How to read SuDoc numbers

What are SuDoc numbers?

The SuDoc classification system is designed to group together publications by the government author. Each government department is assigned its own alphabetical identifier based on the name of the organization, e.g., C is used for the Commerce Department and NAS is used for NASA. To distinguish the subordinate bureaus and the offices, numbers are added to the alphabetic identifiers with "1" designating the secretary or administrative office. Beginning with "2", the numbers are applied in numerical order to each subordinate office. A period follows the combination of letters and numbers representing the bureau or office.

For example:

- **C1** — Commerce Department (including Secretary's Office)
- **C3** — Census Bureau
- **C13** — National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
- **C55** — National Weather Service.

Adding a number after the period the SuDoc classification system allows for the identification of the various series of publications issued by a particular bureau or office. For example:

- **C1.1** — annual reports published by the Department of Commerce.
- **C1.1:995** — the annual report for 1995.

How to Find a Document Using the SuDoc Number

The SuDoc number is written on the upper left hand corner of the document. The number may also be found on the inside front cover, especially on hardcover books.

Here is an example on how to find the SuDoc number NAS 1.2:R 11:

NAS is a section in the N's after NA and before the NF's. Once you have found the NAS section you need to concentrate on finding the NAS 1.2's. These will be after the NAS 1.1: documents and before the NAS 1.3: documents. After you have found the NAS 1.2: section, the NAS 1.2:R 11 will fit in this group in alphabetical order.

One thing to remember with Government Documents is numbers always come before letters.

*For example:*  
NAS 1.2:613 would be shelved before NAS 1.2:R 11

Help

If you have any problems understanding how to find a Government Document using the SuDoc number, ask someone at any of the three service desks (first and second floors) for help.