

Searching the Library Catalog

???? begins with...

This search type results in an alphabetical list suitable for browsing. Use **???? begins with...** if you know the title, author, or subject of the item you need. Use the dropdown box to see all the lists you can browse. This search always matches the string you enter against the index precisely starting from the left.

- Choose the index you want to browse through, and then enter the text from which you would like to begin with. This text will appear at the top of a scrollable list. For example, entering the letter *a* will give you an alphabetical list starting at the letter *a*. Entering the word *great* will give you an alphabetical list starting with *great*.
- **Author (Lastname, Firstname):** When you select an author search, you always enter the last name followed by the first name. That is, if you know that *Ernest Hemingway* wrote the book you are interested in, you would enter *Hemingway Ernest* in the "Enter search term(s)" box.
- **Title begins with...:** Omit "a" "an" "the" when they are the first word in the title. For example, to search for *The Catcher in the Rye*, enter the search as *Catcher in the Rye* in the "Enter search term(s)" box
- **Subject begins with...:** Subject browse searching allows you to limit a search to items ABOUT a given topic. This search restricts your search to a part of the bibliographic record that contains terms from a controlled vocabulary. Our library uses the Library of Congress subject headings.

Keyword:

Use **keyword** if you are not sure of exact titles, subjects, authors, etc. Keywords are significant or unique words you use to search for information. Results are retrieved from specific fields of an electronic record.

- Lower-case letters will find matches of capitalized words also. For example, *computer* will find matches for *computer*, *Computer* and *COMPUTER*.
- You may use the Boolean operators AND and OR in your search string. For example, you could type *(heart OR cardiac) AND surgery* to retrieve all records having *heart* or *cardiac* in them, together with the word *surgery*.
- Use the ? character to find matches that contain portions of words. For example, *gun?* will retrieve *gun*, *guns*, *gunners*, *gunnery*, *gunning*, etc. In another example, *?ology* will retrieve *anthropology*, *archaeology*, *psychology*, etc. The ? character may also be used to find variant spellings. For example, *alumi?m* will find the American spelling, *aluminum*, and the British spelling, *aluminium*.

Advance Search:

Advanced Search lets you search the database for keywords. You can use pull-down menus to specify fields and limit your search by year, language, or format.

Results:

The list of records appears in the results list window. When you enter a successful search query, or click on an underlined entry from the browse list, a Results List is displayed. The Results List can display up to 5000 records. The Results List shows how many records satisfy your query specifications. Each record in a Results List is sequentially numbered. The search results can be displayed in different formats.

- **Creating a subset** allows you to work with a group of records selected from a result set. Mark records in the results list, and then click **Create Subset**. The results list will then display only the records you have put in the subset.
- **Filtering** results allows you to view a subset of your current search results using defined limits such as publication year, availability, range of data (alphabetical, numeric, and so on), and the date the record was added to the collection.
- **Refine** allows you to broaden or narrow your search strategy by expanding your terminology or creating subsets of your search.
- **Sort options** allow you to sort records using predefined sort options.

Search History:

You can view the results of previous searches, incorporate them into new searches, or combine them into one result set.

View Record:

From the Results List, click on the record number to see the full record for your item. In the full view of a record you can see the record in a variety of forms (standard, catalog card, citation, nametags, MARCtags).

Full view has links allowing you to jump to:

- A Browse List
- Other, similar records, for example other records that share the same subject
- Holdings information

Holdings/Location:

The holdings information tells you whether the item is available by displaying the item status, due date, collection and call number and other descriptive information.

The location information gives you holdings information based on the campus you select.

Help?

- Ask for assistance from a library staff member.
- Use the help button in *VCCSLinc*.
- Online? Use our Ask A Librarian service on our homepage.