



# Quick Guide to Searching The CAT

To use The CAT, visit the University Libraries' home page ([www.libraries.psu.edu](http://www.libraries.psu.edu)) and click on the link marked "The CAT."

CAT Help pages: Click "Help" in the blue menu bar at the top of any CAT screen.



## What?

The "Quick Search" screen allows you to select from a powerful array of searches. From one screen it is possible to perform any of the main search types: keyword, browse, or exact search. This enables you to easily select the search most appropriate to your needs.

## When?

Use **Quick Search** when you have a basic topic in mind, and want to get results quickly. **Advanced Search** should be used for more complex searches. Quick Search performs three types of searches: **Keyword**, **Browse** and **Exact**.

- Choose **Keyword** to find a word or phrase anywhere.
- Choose **Begins with (Browse)** to search a series of words sequentially.
- Choose **Exact** to search an exact title, author, or subject.

## How?

To begin a **quick search**:

1. **Type the word(s) or phrase** you're looking for in the box provided. Note: You can use Connectors (**AND, OR, NOT**) by typing them directly into your search box.
2. **Select the type of search** that you want to do (**Keyword, Browse** or **Exact**).
3. From the dropdown menu, **select the kind of search you want to do**: Keywords Anywhere (Searches the entire record); Topic: Title + Subject; Author; Title; Journal Title; Series; LC Subject Heading or Medical Subject Header, or ISBN
4. **Select a Library** to limit your search to a specific library location, if you desire. "All" will search the entire PSU Libraries collections at all locations.
5. **Click the Search button** to begin your search.

## Sample Quick Search:

Quick Search

Keyword  Begins With (Browse)  Exact

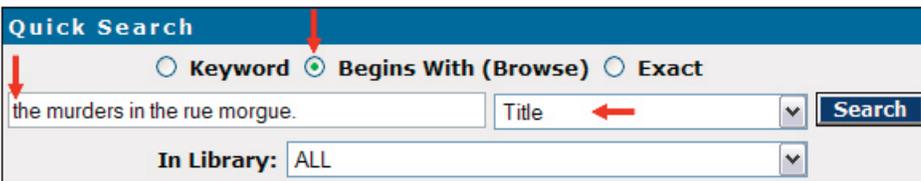
emmett till murder Keywords Anywhere Search

In Library: ALL

## How Do I Search for Books?

### Do you know the Title of the book?

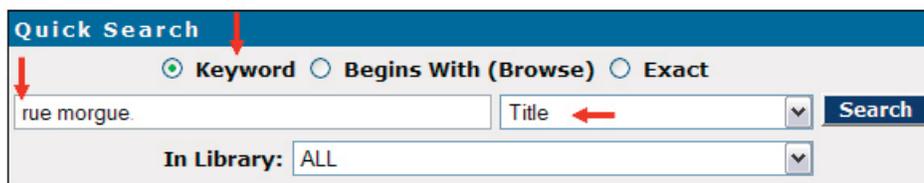
On the **Quick Search** screen, select "Title" from the drop down menu located next to the search box. Enter the title of the book in the search box. Click on the radio button marked "**Begins with (Browse)**" above the search box.



The screenshot shows the 'Quick Search' header. Below it are three radio buttons: 'Keyword', 'Begins With (Browse)' (which is selected), and 'Exact'. To the right of these is a dropdown menu set to 'Title'. The search box contains the text 'the murders in the rue morgue.'. Below the search box is a dropdown menu for 'In Library' set to 'ALL'. A 'Search' button is on the right.

### Are you unsure of the exact title?

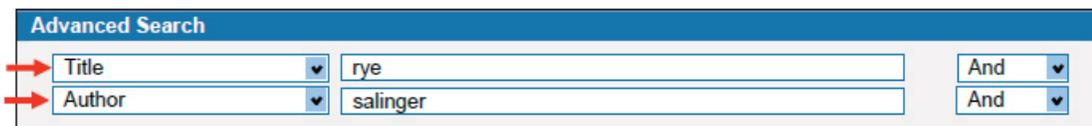
On the **Quick Search** screen, select "Title" from the drop down menu located next to the search box. Enter the title word(s) that you know for the item in the search box. Click on the radio button marked "**Keyword**" above the search box.



