

AMENDMENTS TO THE *GUIDELINES FOR REVISION OF THE IPC*

adopted by the Committee on Experts of the IPC Union at its thirty-seventh session and modified at its forty-fourth session

INTRODUCTION

3. *Deleted*

15. When necessary, the scope of a place can be restricted by limiting references (see paragraphs 37 and 38 below). However, titles that positively state the scope in a way that makes references unnecessary are preferable. For example, it is better to say “1/00 *Electric motors*” rather than “1/00 *Motors (non-electric motors 3/00)*”, even though both wordings define the same scope.

20. Titles should normally be in plural form, except when it might confuse users as to the scope of a place.

23. If abbreviations are used that might not be familiar to IPC users the corresponding full text that they replace should be given together with the abbreviation at the hierarchically highest place where it appears in the scheme. Either the full text or its abbreviation could be in square brackets, for example “AC [alternating current]” or “alternating current [AC]”, depending on their readability or on the industrial practices in certain technical fields. Abbreviations that are used in the scheme should also be included, along with the full text that they replace, in the “Synonyms and Keywords” section of the Definitions.

25. The full names of chemical elements should be used whenever possible. When groupings of elements are given in the IPC, they should follow the definitions given in the Note at the beginning of section C of the IPC.

26. Except in chemical formulae, Greek letters should be spelt out, e.g. “alpha” instead of “ α ”, in order to facilitate text searching.

27. Classification symbols should always be given in their complete form, for example “A22C 21/00” and not “21/00”. When two or more classification places are listed together, their classification symbols should also be written in their complete form, for example “B21C, B21D” and not “B21C, D” or “A22C 21/00, A22C 23/00” and not “A22C 21/00, 23/00”.

28. Expressions within brackets should be avoided in schemes, except for references (which are placed within round brackets) and explanations or abbreviations [which are placed within square brackets].

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30. Other preferred terms and expressions:

- The term “processes” should be preferred over the term “methods”. Moreover, only one of the terms should be used within a given scheme.
- The term “apparatus” should be used rather than “machines”, since it is more generic. Exceptions can be made when it is accepted practice in a particular art to use the term “machines”, for example in expressions such as “dynamo-electric machines” or “sewing machines”.
- The term “functional” may be used only if its meaning is clear in the context given, for example as in “Computing devices characterised by the combination of hydraulic or pneumatic functional elements with at least one other type of functional element”. Otherwise, it should be replaced by a clearer wording.
- The term “material” should normally be used only in its singular form, except when the plural form is required for accuracy.
- The terms “invention(s)” and “inventive” should be avoided, with the exception of the expressions “invention information” and “inventive thing(s)” that are used with the meanings defined in the Guide.
- The expression “characterised by ...” should be used rather than alternative expressions such as “having special ...” when a group is intended to provide for things distinguished by a particular detail or feature. Example:
In a main group for balls, the subgroup title “characterised by their coverings” should be preferred over “special coverings” (A63B 39/00).
- The expression “arrangement of ...” should be used rather than alternative expressions such as “mounting or disposition of ...” when a group is intended to provide for things distinguished by a particular way of incorporating a part or detail.
- The broader expression “arrangements for ...” should be used rather than alternative expressions such as “devices for ...” or “apparatus for ...”, except when a restricted meaning is intended. Example:
“Arrangements for adjusting the toe-clamps” is a broader expression than “tools”, “devices” or “apparatus” for the same purpose (A63C 9/22).
- The expression “specially adapted for ...” should be used instead of “peculiar to ...” or similar alternative expressions when a group is intended to provide for things that have been modified or specially designed for a certain application or for solving a particular problem. Examples:
“Furniture specially adapted for vessels” should be preferred over “Furniture peculiar to vessels” (B63B 29/04).
“Arrangement or operation of ventilating devices, specially adapted for lavatories” should be preferred over “Special arrangement or operation of ventilating devices” (E03D 9/04).

30bis British English spelling and terminology should be used in the classification schemes. For example, "tyre", "aluminium", "colour", "travelling" and "characterised" should be used instead of "tire", "aluminum", "color", "traveling" and "characterized". Corresponding US English expressions should be indicated in the Definitions if necessary.

37. Limiting references should always be presented both in the classification schemes and in the Definitions. A limiting reference is a reference associated with a classification place that excludes specified subject matter from the scope of this classification place, when this subject matter would otherwise be covered by that place. Precedence references are a type of limiting reference.

39. References from function-oriented to application-oriented places, and references out of residual places, should normally only be presented in the Definitions, under the heading "References relevant to classification", and not in the schemes. However, in some cases where references of this type are considered limiting or necessary for the correct use of the classification they are included in the scheme. See for example F04C 7/00 "Oscillating-piston machines or pumps (such pumps specially adapted for elastic fluids F04C 21/00)", where the reference points to an otherwise identically worded application-oriented group in the same subclass.

