

# GENRES OF NONFICTION

**Genres** are categories of books that have similar styles, forms, or content. **Formats** are ways that literature is presented, including novel, picture book, play, and graphic novel. **Genres of nonfiction** include self-help/psychology, religion, science and technology, how-to, cookbooks, crafts, music/art/architecture, essays, travel/geography, history, biographies, autobiographies, and memoirs.

**Hint:** use this **Dewey Decimal Cheat Sheet** to browse through different sections of the informational books available in our library. Note that some books may be able to be shelved in two or three different places—the culture of France might be in the 300s, food of France in 641, geography of France in 914, biography of a French person in the 920s, and history of France in 944. It's always a good idea to use the library catalog when visiting a new library or looking up a topic for the first time!

<b>000</b>	Computer science & general works	<b>500</b>	Science
<b>100</b>	Philosophy & psychology	<b>600</b>	Technology
<b>200</b>	Religion	<b>700</b>	Arts & recreation
<b>300</b>	Social sciences	<b>800</b>	Literature
<b>400</b>	Language	<b>900</b>	History & geography

**Self-help/Psychology/Sociology:** Self-help books usually describe how to improve your life in some way, either by raising your self-esteem, increasing your health, or learning a new skill. Psychology and sociology books describe how people behave and interact. These books are often found in the 100s and 300s, but some can be found in the 600s. Examples: *What a Girl Wants: Beauty, Health, Hygiene*, by Karen Cooper; *Self-Development* from the Career Skills Library; *The Civil Rights Movement*, by Charles Patterson.

**Religion:** Religion books look at modern religions as well as ancient religions. These books are usually found in the 200s. Examples: *Mythology*, by Edith Hamilton; *One World, Many Religions*, by Mary Pope Osborne.

**Science and Technology:** Science and technology books cover a wide range of fields. Natural science (astronomy, animals) is found in the 500s, while applied science and technology books (including transportation and pet care) are found in the 600s. Examples: *Astronomy*, by Ian Graham; *Prehistoric Marine Reptiles*, by Judy A. Massare; *Complete Illustrated Guide to Cat Care*, by Bruce Fogle; *Super Sports Cars*, by Jay Jackson.

**How-to:** How-to books describe how to do something. They are often found in the 700s in the recreation section, but can be found in other areas as well. Examples: *How to Make Your Own Video*, by Perry Schwartz; *How to Spot Butterflies*, by Patricia Taylor Sutton and Clay Sutton.

**Cookbooks:** Cookbooks explain how to create snacks, meals, or beverages, by cooking, baking, or mixing ingredients. The subject **Cookery** is usually assigned to these books, and they are usually found in the 640 section. Examples: *Roald Dahl's Revolting Recipes*, by Roald Dahl; *Vegetarian Cooking Around the World*.

**Crafts:** Crafts books show projects that you can complete. They are usually found in the 745 shelves. Examples: *Traditional Crafts from Mexico and Central America*, by Florence Temko; *Super Paper Airplanes*, by Norman Schmidt.

**Music/Art/Architecture:** Music, art, and architecture books give examples of those art forms and provide some information on their creators. These are usually found in the 700s. Examples: *A Young Person's Guide to Music*, by Neil Ardley; *What Makes a Picasso a Picasso?*, by Richard Muhlberger; *Cathedral*, by David Macaulay.

**Essays:** Essays are short prose works that make a point, state an opinion, or describe an event. These are often found in collections in the 800s. Example: *Bondage, Freedom, and Beyond*, by Addison Gayle, Jr.

**History:** History books describe events that took place in the past. World history describes events from cultures around the world, while American history focuses on events of the United States. These books are usually found in the 900s. Examples: *Ancient Greece*, by Ann Pearson; *The Civil War*, by Alden R. Carter; *The Renaissance and the New World*, by Giovanni Caselli; *Great Escapes of World War II*, by George Sullivan.

**Travel/Geography:** Travel books describe the land and sights of a city, state, country, or region. They may provide information that would help you plan a trip. Geography books will provide information on a country or state, but will not have trip-planning information. These books are usually found in the 900s. Examples: *America's Hidden Treasures: Exploring Our Little-Known National Parks*; *Austria—In Pictures*.

**Biographies:** Biographies tell the story of a person's life (or part of the person's life). They are written by someone other than the person the book is about. They are usually found in 920-928. Examples: *Bill Gates, Billionaire Computer Genius*, by Joan D. Dickinson; *Cleopatra*, by Diane Stanley.

**Autobiographies:** Autobiographies tell the story of a person's life and are written by person the book is about (sometimes with the assistance of a second person). There is no special subject heading or section of the library for autobiographies; they are shelved with other biographies. Autobiographies are usually found in 920-928. Examples: *Heart of a Champion*, by Michelle Kwan; *Things Change*, by Troy Aikman.

**Memoirs:** Memoirs tell the story of part of a person's life, usually as a limited autobiography. For example, a person might write a detailed memoir about her experiences during World War II, but not talk about her life before or after the war. Memoirs are usually found in 920-928. Examples: *Behind the Secret Window*, by Nelly S. Toll; *Within Reach: My Everest Story*, by Mark Pfetzer.