The screenshot shows the 'Quick Search' header. Below it are three radio buttons: 'Keyword' (which is selected), 'Begins With (Browse)', and 'Exact'. To the right of these is a dropdown menu set to 'Title'. The search box contains the text 'rue morgue.'. Below the search box is a dropdown menu for 'In Library' set to 'ALL'. A 'Search' button is on the right.

### Do you know an Author and part of the Title?

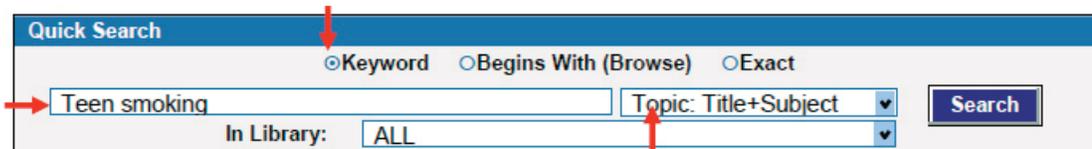
Go to **Advanced Search**. (The advanced search link is located on the right side of the main search page in The CAT.) Enter the **title word(s)** in the first box. Select "Title" from the drop-down menu next to the search box. Enter the **author's last name** in the next box down. Select "**Author**" from the drop-down menu next to the search box. Click "Search."



The screenshot shows the 'Advanced Search' header. Below it are two search criteria. The first is 'Title' with a dropdown menu set to 'Title' and the text 'rye'. The second is 'Author' with a dropdown menu set to 'Author' and the text 'salinger'. Between and after the criteria are 'And' dropdown menus. A 'Search' button is on the right.

### Are you looking for books on a Topic?

On the **Quick Search** screen, select "Topic: Title & Subject" from the drop down menu located next to the search box. Enter your topic word(s) in the search box. Click on the radio button marked "**Keyword**" above the search box.



The screenshot shows the 'Quick Search' header. Below it are three radio buttons: 'Keyword' (which is selected), 'Begins With (Browse)', and 'Exact'. To the right of these is a dropdown menu set to 'Topic: Title+Subject'. The search box contains the text 'Teen smoking'. Below the search box is a dropdown menu for 'In Library' set to 'ALL'. A 'Search' button is on the right.

### How can I tell if the item is on the shelf?

If your search has found two or more items: Click on the "Details" button beside a record that you are interested in to see more information about the item. On the "Details" page for the specific item, look at the bottom of the record to see whether the item is available or is checked out. Unless the item has a due date listed, it should be on the shelf at the location indicated.

[Details](#)

### Holdings

#### Penn State Harrisburg

| Call Number       | Material | Location                            |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| HD30.255.S58 2008 | Book     | Penn State Harrisburg - Stacks 3 Fl |

If the item is available, you will want to note the call number and location. If the item is not available or is held at another location, click on the "I want it" button on the left side of the screen to place a hold on the item or to have it sent from another campus.

[I Want It](#)

## How Do I Search for Journals?

### Do you know the NAME of the journal?

Note: You can find the titles of journals in the CAT, but not the individual articles within the journals. If you are searching for journal articles on a specific topic, go to the Libraries' homepage ([libraries.psu.edu](http://libraries.psu.edu)) and choose Find Research Guides by Subject. When you find your subject research guide, you will find a list of the databases you can use to find articles.

At the **Quick Search** screen, type the **journal name** in the search box, and select "**Journal Title**" from the drop-down menu. Then, click the "**Begins With (Browse)**" radio button. **The CAT** will retrieve journal titles that begin with the words you type.

The screenshot shows the 'Quick Search' interface. At the top, there are three radio buttons: 'Keyword', 'Begins With (Browse)', and 'Exact'. The 'Begins With (Browse)' radio button is selected. Below the radio buttons is a search box containing the text 'journal of communication'. To the right of the search box is a dropdown menu with 'Journal Title' selected. Below the search box is a label 'In Library:' followed by a dropdown menu with 'ALL' selected. A 'Search' button is located to the right of the search box. Red arrows point to the search box, the 'Begins With (Browse)' radio button, and the 'Journal Title' dropdown menu.

### Exact journal title searching

Another option is to select the "Exact" radio button. In **Quick Search**, type the **journal name** in the search box, and select "**Journal Title**" from the drop-down menu. Then, click the "**Exact**" radio button.

**One-Word Titles:** "Exact" is especially useful if the journal's title consists of one very common word, such as *Science*, *Cell*, or *Time*. "Exact" allows you to search only for journals that specifically match on the words you type. Keep in mind that you may still have to scroll down through the list of search results to find the specific journal title that you are seeking.

