



Search anything



ADVANCED SEARCH

Getting Started with the Library of Virginia's Catalog

Library Account

- You will be prompted to sign into your library account. A library account is not needed to search the catalog, but you must be signed in to request items from the closed stacks.
- While signed in, you can “Pin”  favorite items or search queries. Your favorites will be retained on your library account even after you log off. From the saved searches screen you can see the queries you saved. You may also set up an availability alert notification for items or queries.
- To view your library account information, hover over your name and select “My library account.” From this screen you can see the books you have on loan, fines and fees, requests, and any blocks or messages pertaining to your account. Any items placed on hold will appear in the “Requests” section. You may also cancel requests from this page.
- Under “Personal Details,” you can edit account information, including email and password.

Basic Search

- Just type one or more words into the search bar and click the search icon . If you enter multiple words, you will get results that contain all of the specified terms. You can conduct your initial search using some quick filters. As you begin typing you will see the choices of “Library Catalog,” which searches the entire catalog holdings, “Books and Journals,” “Archives and Manuscripts,” or “Digital Collections.” For more complex searching, there are a number of “Advanced Search” and “Browse,” options that may enable you to get more precise and useful results.
- By default your search results will be sorted based on relevance. Click on the “Sort by” arrow to sort by date, title, or author. As

you scroll down, you can see where a search term appears in the brief record for each result - it's underlined in yellow.

- Use the filters in the left-hand bar to refine and view a subset of your results. Select checkboxes and then “apply filters” at the bottom of the screen or, to apply just one, select the filter name. To exclude items, hover over your filtered criteria and select the red checkmark  that appears.
- Once you have applied filters, you can hover over the filter and select the lock icon  to keep them in place when you run a new search.

Catalog Record

- From the results, click the title to view the holdings and full catalog record. To close out of the full record, click the “X” on the left side of the screen. You can also move to the next or previous record generated from your search by clicking the up or down arrows surrounding the “X.”
- In the “Send To” section, you can send the citation by generating a permanent link to this record by clicking the “” icon. You can also print or email the citation.
- In the “Find It” section, you can see if the item is circulating or non-circulating, as well as, its location.
- When signed in to your account, the “Request” feature will be visible. When you click “Request” a new box will appear. Select your desired copy (if multiple copies are available) and “Send Request.” You should see a confirmation notice in a green box. Items are held at the circulation desk until 4:45PM and then returned to the stacks. Items from the closed stacks must be requested prior to 4:30 for same day retrieval.

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Tips for Searching the Library of Virginia's Catalog

Browse Search

Browse takes you to a particular spot in an alphabetical or numerical list of all of the authors, titles, subjects, call numbers in the Library Catalog.

- Browsing by author is a great way to find variations in an author's name. For example, Jennings and Jenings, or Edmund and Edmd.
- Browsing by title is helpful for quickly finding minor variations in titles. For example: *Big Stone Gap Post* and *Big Stone Post*.
- Browse by subject to see how your topic is organized and subdivided in the Library Catalog's subject headings, providing clues for more directed searches.
- Browsing by Library of Congress call numbers might help you to find additional published material on your topic.
- Browse LVA call numbers to find manuscript accession numbers or microfilm numbers or other Library of Virginia numbered materials.

Advanced Searching

The Advanced Search screen allows you to preset filters before searching. For example, if you only wanted to search within Digital Materials and only wanted Images, or if you only wanted materials published between particular dates.

You may also conduct advanced searches from the general search box using Boolean and Proximty operators, Phrase searching, and Wildcards.

- **Boolean operators:** OR, NOT and AND written in ALL CAPS may be used in your search. By default, all search terms will be combined with the AND operator. To exclude terms use the NOT operator or "-" character before a term.
- **Proximity operators:** Enclose your search terms in quotes and use the tilde (~) followed by a number indicating the distance you want to allow between the search terms. For example: "washington statue"~10 will find results where "washington" and "statue" appear within ten words of each other. Proximity searching does not take the order of search terms into account.
- **Wildcards:** The question mark (?) will match any one character and can be used to find "Olsen" or "Olson" by searching for "Ols?n". The asterisk (*) will match zero or more characters within a word or at the end of a word. A search for "Ch*ter" would match "Charter", "Character", and "Chapter". When used at the end of a word, such as "Temp*", it will match all suffixes "Temptation", "Temple" and "Temporary". Wildcards cannot be used as the first character of a search, and they cannot be used within double quotes (phrase searching).
- **Phrase Search:** To do a phrase search use quotation marks. The query "local food" will only retrieve results with that phrase. By using quotes around phrases you will return fewer, more relevant results.