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Search screens

There are three kinds of search screen to choose from

- **Simple** – a single search box which searches across both Library and Archive catalogues. It will find catalogue records which include all those words. It is the simplest way to do a general search or to search for book titles
- **Advanced** – more specific searches of either Library or Archive catalogue. For example you can search for a specific author, archive creator, subject or date
- **Expert** – more specific and complex searches of either Library or Archive catalogue. For example, in the Library catalogue you can search on publisher, ISBN or language; and in the Archives catalogue you can search for a specific archive reference. You can also limit your search to a type of Library material, such as books (all monographic publications, including pamphlets), articles, serials or audio-visual material.

Only **Simple Search** searches across both Library and Archive catalogues. In **Advanced** or **Expert Search** you have to choose between Library or Archive – *always* make sure the one you want is selected at the top.

Click on the help button at the top of the screen for help on different catalogue screens.



Clicking the help icons beside the search boxes in **Advanced** and **Expert Search** will give you context specific help too.

Searching for a specific author/subject/publication type/archive reference

Choose **Advanced** or **Expert Search** and select Library or Archive catalogue. Enter the name, subject, publication type or other term in the appropriate search box and click search.

Names should be surname first, e.g. *Smith, John*

Often searching for varying forms of name or subject terms will still bring up the results you want (e.g. searching for *Fell, Margaret* under her married name *Fox, Margaret*). But you can sometimes improve your search by using the form of name/subject/publication type etc. preferred in the catalogue. You can select these from a pop-up list where you see the binoculars icon beside the search box. For example, if you know the subject of the book but you are not sure what term to use, you can look at the list of subjects and choose the best term; or if you want to distinguish between two people with the same name, such as *Fox, George*, you can look at the list of names to pick the one with the correct dates.



Author/creator and subject are available in both searches, but **Expert Search** offers a wider range of fields to search than **Advanced Search**, including publication type and archive reference.

Limiting a search to books, journals, or articles

If you only want books, or journals or articles, choose **Expert Search** and select Library catalogue - books (all monographic publications, including pamphlets), - articles, - serials or - audio-visual material from the drop down **search in** menu at the top.

Using the archive hierarchy browser

Archives and manuscripts are generally catalogued as named collections in a hierarchical structure: a top-level record (called the “fonds”) describes the whole collection, next level records cover specific groups of material (e.g. correspondence) and further levels may provide more detail within those groups.

Most of the archives and manuscripts in the catalogue are described at fonds level. Where they are catalogued at deeper levels you can use the catalogue’s hierarchy browser to explore groups of material within a collection. The hierarchy browser displays at the bottom of the record: click on the plus or minus signs at the right of each level to expand or close the hierarchy, and click on the link to see the detailed catalogue record for that level (fonds, series, item, etc.). In **Expert Search** you can limit your search to a particular archive level by entering it in the “level of description” search box.

Finding other items on the same topic or by the same author/creator

An easy way to find other items on the same subject or by the same author/creator is to use the links which display in a detailed records. Click on the links to see other records with the same term. Besides authors and subjects, there are links for publishers, publication types (genres), series and related archive collections.

Narrowing down your results

If you get too many results, there are several ways you can narrow them down.

- You can change from **Simple Search** to **Advanced** or **Expert Search** to combine searches in more specific ways.
- You can add more search words to your existing search. Click “Search in results” from the list of “Actions” on the left of the screen. A new search will open, within the original results.
- In **Advanced** and **Expert Search** you can also pick a more specific term to search on, using the binoculars icon beside search boxes like author, creator or subject.
- In **Expert Search** you can get switch off truncation by un-checking the “Enable Truncation” tick box (by default, truncation is enabled, so searching for a word will include longer terms; e.g. a search for "spirit" will also find "spirits", "spiritual" and "spirituous"; un-check the box if you want to exclude longer terms).
- You can sort your results by author, title or date to help you locate the most relevant ones.

