

AMENDMENTS TO THE *GUIDE TO THE IPC*

INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION (Version 2013)

22. ---

(d) ---

Example: H01S 3/02

Subgroups are ordered in the scheme as if their numbers were decimals of the number before the oblique stroke. For example, 3/036 is to be found after 3/03 and before 3/04, and 3/0971 is to be found after 3/097 and before 3/098.

(e) ---

ORDER OF GROUPS

35. The groups in each subclass are arranged in a sequence intended to assist the user. For newer subclasses, the main groups are generally arranged from the most complex or highly specialised subject matter to the least complex or least specialised subject matter (see also paragraph 52, below). A residual main group (for example, 99/00 "Subject matter not provided for in other groups of this subclass"), when needed, is placed at the end of the scheme of these newer subclasses.

Function of References

39. A reference has one of the following functions:

Limiting references

(a) **Scope-limitation** – A reference which specifies subject matter which is taken to another place where it is covered, even though it is apparently covered by the title of the place where the reference appears. This type of reference is very important for the proper understanding and use of the place where it appears.

Hence a scope-limitation reference fulfils both of the following requirements:

- (i) excludes specified subject matter from the scope of this classification place, when this subject matter would otherwise fulfil all the requirements of the classification place and its definition, i.e. would otherwise be covered by that place; and
- (ii) indicates the place(s) where this subject matter is classified.

Example: A47B 25/00 Card tables; Tables for other games (billiard tables
A63D 15/00)

Indeed billiard tables “fit” *a priori* under tables for games other than cards, and yet they are classified in A63D 15/00 instead.

In the definitions, scope-limitation references are listed in tabular form under the heading “References relevant for classification”.

(b) **Precedence** – A reference stating that another place “takes precedence” is used when subject matter is classifiable in two places, or when different aspects of the subject matter to classify are covered by different places, and it is desired that such subject matter should be classified in only one of those places (see, for example, group A01D 43/00). Such a precedence reference occurs most frequently at subgroup level; in some cases, where several groups are similarly affected, it may be replaced by a note at a higher level (see, for example, Note (2) following the title of subclass A61M).

Non-limiting references

(c) **Application-oriented** – References in function-oriented places which point to places where their subject matter is covered if it is specially adapted, used for a particular purpose or incorporated in a larger system (see paragraphs 85 to 87, 89 and 90).

Example: When considering the subject matter of lasers, i.e. devices using stimulated emission, which are covered by subclass H01S, the following are application-oriented references:

eye surgery using laser	A61F 9/008
laser printers	B41J 2/44, B41K 2/455
laser heads for recording or reproducing	G11B 7/125

In the definitions, application-oriented references are listed in tabular form under the heading “References relevant for classification”.

(d) **Out of a residual place** – References appearing in residual places which point to places which provide for the subject matter under consideration.

Example: When considering the subject matter of light sources, the subclass F21K is residual to the whole of the IPC, and the following are examples of references to other places which provide for the subject matter under consideration:

candles	C11C 5/00
electric incandescent lamps	H01K
semiconductor devices adapted for light emission	H01L 33/00, H01L 51/50-H01L 51/56

In the definitions, references out of residual places are listed in tabular form under the heading “References relevant for classification”.

(e) **Informative** – References indicating the location of subject matter that could be of interest for searching, but which subject matter is not within the scope of the classification place where the reference occurs.

Hence an informative reference fulfils both of the following requirements:

- (i) the subject matter “does not fit” in the place under consideration, but

- (ii) that subject matter is still interesting for searching purposes.

It is instructive to compare the two conditions above with the two conditions (i) and (ii) relating to a scope-limitation reference instead.

As an application-oriented reference usually points from a function-oriented place to an application-oriented place, so an informative reference usually points from an application-oriented place to a function-oriented place.

In the definitions, informative references are listed in tabular form under the heading "Informative references".

Limiting vs. non-limiting references

The set of references as defined in subparagraphs (c), (d) and (e), above, are referred to as non-limiting references, as opposed to the limiting references as defined in subparagraphs (a) and (b), above.

Limiting references are included in the classification schemes and in the definition, when available. To maintain the readability of schemes while increasing the amount of useful related information provided, non-limiting references are progressively being removed from schemes and transferred to the definitions of the IPC (see also paragraph 48, below).

Use and Interpretation of References

40. ---

- (g) --- be read independently.

Example: A47J 31/00 Apparatus for making beverages (household machines or implements for straining foodstuffs A47J 19/00; preparation of non-alcoholic beverages, e.g. by adding ingredients to fruit or vegetable juices, A23L 2/00; coffee or tea pots A47G 19/14; tea infusers A47G 19/16; brewing of beer C12C; preparation of wine or other alcoholic beverages C12G)

An exception is --- by a comma.

Example: A01L 11/00 Farriers' tools or appliances (making horseshoes by rolling B21H 7/12, by forging B21K 15/02)

FUNCTION-ORIENTED, APPLICATION-ORIENTED AND RESIDUAL PLACES

85. ---

87. ---

87bis. There are also places in the IPC which should be considered for classification if and only if no other place of the IPC provides for the subject matter under consideration. Such places are referred to as "residual places".

Expressions in the titles like:

- “not otherwise provided for”,
- “not provided for in ...”,
- “not covered by ...”

clearly designate residual places.

The residual nature of the place can be relative to other subgroups, other main groups of the same subclass, other subclasses or even to the whole of the IPC. Main groups 99/00, throughout the whole of the IPC, are special residual places.

Examples: F21S 15/00 Non-electric lighting devices or systems employing light sources not covered by main groups F21S 11/00, F21S 13/00 or F21S 19/00

G06Q 99/00 Subject matter not provided for in other groups of this subclass

A99Z SUBJECT MATTER NOT OTHERWISE PROVIDED FOR IN THIS SECTION

F21K LIGHT SOURCES NOT OTHERWISE PROVIDED FOR

183. This part of ---

parallel groups (coordinate groups) ---

reference = a pointer to another place in the IPC, consisting of a phrase between round brackets describing a subject matter followed by the IPC place(s) where that subject matter is covered.

Example:

A47B 25/00 Card tables; Tables for other games (billiard tables A63D 15/00)

limiting reference = a reference of one of the two categories below:

- scope-limitation reference
- precedence reference

scope-limitation reference = a reference which clearly excludes subject matter from the place where the reference appears, that subject matter being otherwise covered by that place – see also paragraph 39(a), above.

precedence reference	=	a reference stating that another place “takes precedence”, which is used when subject matter is classifiable in two places, or when different aspects of the subject matter to classify are covered by different places, and it is desired that such subject matter should be classified in only one of those places – see also paragraph 39(b), above.
non-limiting reference	=	a reference of one of the three categories below: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– application-oriented reference– reference out of a residual place– informative reference
application-oriented reference	=	a reference (usually appearing in a function-oriented place) which points to a place where the subject matter under consideration is covered if it is specially adapted, used for a particular purpose or incorporated in a larger system – see also paragraph 39(c), above.
reference out of a residual place	=	a reference appearing in a residual place, illustrating places which cover (provide for) the subject matter under consideration – see also paragraph 39(d), above.
informative reference	=	a reference indicating the location of subject matter that could be of interest for searching, but which subject matter is not within the scope of the classification place where the reference occurs – see also paragraph 39(e), above.
residual main group		– – –
residual place	=	a place which should be considered for classification if and only if no other place of the IPC covered (provided for) the subject matter under consideration — see also paragraph 87bis, above.
standardised sequence of groups		– – –

[Annex VII follows]