748
Jan. 1, 1893	Y 1 – 58973
Jan. 1, 1894	Z 1 – 62803

1895 – 1897

No Classification

One letter followed by small figure 2 before the number, as a symbol of the year.

1895 AA 1 – 67574

1896 B2 1 – 72482

1897 C2 1 – 74191

1898 – 1899

No Classification

No letters before the numbers.

1898 1 – 77621

1899 1 – 85602

1900

Four classes

Letter before the numbers indicating the class.

A (Books and dramas) A 1 – 31965

B (Periodicals) B 1 – 21589

C (Music) C 1 – 20024

*D (Miscellaneous) D 1 – 24642

**Miscellaneous included maps, charts, chromos, lithographs, engravings, prints, photographs and fine arts.*

1901 – June 30, 1909

Nine classes*

Letter before the numbers indicated the class. Letter followed by xxc (i.e., twentieth century) and the number.

A (Books)	A xxc 1 – 243564
B (Periodicals)	B xxc 1 – 189240
C (Music)	C xxc 1 – 210861
D (Drama)	D xxc 1 – 16208
E (Maps and Charts)	E xxc 1 – 15227
F (Engravings, cuts & prints)	F xxc 1 – 78218
G (Chromos & Lithographs)	G xxc 1 – 21857
H (Photographs)	H xxc 1 – 129497
I (Orig. works of art)	I xxc 1 – 30269

**Numbering was continued after July 1, 1909, with the changes given below. Numbers between closing numbers here and beginning numbers in 1909 were unused.*

1904

Books and works of art deposited and registered at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, St. Louis, Missouri.

Books	LPE Group 1 No. 1 – 183
Works of art	LPE Group 2 No. 1 – 178

1905

April 11 separate numbering started for deposits of foreign books for reservation of copyright.

Act of March 3, 1905.

Res. No. 1 – 3073 (Completed June 30, 1909)

1909

Changes in classes, and Renewals Notice of Uses added. (Act of March 4, 1909) Effective July 1, 1909.

Numbering continued 1901 series above.

		<u>Completed Date</u>
*A (Domestic books)	A xxc 243600 – 1087999 (1057000-1060999 unused)	Oct. 13, 1928
	AA and AO Pamphlets, small books, leaflets, etc.	Oct. 6, 1928
	A5 Contributions to periodicals	Nov. 21, 1928
	A5ct Contributions in Chicago Tribune	Feb. 18, 1929
	A5nt Contributions in New York Times	Aug. 29, 1929

**Certain records books were assigned to particular classes of books but were numbered as a single class.*

		<u>Completed Date</u>
A for. (Foreign books)	A For. xxc 1 – 39999	Oct. 1928
A int. (Ad interim books)	A int. xxc 1 – 12999	Jul. 3, 1929
B (Periodicals)	B xxc 189300 – 900999	Oct. 2, 1928
C (Lectures, sermons)	C xxc 1 – 4115	Oct. 1, 1928
*D (Drama & Dramatico-Mus.)	D xxc 16206 ** - 87999	Feb. 28, 1929
<i>*Certain record books were assigned to particular kinds of drama but numbered as one class:</i>		
	D1c Unpublished drama	
	D2c Published drama	
	DM Dramatico-musical comp.	
<i>**16206. 7, 8, are dup. nos. of old series</i>		
*E (Music)	**E xxc 211000-704999	Sept., Oct. 1928
<i>*After no. E xxc 264703 (1911) certain record books were assigned to published, unpublished and foreign music but were numbered as a single class.</i>		
<i>**This numbering was a continuation of Class C of the 1901 group.</i>		
*F (Maps and Charts)	**F xxc 15228-56999	Sept. 23, 1929
<i>*Certain record books were assigned to maps from the Sanborn Map Co. and marked FS- the last book was completed Sept. 15, 1929.</i>		
<i>**This numbering was a continuation of Class E of 1901 group.</i>		
*G (Works of art)	G xxc 30270 – 84999	Jan. 2, 1929
<i>*This is a continuation of Class I of the 1901 group.</i>		
H (Reproductions)	H xxc 1 – 1072	June 30, 1925
I (Drawings of plastic works of scientific or technical character)	I xxc 1 – 15999	Dec. 11, 1928
*J (Photographs)	**J xxc 129500 – 300999	Nov. 24, 1928
<i>*Certain record books were assigned to unpublished photographs and marked Jo but numbered as a single class.</i>		
<i>**This numbering was a continuation of Class H of the 1901 group.</i>		
*K (Prints and pictorial illustrations)	K xxc 1 – 246999	Dec. 3, 1928
<i>*Certain record books were assigned to pictorial illustrations from the Chicago Tribune and marked Kct but were numbered as a single class.</i>		
*R (Renewals)	R xxc 1 – 49999	**Sept. 4, 1928
<i>*Certain record books were assigned to renewals from the West Publishing Co. and marked RW but were numbered as a single class.</i>		
<i>**A new numbering was begun in Sept. 1928 but the one book assigned to the West Publishing Co. entries was not completed until Jan. 1933.</i>		
*U (Notice of use)	Not numbered	
<i>*Started Sept. 2, 1909</i>		

