Perform a search

Discover how to perform a basic and advanced search in addition to searching lists, contacts, and libraries in WorldCat.org.

**Perform a basic search**

1. On the WorldCat.org homepage, enter one or more basic **keywords** in the search box.  
   Or  
   Select **Search for Library Items** from the Search drop-down menu and then enter one or more basic **keywords** in the search box.
2. Click **Search**. Your results appear, sorted by relevance.
3. Click an **item title** to view the Item Details screen.

**Perform an advanced search**

Advanced search allows you to construct more complex searches by entering keywords for multiple categories and limiting your results by format (e.g., Books), or date of publication, subject content, audience, and/or language.

You can access the advanced search from the following areas:

- WorldCat.org homepage
- Search Results screen
- Search for Library Items screen
To perform an advanced search:

1. Click **Advanced Search** from one of the locations above.
2. Enter one or more search terms in at least one of the available fields.
3. (Optional) Limit your search results by selecting values for one or more Limit results by fields. See [Limiting an advanced search](#).
4. Click **Search**. Your results appear, sorted by relevance.
5. Click an **item title** to view the Item Details screen.

### Limiting an advanced search (optional)

You can limit advanced search results by entering information in one or more of the following fields, if available:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIELD</th>
<th>RETURNS ONLY...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Items published in a certain date range (whole years only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Items for the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Items with the content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format</td>
<td>Items in the format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Items in a certain language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To get more exact search results, combine search terms with limiters. For example, to find a specific journal:

1. Enter part of a journal title in the Title field, followed by an asterisk. (*)
2. Limit your search results by selecting **Journal/ Magazine** from the Format drop-down list.

**Example:**

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https://help.oclc.org/Discovery_and_Reference/WorldCat-org/Search_WorldCat-org/Perform_a_search
Printed: Sun, 28 Nov 2021 11:01:38 GMT
**Search for lists**

Lists are a way for you to group library-owned items you have found. Lists let you keep track of items of interest and refer back to them whenever you want to. You can create as many lists as you need, up to a total of 500 items per list.

You can search for:

- Public lists you have created
- Lists that have been created by other users, provided that the creator has set a list's Privacy Setting to Viewable by Anyone (Public).

For additional information about lists, see [Work with lists](#).

To search for a list:

1. Select **Search for Lists** from the Search drop-down menu.
2. Enter in the search box any combination of:
   - A complete or partial list name
   - One or more words contained in the list's description
3. Click **Search**. Lists that match your search are displayed.
4. Select a **list name** to see its contents.

### Search techniques for lists

Several techniques are available for searching for WorldCat lists. See [Search guidelines](#) for more information.

#### Invalid search techniques

Some common search techniques cannot be used to search lists:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USAGE...</th>
<th>movies - hitchcock (used in place of the Boolean NOT operator)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Search for contacts

You can search for others who have created public WorldCat profiles, in order to connect with people that you know, or people you may have heard of. You can search for contacts by:

- WorldCat username
- Your contact's first or last name

To search for a contact:

1. Select **Search for Contacts** from the Search drop-down menu.
2. Enter a user name, a first name, or a last name in the search box.
3. Select either the **User Name** or the **First or Last Name** radio button.
4. Click **Search**. Profiles for individuals whose public profiles and user name match your search are displayed.
5. Select a **user name** to see that user's profile.

Search techniques for contacts

All contact searches must use a complete single word only. Searches involving wildcards or truncations will not work.

Note: Search results match EXACT searches only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USE THIS...</th>
<th>NOT THIS...</th>
<th>RETURNS RESULTS...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>smith</td>
<td>john smith</td>
<td>smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>john AND smith</td>
<td>NOT smithson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anderson</td>
<td>anders?n</td>
<td>anderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOT andersen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>robert</td>
<td>robert*</td>
<td>robert</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Search for a library

You can search for a library near you. You can search for a library by:

- Library name, or part of a name
- Zip/postal code
- State or province

Note: Only libraries that have created a profile in the WorldCat Registry are listed in the library search results.

To search for a library:

1. Select **Search for a Library** from the Search drop-down menu.
2. Enter keywords in the search box. You can search by:
   - A library name or part of a name
   - Zip/postal code
   - State or province
3. Click **Search**. Libraries are displayed whose name or location match your search.
4. *(Optional)* You can narrow your search results by library type from the Refine Your Search list on the left-hand side of the screen.
5. Select a **library** to see the library's profile page.