The screenshot shows the 'Quick Search' interface. At the top, there are three radio buttons: 'Keyword', 'Begins With (Browse)', and 'Exact'. The 'Exact' radio button is selected. Below the radio buttons is a search box containing the text 'science'. To the right of the search box is a dropdown menu with 'Journal Title' selected. Below the search box is a label 'In Library:' followed by a dropdown menu with 'ALL' selected. A 'Search' button is located to the right of the search box. Red arrows point to the search box, the 'Exact' radio button, and the 'Journal Title' dropdown menu.

### Are you looking for journals on a particular SUBJECT?

First, go to the **Advanced Search** screen. There, type your subject word(s) in the first search box and select "Topic: Title + Subject" from the drop-down menu. Then, select "Periodicals" from the "Material Type" drop-down menu at the bottom of the screen.

The screenshot shows the 'Advanced Search' interface. At the top, there is a search box containing the text 'hematology'. To the left of the search box is a dropdown menu with 'Topic: Title+Subject' selected. To the right of the search box is a dropdown menu with 'And' selected. Below the search box is a label 'Then select...'. Below this label are three dropdown menus: 'In Library:' with 'ALL' selected, 'Language:' with 'ANY' selected, and 'Material Type:' with 'Periodicals' selected. A red arrow points to the 'Material Type' dropdown menu.

### Once I find journals in The CAT, how do I access them?

**Online Content:** If the journal is available electronically, there will often be a direct link, labeled "Online Content." Click this link to go to the database featuring the journal. **Print Format:** At the journal's detailed screen, look at the "Locations" area of the record to see where bound and unbound issues of the journal are kept in the library. Note the call number for the bound volume(s).

### Are you looking for ONLINE journals?

Other ways to find online journals include Citation Linker and the E-Journal List which can be found on the Libraries' homepage ([libraries.psu.edu](http://libraries.psu.edu))

## Use the Advanced Search screen to take advantage of these advanced searching capabilities.

### Boolean Searching

BOOLEAN Operators enable you to narrow or expand your results.

**AND** Narrows: The terms you use must both occur in the same work, although they can occur in different fields (such as in Author and Subject fields).

**OR** Expands: The terms you use can occur in the same or different works. Either term will be retrieved.

**NOT** Narrows: Discards any record containing the word you specify using NOT. (e. g. Depression **NOT** economic)

### Phrase Searching ‘ ’

Phrase Searching will retrieve your search terms in the order you typed them.

Use Phrase Searching when you are trying to link two or more common words that may have different meanings when separated.

To search for a phrase on the quick search page, enclose the phrase in single quotes.

Example:

Using ‘women engineers’  
will search the exact phrase (women engineers)

### With

With allows you to search for terms in the same sentence of the same field (e.g. title, series, subject) in the record.

### Truncation \$

Truncation searches for documents containing variations on a search term. The CAT uses a “\$” as the “wildcard” which represents a single character, many characters, or no characters.

Use truncation when your search yields no or too few results, or if you want to conduct a more comprehensive search.

Example:

Using environment\$  
will search environment, environments, environmental, and environmentally

### Limit

The Limit option allows you to restrict your search to particular criteria that you specify – such as date, language, where it is located, or what type of material (book, video, score, juvenile material, etc...) it is.

Use Limit when you get too many results, or find many of your results to be irrelevant, due to age, language, location or type.

### Nesting ( )

Nesting utilizes **parentheses** to clarify relationships between search terms. Generally the items in parentheses are linked by “OR.”

Use parentheses ( ) to group or nest search terms together.

Example:

Using (Iraq or Kuwait) and oil  
will search Iraq or Kuwait first

### Substitution ?

A Question Mark substitutes a single character in a keyword search.

Use ? when you are unsure of a spelling or when you want to find two forms of one word.

Example:

Using wom?n  
will search woman and women

### Publication Date

**1980-2005** for dates between 1980 and 2005

**>1980** for dates after 1980  
(retrieves 1981 to present)

**<1990** for dates previous to 1990  
(retrieves 1989 and earlier)

**<=1900** for dates published in 1900 and earlier  
(“less than or equal to” 1900)

**>=1900:** for dates published in 1900 and after  
(“greater than or equal to” 1900)

Also see the CAT tutorial by choosing “tutorials” on the libraries homepage [libraries.psu.edu](http://libraries.psu.edu)