1912

Act of Aug. 24, 1912 following classes added:

		<u>Completed Date</u>
L (Motion pictures – photoplays)	Lxxc 1 – 25999	Jan. 12, 1929
M (Motion pictures – not photoplays)	Mxxc – 5999	Mar. 23, 1929

1913

Registration made at Panama Pacific International Exposition (Act of Sept. 18, 1913).

1915

No. 1, July 25, 1915, pages 27-33 inclusive entries, 1 certificate.

1928 – Dec. 31, 1945

Closing the xxc series and beginning the series without xxc.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Beginning Date</u>	<u>Numbering</u>
A	Oct. 14, 1928	A 1 – 192186
AO	Oct. 8, 1928	AO 1 – 4325 (Discontinued Dec. 4, 1928)
[These registration numbers are bound with the AA registration]		
AA	Sept. 27, 1928	AA 4326 – 501314
A5	Dec. 12, 1928	A5 1 – 140664
A5ct	Feb. 18, 1929	A5ct 1 – 2999 Discontinued Dec. 3, 1930
A int.	July 3, 1929	A int. 13000 – 29298
A for.	July 16, 1928	A for. 1 – 51150
B	Oct. 1, 1928	B 1 – 705364 (704269 – 704999 not used)
C	Oct. 1, 1928	B 4116 – 18031
*D	April 11, 1930	D 1 – 96581

**Published drama marked D pub.; Unpublished drama marked D unp.; certain record books assigned to Dramatico-musicals and marked DM.*

E pub.	Oct. 20, 1928	E pub. 1 – 137736
E unpubl.	Oct. 6, 1928	E unp. 1 – 451923
E for.	Sept. 22, 1928	E for. 1 – 71662
*F	Sept. 23, 1928	F 1 – 20127

**Certain record books assigned to maps from Sanborn Map Co. and marked F.*

<u>Class</u>	<u>Beginning Date</u>	<u>Numbering</u>
G	Jan. 2, 1929	G 1 – 46841
*H	Oct. 23, 1937	H 1073-3060
<i>*No registrations made from June 30, 1925-1937</i>		
*I	Dec. 17, 1928	I 1 – 37139
<i>*Published entries marked I pub. Unpublished entries marked I unpub.</i>		
*J	Nov. 24, 1928	J 1 – 3900
<i>*Certain record books assigned to unpublished entries and marked Jo – discontinued and same numbering with unpub. marked J unpub.</i>		
K	Dec. 3, 1928	K 1 – 60530
K ct*	Dec. 3, 1928	Kct – 8402 Discontinued
<i>*ct – Chicago Tribune</i>		
L	Jan. 14, 1929	L 1 – 13711
M	March 26, 1929	M 1 – 16613
*R	September 5, 1929	R 1 – 146584
<i>*Certain books assigned to West Publishing Co., and marked RW</i>		
U	Not numbered	

1940

Following classes added – (Act of July 31, 1939) – effective July 1, 1940: closed Dec. 31, 1945.

