



Pagination Considerations in Cataloging Guide

Last updated: June 23, 2026

Pagination

Defined as a consecutive sequence of numbers or letters assigned to pages in a book. For cataloging purposes, pagination is relevant when a sequence of page numbers ends. Page numbers are recorded in the 300 field (physical description) of a bibliographic record, based on the last printed page number in every sequence. A sequence of page numbers may include preliminary information, main text, and/or supplemental pages. How page numbers are assigned to sections of a book may differ, but what is relevant to catalogers is the last printed page number of every sequence.

Preliminary Pages

These are the pages at the beginning of a book, often found in introductions or forewords, which have a separate sequence of page numbers before the main text. Preliminary pages often use lower case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.), but may also use Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) or letters (a, b, c, etc.). The bibliographic record will note the last page number in the preliminary sequence first, as in the example below.

The diagram illustrates the relationship between a book's page numbering and its cataloging record. A red arrow points from the page number 'xvi' in the 'Introduction' section of a book to the '300' field in the cataloging record, indicating that the page number is recorded in the physical description field.

Book Page:

xvi *Introduction*

privacy. The central question in this area is one that carries throughout the book: What can we reasonably expect to keep private?

The Constitution has also been interpreted to protect another form of privacy, the right to make decisions involving family life and procreation, including contraception and abortion. However, this form of privacy is not explicitly set out in the Constitution, but is derived from the broader concept of "liberty," and is therefore some-

Cataloging Record:

Field	Number	Text
Dewey Decimal Classification Number	082 00	323.44/8/0973 220
Personal Author	100 1	Alderman, Ellen.
Title	245 14	The right to privacy / cEllen Alderman and Caroline Kennedy.
Edition	250	1st ed.
Publication info	260	New York : bKnopf, c1995.
Physical description	300	xvi, 405 p. ; c25 cm.

Amendment, and in the battle over privacy that is a truly powerful shield.

Last Page Number

Usually in Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.), this most often refers to the final numbered page for the sequence of pages that include the main text of a book. The last page number may, however, extend beyond the main text into an index, bibliography, or other bonus content. The last page number may also appear several pages before the main text ends. What is relevant to cataloging is the last printed page number in the sequence.

In this example, the last page number is found on the last page of the index.

The image shows a book's index page with various entries. A red arrow originates from the 'Physical description' field of a catalog record below and points to the 'INDEX 315' at the top right of the index page.

Index Page Content:

- large gatherings and, 5
- LBJ and, 124–25, 129, 130
- long hours for, 48, 101, 103–4, 117, 133,
- 62,
- 66–67
- Mary Prince and, 107
- Monica Lewinsky scandal and, 142–43,
- 144–45, 146, 147, 149
- as movers, 31, 53–54, 61, 74
- 6, 11, 10
- royalty and, 181–82
- September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and,
- 257–63, 264–65, 266–68
- slaves as, 176–77
- social secretary of, 13–14
- as tenants of White House, 6, 11, 232
- traditions and, 40
- training exercises for, 108
- ushers of, 45, 81, 86–87, 91, 100, 163–64,
- 177–78, 189–90
- valets of, 16
- Watergate scandal and, 157–58

Catalog Record:

▼ Dewey Decimal Classification Number	082	04	975.3 223
▼ Local holdings	049		IHXA
▼ Personal Author	100	1	Brower, Kate Andersen, eauthor.
▼ Title	245	14	The Residence : bInside the Private World of the White House / cKate Andersen Brower.
▼ Portion of title	246	30	Inside the private world of the White House
▼ Edition	250		First Harper paperback edition.
▼ Publication	264	1	New York, NY : bHarper, c2016.
▼ Copyright	264	4	c©2015
▼ Physical description	300		x, 315 pages, 14 unnumbered pages of plates : billustrations, portraits ; c21 cm

Index Page Content (continued):

- presidential transitions and, see presiden
- tial transitions
- private moments witnessed by, 80, 88,
- World Trade Center, see September 11,
- 2001 terrorist attacks

Supplemental Pages

After the main text, a book may include a discussion guide, references, an index, or an excerpt from the author's next book, and this extra content might have its own sequence of numbered pages. These supplemental pages with their own numbering, different from the main text, are included in the bibliographic record. Supplemental page numbers may appear in lowercase Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.), Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.), or letters (a, b, c, etc.). The bibliographic record will note the last page number in the supplemental sequence last, as in the following example.

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About the book

Reading Group Guide *(continued)*

friendship, Rachel and Noah's, Esther and Robbie's, and Esther and Richard's. Do you think the portrayals of friendship here are realistic? Why do you think Jean fails to find any meaningful connection with the other characters? ~

▼ Personal Author	100	1	Nunn, Kayte, eauthor. ?UNAUTHORIZED
▼ Title	245	14	The forgotten letters of Esther Durrant / cKayte Nunn.
▼ Edition	250		First U.S. edition.
▼ Publication	264	1	New York, NY : bWilliam Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, c[2020]
▼ Copyright	264	4	c©2020
▼ Physical description	300		375, 10 pages ; c21 cm

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exclusive offers, and more
at hc.com.

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The book's last supplemental page number is page number 10. The publisher has given the *Reading Group Guide* its own sequence.

No Numbered Pages

Sometimes a book might not have any numbered pages. This is most frequently found with children's books, but it may be seen with adult works as well. When this happens, you will see the phrase "1 volume (unpaged)" as the pagination in the 300 field.

▼ Physical description	300	1 volume (unpaged) : bcolor illustrations : c24 cm
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Various Pages

Finally, when a book's pagination starts and stops so frequently it becomes difficult to transcribe them all in the 300 field—or a cataloger feels it would be challenging for a user to understand the pagination—you will not see the last printed page number of every sequence listed. Instead, you will see a variation of the phrase "various pagings" in the 300 field.

▼ Physical description	300	1 volume (various pagings) : billustrations : c29 cm
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▼ Physical description	300	1 volume in various pagings : billustrations, charts : c28 cm
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Questions? Please contact the RSA Help Desk at help@librariesofrsa.org or 866-940-4083.