

TECHNOLOGY COLLECTION PLAN 12/04

Collection description for Technology:

The technology collection deals with humans putting the natural world to work. Geology becomes mining and metallurgy, physics becomes motor vehicles, chemistry becomes cookery, botany and zoology become gardening and domesticated animals. This area of practical science is very popular with library users. Several collection components are much larger and more in depth than an "average" public library would maintain. Popular interest and use justify the breadth and size of this collection.

Contrary to other adult nonfiction sections, portions of the technology collection may not do well on the new bookshelf. Time spent on the new bookshelf must be balanced with the needs of the many users who skip using the catalog and go directly to the desired section in the stacks. The materials' heaviest use comes when the patron has a specific need, such as repairing a roof, building a house deck, or replacing an engine.

The contents of this collection span human technological endeavors. In general, the technology area has more than one selector.

Call numbers	Subject	% of tech total
004-006	Computer technology	5.7%
600-609	General technology, inventions, patents	0.5%
620-621.2/621.4-629.1	Sound, materials science, hydrology, models, railroads	7.4%
621.3	Electronics	3.0%
629.2-629.9	Motor vehicles, aeronautics, space	10.2%
630-635	Agriculture/Gardening	12.3%
636-639	Domesticated animals/Pets	14.8%
640-645	Cooking & household management	29.8%
646-648	Sewing, housekeeping, personal grooming, clothing	4.2%
660-689	Industrial Technology, Manufacturing	6.1%
690-699	Construction/Remodeling	5.8%
Total	13,673 items	

The collection is 18.5% of adult nonfiction print and accounts for 18.2% of the adult nonfiction circulation

Scope and exceptions:

A. Focus is on practical, how-to manuals as well as attractively illustrated books describing plants, animals, woodworking, vehicles, computer programs, weaponry, etc. for hobbyists. Efforts are made to include and even duplicate expensive items in popular areas such as cooking and gardening. Several areas have advanced level works, because many of our users are sophisticated hobbyists and demand is high for expert level books. Areas with expert level material include gardening, cooking, and automobile repair.

B. Emphasis is on providing a broad range of topics. This allows us to have information on cooking from around the world, garden plants of all different types, the many dog breeds,

repair manuals for a great variety of vehicles, etc. Books on computer programs tend to be limited to the most popular, well-known programs, widely used in this community. We avoid selecting books with easily lost or destroyed disks or CD-ROM's where the book would have little or no value without the accompanying material.

C. Philosophical works are generally bought only if the author is prominent or community interest is high. Examples would be Wes Jackson for rural living and Frances Moore Lappe for food.

D. Personal narratives are purchased selectively in the gardening, domesticated animals, housekeeping and construction sections. Popularity of these titles fades quickly, except for an author such as James Herriot.

E. We purchase study manuals for tests, such as engineering, pilot and amateur radio certifications.

Audience

In general the collection level supports the hobbyist and do-it-yourselfer, from introductory to intermediate activities. The collection supports the professional needs of many people employed in the mechanical and construction trades, chefs, computer operators, and those employed in small agriculture operations. Repair manuals are purchased in all areas to support persons who wish to save money by doing their own work. These range from very basic, step-by-step manuals, to the professional level. Additionally, the many amateurs who remodel or even construct entire houses or who do high levels of woodworking projects rely on this collection.

Size and Duplication

A. Collection size = *13,673 items* (FY04) Statistics for the collection indicate that it decreased by 6% since FY97.

B. Percent of total nonfiction print collection=*18.5%* up from 18.2% in FY97

C. Average number of times an item circulates annually (turnover) = *2.84*.

D. We purchase multiple copies of heavily used, practical titles. Areas in which this regularly occurs are gardening, pets, cookbooks, appliance and home repair and personal grooming.

Selection Plan

See "Introduction to Collection Plans for Adult Nonfiction" for broad selection plan criteria. A balance is struck between attractively bound, illustrated works, and less attractively presented works that have authoritative content. The attractive works are more likely to circulate and therefore tend to be duplicated. In general, purchase of retrospective works is limited because of the emphasis on currency, although the needs of hobbyists restoring and conserving items, such as old cars, require complete runs of repair manuals for all makes and models from the 1940's on. Similarly, persons interested in kitchenware or vintage clothing need retrospective material.

These are the important selection criteria

- Usefulness
- Accuracy
- Demand/popularity. Effort is made to purchase titles suggested by patrons.
- Production quality. With computer books this is usually not an option, being only

published in paper and of a size that increases the likelihood of falling apart quickly. Based on predicted use they may be bound before going to the shelves.

- Currency. This is important when dealing with code-governed technologies (e.g. electrical) and computer programs, however it is not a factor for model train layouts.
- Regional interest
- Hobbyist materials

Selection Tools

Aside from the standard sources in the “Introduction to Collection Plans for Adult Nonfiction,” selectors read a wide range of specialized magazines, such as *Vegetarian Times*, *Cats*, *Fine Gardening*, *Car & Driver*, etc. *Publisher’s Weekly* includes a list of best selling computer books at regular intervals and Baker & Taylor and Ingram include lists in their catalogs.

The Quality Books Small Press selection cards, while not evaluative, are good sources for most of the technology subject areas. Small presses are more likely to be the first to publish books on ostrich raising or straw bale houses. Not all areas are reviewed often.

Standing orders are used, for example Chilton’s auto repair and Jane’s vehicles and weapons.

Maintenance Criteria

Maintenance criteria are the same as those in the “Introduction to Collection Plans for Adult Nonfiction,” especially the following:

- A. Withdraw physically deteriorated materials; consider subject replacement if old or out of print. Most of the replacement in this area is subject replacement.
- B. Withdraw if superseded by better illustrated works.

There are seasons to certain subject areas, e.g. spring-summer for gardening, that allow the selector to plan for maintenance when the shelves are fuller.