40. Informative references have no effect on the scope of the place where they stand. They should only be presented in the definitions, under the heading "Informative references", and not in the schemes. Examples of such references are:

- References from application-oriented places to general places:
A01C 3/04 Manure loaders (loaders in general B65G)
- References between different application places for related subject matter:
A21C 15/04 Cutting or slicing machines or devices specially adapted for baked articles other than bread (for cutting or slicing bread B26B, B26D).
- References to related places which do not overlap:
A44C 3/00 Medals; Badges (frames or housings for storing same A47G 1/12)

41. References in an application-oriented place to a function-oriented place are always informative.

Example:

- A47C 1/00 Chairs adapted for special purposes (features relating to vertical adjustability A47C 3/20)

42. If a reference does not relate to all parts of a multipart title it should be placed after the last title part that it relates to. If it is not obvious to which title part(s) a reference relates (e.g. when it relates to only two of three title parts) the order of title parts should be chosen so that the applicability of references is clear. Otherwise the wording of a reference should make clear to which part of the title it refers. Alternatively a note could be introduced instead of a reference.

44. References that are presented at a higher hierarchical level should not be repeated at a lower hierarchical level. However, references at lower levels are acceptable, when they point to more specific places within a broader area that is indicated by a reference in a hierarchically higher place.

48. The use of examples should be preferred over titles which have a main part that actually serves as an example. For example, "*Cutting tools, e.g. knives*" should be preferred over "*Knives or other cutting tools*" or "*Knives; Other cutting tools*".

60. *Deleted*

Selection of General Classification Rules

77. When creating a new subclass, it should be considered whether the first place priority rule should be used. When revising a minor part of an existing scheme where a particular general classification rule is used, introduction of a different general classification rule should only be considered if it will not cause confusion for users.

78. Strategies such as indexing or multi-aspect classification may be used if it is considered particularly advantageous for search purposes.

91. Indexing schemes shall therefore not be created to cover aspects of subject matter that are already provided for by the classification schemes they are associated with. New entries that are based on the same principles as existing subdivisions of a classification scheme should only be created as classification groups. In particular, indexing schemes should never be created that merely specify:

- further variations of a general concept already covered by the classification scheme;
- details of the subject matter covered in existing classification groups.

Indications, Transfers and Revision Concordance Data

122. When indicating the status of an entry during the working phase of a project, for example, when submitting a proposal, the following indications should be used:

- “N” for new entries;
- “C” for entries with modified file scope;
- “M” for groups or subclasses where changes do not impact the file scope;
- “D” for deleted entries;
- “U” for entries that are unchanged, but presented in order to show the hierarchy of the scheme to simplify understanding.

126. As a result of the approval of the RCL relating to a revision project, an indication of modification of file scope (“C”) should be added to those existing places which were included in the RCL, even though their title was not modified. On the other hand the “C” should be removed from those places that were approved with a “C” in the revision project but which were not included in the RCL.

126bis. Concurrently with the establishment of the RCL the rapporteurs should also prepare a Default Transfer Symbols (DTS). This list decides how documents in deleted groups or groups with changed file scope (“source groups”) that have not been reclassified at the end of a revision cycle will be automatically transferred. If possible, the default transfer should be made to a single destination group, but in some cases a default transfer to two or more groups will be necessary. Depending on the type of revision many different situations can arise. This is a list of typical cases:

Situation	Destination group
a) The source group gets new subgroups	The source group
b) The source group is deleted and replaced by a new group with identical or broader scope	The new group
c) The source group is deleted and replaced by more than one new group	The parent group of the new groups, if there is a single one. If there isn't a single one, all the most likely parent groups.
d) The file scope of the source group is broadened, e.g. by a modified title	The source group
e) The file scope of the source group is narrowed otherwise than by subdivision, e.g. by the addition of a limiting reference	The source group, and the group to which subject matter is transferred. If there isn't a single group, all the most likely groups (or their parent groups, if such exist).

In other situations the rapporteurs should use their judgment in order to find the best places for the default transfer. For example, statistics of actual transfers, if available, could be used for finding destination groups.

Checking of References, Class Indexes and Subclass Indexes

127. At the end of each revision project, the rapporteur should check all references that point to a revised area and make sure that those affected by the amendments are updated. This check may be carried out with the aid of the Cross Reference List (CRL), a reversed list of references prepared by the International Bureau, listing for a given place in the IPC all places in schemes and definitions where reference is made to that place.

Changing the Symbols of Existing Classification Places

129. Renumbering of a group should take place if the scope of the group is substantially changed, except when the scope of the group is modified solely by the creation, deletion, or amendment of one or more of its subgroups.

