CATALOG
101
SEARCH GUIDE
Parkland Community Library's (PCL) Catalog 101 is a comprehensive overview of using the library catalog. The Catalog 101 Search Guide is a companion to the video series and provides additional search methods for you to try.

The Catalog 101 Search Guide can be used as a companion to the video series or as a standalone resource.

If you have any questions regarding the catalog or require further assistance don't hesitate to get in touch with our Reference desk:

Phone: 610-398-1361 ext. 106
Email info@parklandlibrary.org

What you'll find in the PCL catalog:
- Audiobooks
- Books
- DVDs
- eBooks
- Magazines
- Videos
- and more!

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Keywords
A keyword is a main idea or concept in your search topic. The first step in any catalog search is identifying your keywords.

For example, You might be looking for a cookbook with vegetarian recipes. Your keywords would be *cookbook* and *vegetarian*.

**SEARCH TIP:** Avoid using long phrases and full sentences as this confuses the catalog. A *cookbook containing vegetarian recipes* would not return the results you are looking for.

To expand your keyword search, consider using synonyms and related terms. Using our previous example, we might include *recipe* or *vegan* to expand the search parameters.
Boolean Operators

Boolean operators are simple words used as conjunctions to combine or exclude keywords in a search.

The three common operators are **AND**, **OR**, and **NOT**.

**AND** will retrieve results including both keywords. Using **AND** often narrows the number of search results retrieved.

**OR** will retrieve results including either keyword. This action will broaden your search.

**NOT** will specifically exclude the keyword. This will also narrow your search results.

**SEARCH TIP**: Any time you are using a Boolean operator, the word MUST BE IN ALL CAPS to function properly.

You can also search with parenthesis using Boolean operators. For example, we can search for *(vegetarian OR vegan) cookbooks*.

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SEARCH TYPES

Basic Search
A basic search is a general keyword search.

You can search by keyword, title, author, journal title, series, subject, and digital bookplate. A digital bookplate is used to mark an item that was donated to the library.

Additional search parameters in a basic search include the item format and the library location. Your library will default to Parkland Community Library. Use the dropdown menu to select a different library or to search the entire LCLC catalog.

Search terms with common suffixes are automatically included in the search. For example, a search for the keyword run would return results including run, runs, and running.

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**SEARCH TIP:** What is the difference between a keyword and a subject?

**Keywords**
- Searches multiple fields at once
- The broad search may return irrelevant results
- A lower precision search returns more results

**Subjects**
- Searches using subject headings only
  - A subject heading is a specific word or phrase used to find and organize books and other library materials
- Uses a controlled vocabulary
  - A controlled vocabulary is an established list of terms and phrases used by the catalog
  - A controlled vocabulary can limit your results if you are not using a term on the predetermined list

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Returns results of a higher relevance

The preciseness of the search will return fewer results

**Advanced Search**
An advanced search is used for a more specific search. The advanced search feature allows the catalog to search multiple search terms in multiple fields simultaneously.

Let’s look at an example.

You are looking for the author Shirley Jackson, however, there are multiple authors by that name. While you don’t have a book title, you know she is a fiction writer.

With the advanced search, we can search by the author’s full name **AND** the subject fiction. The catalog returned seven results including the popular titles *The Lottery* and *The Haunting of Hill House*. 

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How to use the advanced search:

- Enter your keywords and select the type of keyword (keyword, title subject, etc.) in the Search Input section.

- Adjust the Boolean Operators as needed for your search.

- You can further narrow your search by using the additional parameters in the Search Filters section.

   Additional filters include:
   - Item type
   - Item format
   - Language
   - Audience
   - Video format
   - Bib level (this field will not be relevant to your search)
   - Literary form
   - Shelving location (this field can be utilized, but its use is uncommon in most searches)
   - Search library (the library’s location)
Where (this field will not be relevant to your search)

Publication year (Click in the top box and select is, before, after, or between)

**SEARCH TIP:** When searching using multiple search parameters, the advanced search function will process the rows from top to bottom.

**Numeric Search**
Under the advanced search settings, there is an option to run a numeric search. A numeric search searches the catalog by a defined numeric value.

The most commonly used fields in a numeric search include ISBN, ISSN, and call number.

Enter your numeric value in the identifier field.

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Phrase Searching
Search the catalog for a phrase by enclosing it in quotation marks. Words enclosed in quotation marks will appear together in the results exactly as typed.

“Vegetarian soup” vs. vegetarian AND soup

Truncation
Truncation is a technique that allows you to broaden your search to include words with various endings and spellings.

For example, a search for veg* would return results including keywords such as vegetarian, vegan, and vegetable.

Truncation symbols may vary based on catalog, but common symbols include *, ?, !, or #.
Wildcard

In a wildcard search, a question mark is used as a substitute for one letter of a word. Using the wildcard technique is helpful when a word is spelled in different ways but has the same meaning.

Example: *Wom?n* would return results including *woman* and *women*. 
OTHER SEARCHES

Browse the Catalog
The Browse the Catalog link is located below the All Libraries button.

Browse for titles, authors (last name, first name), subjects, or series.

Enter your search terms in the starting with box. Select the library location. Click Browse.

Refine Your Search
If you are looking to refine the results of the search you performed, click Refine My Original Search beneath the Another Search button.

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SEARCH TIPS

Identifying words from other cultures
When selecting your keywords, look for synonyms or variant spellings of the words

Example: Trash, garbage, rubbish

Example: Catalog, catalogue

Use significant words
Avoid common words including the, of, an, and that.
CONTACT US

Library Hours
Monday-Thursday 9am-9pm
Friday 9am-6pm
Saturday 9am-5pm

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