

Using WorldCat Effectively

Contains all the records cataloged by OCLC member libraries.

Offers millions of bibliographic records.

Includes records representing 400 languages.

Preparing and executing your search

1	Identify your search ideas.	I need information on the roots of jazz fusion.
2	Select key search terms.	<i>jazz, fusion, roots</i>
3	Browse the indexes to verify the spelling and format of any key terms.	Click the "Browse" icon  to the right of each box to get browse function. Ex. <i>fusion</i> not <i>fussion</i>
4	Browse the Library of Congress Subject Headings for additional terms that may apply to your search.	To access the Library of Congress Subject Headings, click the Subjects icon  at the top or bottom of the screen. Ex.: <i>influences, origins</i> (instead of <i>roots</i> which may find information on plants)
5	Determine the relationships between terms. Use the plus sign (+) to indicate plurals.	I want results to include <i>jazz fusion</i> and either <i>influence+</i> or <i>origin+</i>
6	Combine terms using Boolean operators (AND , OR , and NOT).	<p>The search boxes can be combined using the boxes between the rows. The default combination is "AND" - that narrows the results by requiring terms in both boxes to be present. (<i>jazz fusion AND origin+</i>)</p> <p>Use OR to broaden a search by allowing synonyms or related terms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>jazz fusion AND (origin+ OR influence+)</i>
7	Focus your search when results are too many.	Use the "Related Subjects" button  to identify other terms - to help limit to the most relevant results. Ex. <i>AND "popular music"</i>

Browsing Subject Headings

A subject heading is a word or group of words that describes a library resource. These subject headings are standardized and then used to classify library resources.

A preferred subject heading uses the preferred spelling and format under which many similar subject headings may fall. For example, for some databases, **physicians** may be the preferred subject heading for **medical doctors** and **doctors**, and is to be used instead of these other terms.

Click the **Subjects**  icon to browse the list of subject headings. This feature is useful when you need to refine the search terms you have chosen or when you are looking for alternative search terms to broaden the scope of your search. Use **Subjects**  to browse for subject headings based on a term or concept. For an alphabetical list of subject headings, use the **Index**  feature.

Finding related subject headings:

When you see the icon at the top for Related Subjects  you can click it to see a list of subject headings that are closely related to the term(s) you used to search. Do it!

Remember:

1. Not all items found in WorldCat can be borrowed through interlibrary loan – especially “Internet Resources”, “Archival materials”, and “Visual materials”.
2. Many items in WorldCat are NOT in English.
3. It may be a good idea to get more information about a book before requesting it – including a review, if possible. See the link for “Book Reviews” under the “Find Books” tab on the library web site for advice on finding book reviews.
4. WorldCat is NOT a good place to look for articles - it is mainly a catalog of books and monographic materials.