

## How To Assign LCSH

1. Determine the subject content. Consult, e.g.:
  - Title
  - Table of contents
  - Introduction or preface
  - Author's purpose or foreword
  
2. Identify:
  - Subject: what the item is about
    - Topics
    - Names of:
      - Persons
      - Corporate bodies
      - Geographic areas
      - Events
    - Time periods
    - Titles of works
    - Form of the item (what the item is, rather than what it is about)
      - Physical character (video, map, miniature book)
      - Type of data it contains (statistics)
      - Arrangement of information (diaries, indexes)
      - Style, technique (drama, romances)
    - Genre of item (works with common theme, setting, etc.)
      - E.g.:
        - Detective and mystery stories
        - Comedy films
        - Bildungsromans
  
3. Find the correct LCSH term.
  - Browse LCSH subject authority file using Connexion client
  - If not found, think of synonyms and browse them.
  - If not found, try keyword searching in Connexion client
  - Sometimes the term or concept is not established. If it is not, there could be several reasons:
    - a. That term or concept is expressed in different syntax in LCSH:

**650 \_0 Roads \$x Shoulders**

not:

**650 \_0 Shoulders (Roads)**

**651 \_0 Japan \$x Economic conditions.**

not:

**650 \_0 Economic conditions \$z Japan**

- b. LCSH guidelines in the Subject Cataloging Manual say not to establish that type of heading (perhaps because LCSH does not need that level of specificity or that level of breadth)

Phylum: **yes**  
Subphylum: no\*  
Class: **yes**  
Subclass: no\*  
Order: **yes**  
Suborder: no\*  
Superfamily: no\*  
Family: **yes**  
Genus: **yes**  
Species: **yes**

\* unless the intermediate grouping is considered particularly helpful or warranted by common usage

4. Determine the class of heading (read scope note at the top of each instruction sheet H1095-H1180 )
  - Class of Persons (H 1100)
  - Ethnic Group (H 1103)
  - Names of Person (H 1110)
  - Names of Place (H 1140)
  - Animal (H 1147)
  - Art (H 1148)
  - Disease (H 1150)
  - Musical Composition (H 1160)
  - Plant or crop (H 1180)
  - None of the above (H 1095)
5. Attach free-floating subdivisions from instruction sheets H1095-H1180
6. Attach geographic subdivisions if applicable (read H830 – H990)
7. Attach chronological subdivisions if applicable (read H 620)

8. Attach form subdivisions if applicable (from free-floating lists)
9. Move geographic subdivision as far toward the end of the string as the individual elements in the string will allow:
  - check fixed field “Geo subd” byte in subject authority record
    - a value of “i” there (indirect) means “may subdivide geographically”
    - any other value there (blank, fill character, etc.) means “may **not** subdivide geographically”

10. TOPIC—PLACE—CHRONOLOGY—FORM

That’s the preferred order of elements in an LCSH subject string, but it’s not a hard-and-fast rule. There are many exceptions.

11. Examples (correct and incorrect) for class discussion (consult packet of authority records (session 7 handout)

650 \_0 Eye \$x Muscles.

650 \_0 Weightlifters \$x Muscles.

651 \_0 Japan \$y 19th century.

651 \_0 Honolulu (Hawaii) \$x History \$y 19th century.

650 \_0 Canadian fiction \$y 19th century.

650 \_0 Cataloging \$x Periodicals.

650 \_0 Cataloging \$v Periodicals.

650 \_0 Periodicals \$x Cataloging.

650 \_0 History \$z United States.

650 \_0 French poodles \$z France.

650 \_0 Poodles \$z France.

650 \_0 Poodles \$z Chicago (Ill.)

651 \_0 Chicago (Ill.) \$x History \$y 19th century.