Can't find what you are looking for?

Try these tips.

- Make sure your previous search terms have cleared: click the “Clear” button at the bottom of the search screen.
- Check you are searching the right collection (Library or Archive) if you are in **Advanced** or **Expert Search**. Choose the collection from the “Search in” box at the top of the search screen.
- Check your spelling. Try variant spellings.
- Avoid using punctuation (such as ! or ?). If a word includes an apostrophe, just enter the letters up to the apostrophe (such as *Friend*, instead of *Friends'* or *Friend's*).
- If your search combines names and titles or subjects, try searching on just one of them.
- Try using different search words, or pick specific terms from the pop-up lists beside some search boxes in **Advanced** or **Expert Search** (look for the binoculars icon).
- Enter names in surname, forename order (e.g. *Smith, John*). Consider just using the surname and the first letter of the forename, or omit the forename altogether (e.g. *Smith, J*).

Please note that not everything is included in the online catalogue yet.

- **Library collection.** You can use the online catalogue to search for most of the printed material in the Library – everything published before 1801, everything after 1988, all anti-slavery, peace and temperance material, all journals and newsletters, a growing number of articles and much more. The remaining 19th and early 20th century books, pamphlets and articles are being added, but you may have to check the card catalogue if you don't find them online.
- **Archive collection.** There are additional paper catalogues and other finding aids in the Library reading room, which may provide further information as well as descriptions of archives and manuscripts not yet on the online catalogue.

If you cannot find what you are looking for, please contact us.

Date searching

You can search for an exact date of publication in **Advanced Search**.

You can search for works published, or archive material created, before or after a certain date, or within a range of years in **Expert Search**. For detailed instructions on how to do this, go to **Expert Search** and select "Year" (in Library catalogue), or "Date from" (in Archive catalogue), and click on the help icon:



Sorting results

Advanced Search and **Expert Search** include an option to sort results by title, author/creator or year (ascending or descending). You must choose the sort options before clicking on the search button. If you want to sort your results once you have already done the search, simply click "Search in results", add the sort options and click search again.

Saving your results for later

You can print, email, print or download your search results, either as a list, or in detail. Select these from the "Actions" options on the left hand side of the screen.

If you want to email more results than are displayed on one page, select them by checking the boxes (or choose "Select all" from the "Actions" options). View your selected records on the **Selection** tab, choose "Show detail" if you want full descriptions, and follow instructions for emailing, printing or downloading. You cannot select more than 100 records at a time.

Saving your searches for later

The catalogue saves all your searches until you close the session. Open the **Search history** tab to see and refresh your previous searches.



You can save searches for later sessions by adding them to your browser favourites. Do the search and click on the bookmark icon at the bottom of the display. When you open the favourite the catalogue will open and the search will run again.

How to find out when we add new books or archive collections to the catalogue

You can find out when new items of interest are added to the catalogue by adding a search to an RSS feed. Search for your chosen names or subjects and click on the RSS feed icon at the bottom of the screen. This will add the search to your browser's RSS feed, or you can copy and paste the URL from the address bar into your chosen feed reader. Each time you check the feed you will see any new catalogue records added, and the date.



Linking to catalogue records

Each catalogue record has its own URL. You can save the link in your browser favourites or copy and paste it into a document and easily find it again. If you email results to yourself, they will each have a hyperlink to the detailed record on the catalogue.

Accessing the items

All are welcome to visit the Library to use the Library's collections. For opening hours and how to register as a reader, see our [Visiting the Library](#) page.

To find books on the shelves or to fill in an order slip for items in the stacks, you will need the following information from the detailed catalogue record:

- library shelfmark or archive reference
- title
- author or creator
- for serials, volume/issue number and date of publication
- for articles, serial title, volume/issue number and date of publication

To save time when you visit, you can [contact us](#) to request material in advance. You will need to give us the information listed above to help us identify the right material.

For further help or information about the Library, contact us:

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