APPENDICES I TO III - No change

APPENDIX IV

CLASSIFICATION SYMBOLS FOR NEW CLASSIFICATION PLACES

NUMBERING OF SUBGROUPS

4. Subgroup numbering should, as far as possible, be limited to four digits after the oblique stroke. The maximum number of digits after the oblique stroke is six.
5. Group numbers with a final 0 are not allowed, except for groups having only two digits after the oblique stroke.
6. When subdivisions are created under a new main group, e.g. 10/00, the intended number of one-dot groups is less than ten and the whole of the scheme will not reach the /99 group, the one-dot groups should be numbered 10/10, 10/20, 10/30 and so on. In this way each main subject of the technology covered by the main group will have subgroups with the same first digit.
7. When more than ten one-dot groups are created under a new main group, or when one-dot groups are otherwise added to an existing main group and the principle of paragraph 6 above cannot be applied, the group numbers should as far as possible be chosen so that the intervals between the new groups are similar. The same applies when new subdivisions are inserted in an existing scheme. In the light of that, for the addition of further subdivisions the following formula should be observed:

$$r = \frac{\text{Subgroup number of the group after the interval} - \text{Subgroup number of the group before the interval}}{\text{Number of desired subdivisions} + 1}$$

and the numbering of each subdivision should be the rounded result of

$$\text{Numbering of subdivision 'x'} = \frac{\text{Subgroup number of the group before the interval}}{r} + x \cdot r$$

For example:

- (a) When adding two-dot subgroups between 10/10 and 10/20 in a scheme arranged according to paragraph 6 above, the following numbers will result from the formula above, respectively for each total number of subgroups:

one subgroup (r = 5, x = 1)	10/15
two subgroups (r ≈ 3.3, x = 1, 2)	10/13, 10/17
three subgroups (r = 2.5, x = 1, 2, 3)	10/12, 10/15, 10/18
four subgroups (r = 2, x = 1, 2, 3, 4)	10/12, 10/14, 10/16, 10/18
five subgroups (r ≈ 1.7, x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)	10/12, 10/13, 10/15, 10/17, 10/18
six subgroups (r ≈ 1.4, x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)	10/11, 10/13, 10/14, 10/16, 10/17, 10/19
seven subgroups (r = 1.25, x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)	10/11, 10/12, 10/14, 10/15, 10/16, 10/18, 10/19

eight subgroups ($r \approx 1.1$, $x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8$)	10/11, 10/12, 10/13, 10/14, 10/16, 10/17, 10/18, 10/19
nine subgroups ($r = 1$, $x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9$)	10/11, 10/12, 10/13, 10/14, 10/15, 10/16, 10/17, 10/18, 10/19

(b) When adding groups to an existing sequence separated by 02, for example between groups 1/02 and 1/04, the following numbers would result, respectively for each total number of subgroups:

one subgroup ($r = 1$, $x = 1$)	1/03
two subgroups ($r \approx 0.67$, $x = 1, 2$)	1/027, 1/033
three subgroups ($r = 0.5$, $x = 1, 2, 3$)	1/025, 1/03, 1/035
four subgroups ($r = 0.4$, $x = 1, 2, 3, 4$)	1/024, 1/028, 1/032, 1/036
five subgroups ($r \approx 0.33$, $x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5$)	1/023, 1/027, 1/03, 1/033, 1/037
six subgroups ($r \approx 0.28$, $x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6$)	1/023, 1/026, 1/029, 1/031, 1/034, 1/037
seven subgroups ($r = 0.25$, $x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7$)	1/022, 1/025, 1/028, 1/03, 1/032, 1/035, 1/038
eight subgroups ($r \approx 0.22$, $x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8$)	1/022, 1/024, 1/027, 1/029, 1/031, 1/033, 1/036, 1/038
nine subgroups ($r = 0.2$, $x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9$)	1/022, 1/024, 1/026, 1/028, 1/03, 1/032, 1/034, 1/036, 1/038

EXCEPTIONS

- The numbering rules presented above should generally be followed. The departure is allowed when a compelling reason is provided, for example in order to take into account any foreseen future revisions by leaving empty intervals where it is likely that further groups will be added, or in order to avoid changing group symbols when groups with the same file scope from another scheme are introduced into the IPC.

PROVISIONAL NUMBERING OF PROVISIONAL GROUPS DURING THE REVISION PROCESS

- During technical discussions and commenting in revision projects, provisional group numbers should be used. These do not have to conform to the rules mentioned above. The provisional numbers should be replaced by finalized numbers at the end of each revision project before its final adoption. Provisional numbers that have once been used within a project should never be reused within the same project for other (e.g. new) proposed groups.

APPENDIX V – No change

[Annex V follows]