

Broughton, V. (2015). *Essential classification* (2nd ed.) London: Facet

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Aimed at the beginner, *Essential classification* is an authoritative guide to classification based partly on the Cataloguing and Classification modules of UCL's Library and Information Studies Master's programme taught by the book's author, Vanda Broughton. Both theory and practice is covered and with summaries, exercises and worked examples, there is plenty to help the novice classifier through a first attempt at document analysis and navigating a classification scheme. The book is highly readable with the author's genuine interest in her subject coming across easily and is likely to appeal to any library science student wanting good background knowledge of classification.

With 23 chapters, topics have been divided into bite-size pieces. The first chapters (2 through to 7) explain the theoretical background to classification, introducing the philosophy of knowledge organisation and key concepts in classification. This includes the structure of classification schemes and the different types, such as enumerative and analytico-synthetic classification. Chapters 8 and 9 cover content analysis, which prepare the reader for the following chapters on the practical application of subject indexing and classification schemes.

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The major schemes are explained separately, with two chapters dedicated each to the Library of Congress Subject Headings, the Library of Congress Classification, the Dewey Decimal Classification and Universal Decimal Classification. For training purposes, these chapters can't rival resources freely available online, being no better explained and necessarily less in-depth. However, they offer additionally a critical, scholarly perspective on the schemes, pointing out limitations and providing interesting historical context and real-world examples of their application. There is also a chapter on faceted classification, which represents an alternative to the schemes discussed at length, and a chapter on managing classification that provides insight on administrative concerns that would interest a beginner.

This second edition, published over a decade later than the original, is a worthwhile upgrade. The content on the theory of classification has not changed considerably, but information about the classification schemes is up-to-date and takes into account the new ways in which classifiers will use the schemes. For example, there is now an explanation of how to use WebDewey in comparison with the print schedules. New developments in classification, such as FAST subject headings, are also discussed and, on the whole, the impact of digital technology has been given greater consideration. Broughton has included a new chapter 'Classification in digital space' which explores how online resources can be classified and organised. This chapter covers important new concepts, including social tagging/user generated metadata and the semantic web.

Both enjoyable and exhaustive in its coverage, *Essential classification* is an excellent introduction to the theory behind classification, the main types and examples of classification schemes in wide usage and the practical considerations of applying them to a collection. Written

for students, it works better as an academic introduction to the topic of classification than as a practical how-to guide for the schemes.