KK (Prints and labels)	KK 1 – 36703
RR (Renewals of Prints and labels)	RR 1 – 151

1946

January 1 all classes began numbering with No. 1 – Following the Act of June 3, 1949, a separate series of numbers for foreign works deposited without fee was set up (AFO, BFO . . .) These works were registered upon receipt of application and deposit. In general, F means foreign, P published, U unpublished, I ad interim.

Books A	1 -	
Pamphlets, etc. AA	1 – 230874	Discontinued Dec. 31, 1952
AF	1 -	
AFO	1 -	Began July 28, 1949
AI	1 -	
AIO	1 -	Began Aug. 16, 1949
Periodical contribution A5	1 – 6699	Changed to B5 May 1947
Periodical B	1 -	
Periodical contribution B5	1 – 33161	May 13, 1947 – Jan. 9, 1956 (Changed to BB)

BB	1 -	Began Jan. 9, 1956
BF	1 -	Began Feb. 14, 1952
BFO	1 -	Began July 26, 1951
BI	1 -	Began July 25, 1951
BIO	1 -	Began July 25, 1951
Lectures, sermons, addresses C	1 -	
Dramatic compositions D	1-23811	Discontinued Apr. 5, 1950
DF	1 -	Began Jan. 19, 1951
DFO	1 -	Began Sept. 8, 1949 (Nos. 1-58 DPO)
DP	1 -	Began Apr. 6, 1950
DU	23812	Began Apr. 6, 1950
E = music)		
EP	1 -	
EU	1 -	
EF	1 -	
EFO	1 -	Began Aug. 5, 1949
Maps F	1 -	
FF	1	Began Mar. 17, 1966
FFO	1 -	Began Oct. 5, 1949 (Nos. 1-20 FO)
Works of art G	1 - 16006	Discontinued Apr. 5, 1950
GF	1 -	Began July 30, 1962
GFO	1 -	Began Dec. 13, 1955
GP	1 -	Began Apr. 6, 1950
GU	16007	Began Apr. 6, 1950
Reproductions of art H	1 -	
HF	1 -	Began Feb. 22, 1966
HFO	1 -	Began Sept. 12, 1949 (Nos. 1-3 HO)
Drawings I	1 - 6768	Discontinued Apr. 5, 1950
IFO	1 -	Began Jan. 26, 1950 (Nos. 1-3 IPO)
IP	1 -	Began Apr. 6, 1950
IU	6769	Began Apr. 5, 1950
Photographs J	1 - 6329	Discontinued Apr. 5, 1950
JFO	1 -	Began Feb. 23, 1950 (No. 1-15, JO; No. 16-44, JPO)
JP	1 -	Began Apr. 6, 1950
JU	6330	Began Apr. 6, 1950
Prints and pictorial illustrations K	1 -	
KF	1 -	Began Oct. 4, 1966

KFO	1 -	Began Nov. 14, 1949 (No. 1-19, KO)
Prints and labels KK	1 -	
KKF	1 -	Began Apr. 20, 1967
KKFO	1 -	Began Jan. 6, 1959
Photoplays L	1 – 2973	Discontinued Apr. 5, 1950
LP	1 -	Began Apr. 7, 1950
LU	2974	Began Apr. 13, 1950
LF	1 -	Began Apr. 8, 1966
LFO	1 -	Began Mar. 8, 1965
Motion pictures M	1 – 5133	Discontinued Apr. 5, 1950
MP	1 -	Began Apr. 7, 1950
MU	5134	Began Apr. 13, 1950
MFO	1 -	Began Aug. 31, 1965
Sound recordings N	1 -	Began Feb. 15, 1972
Renewals R	1 -	

1965

November 26 started numbering “NOTICE OF INTENTION TO USE”, using the letter “V” preceding the number.

V	1 -
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