

SOLCAT Tutorial

SOLCAT (**S**chool **o**f **L**aw **C**atalog) is the online catalog of the Duquesne University Center for Legal Information and the Allegheny County Law Library. SOLCAT is freely¹ accessible from any web browser, twenty-four hours a day at: <http://library.law.duq.edu>.

Learning how to use SOLCAT will provide you with key research skills that are applicable in any library. In fact, if you have used another library's catalog, you will probably find SOLCAT very similar.

Upon completion of the tutorial you will be able to:



- ▶ Identify SOLCAT and understand its purpose
- ▶ Navigate through the different screens of SOLCAT
- ▶ Develop useful search strategies
- ▶ Avoid common SOLCAT errors

Why Use SOLCAT?

At its simplest level, SOLCAT is just a finding aid to determine what materials the libraries own. It is used to find specific books, periodicals, government documents, and even videos that either library physically holds. It also provides access to resources that may only be available electronically.

Additionally, SOLCAT can be used to find materials on a given research topic. Since it is a much smaller, law-specific database than the entire Internet, users can use it to easily identify useful resources without being overwhelmed with millions of irrelevant hits. Unlike most search engines, SOLCAT easily brings together "like things". For example, if you search using Google to find a particular author's works, you can probably find the titles, but you will also retrieve a lot of unnecessary information. Searching for an author in SOLCAT will quickly display a listing of all of the author's works that either library owns.

¹ SOLCAT may provide links to proprietary databases that are only accessible to current Duquesne University ID holders and/or Allegheny County Law Library card holders.

Navigation Basics

SOLCAT uses the same basic technology that is found on most web pages. Underlined words and buttons are hyperlinks which take users to additional information.

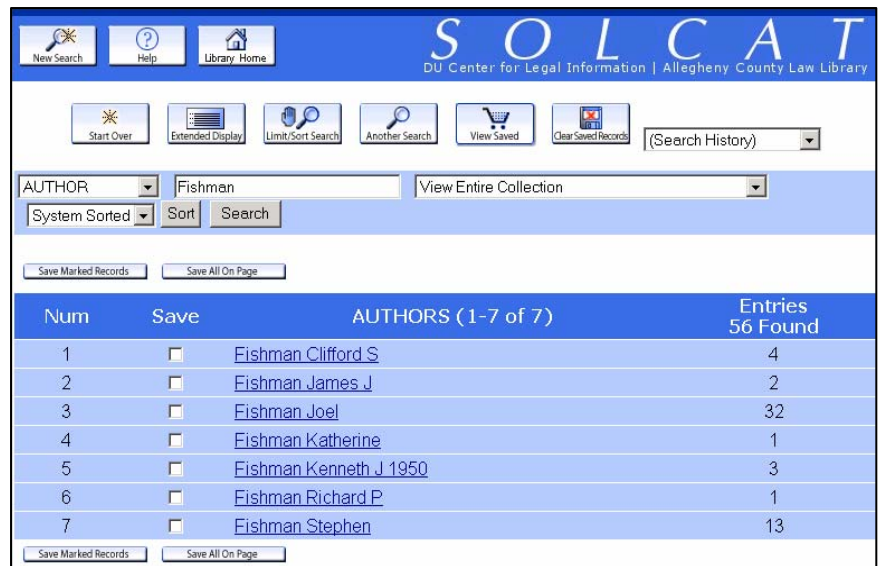
The top menu is always accessible regardless of where you are in



SOLCAT. Search options are also accessible on every page. Additional navigation buttons are offered depending on the context.

Screen Navigation

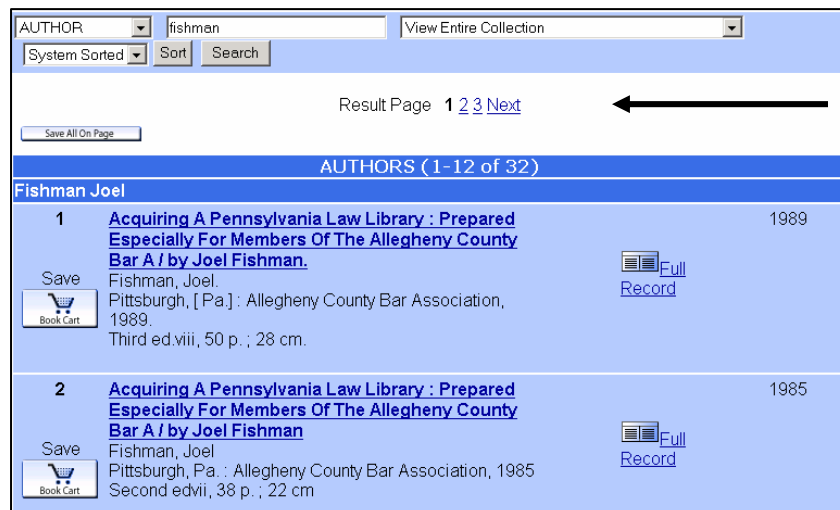
If your search terms retrieve more than one hit, a *browse screen* may be displayed. The browse screen will display possible matches with the entries grouped for easier browsing. To see all of the 32 entries for Fishman Joel, simply click the underlined Fishman Joel link.



The screenshot shows the SOLCAT interface with a search for 'Fishman'. The results are grouped by author. The table below shows the first 7 authors and their entry counts.

Num	Save	AUTHORS (1-7 of 7)	Entries Found
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fishman Clifford S	4
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fishman James J	2
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fishman Joel	32
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fishman Katherine	1
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fishman Kenneth J 1950	3
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fishman Richard P	1
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fishman Stephen	13

Once you select the link, an expanded results page will display more information about the entries. Notice there are 3 pages of results on the example below. To look at a specific record, either select the hyperlinked title or select the "full record" link.



The screenshot shows the expanded results page for 'Fishman Joel'. It displays two records with their titles, authors, and publication details. A navigation bar at the top indicates 'Result Page 1 2 3 Next' with an arrow pointing left.

AUTHORS (1-12 of 32)	
Fishman Joel	
1	Acquiring A Pennsylvania Law Library : Prepared Especially For Members Of The Allegheny County Bar A / by Joel Fishman. 1989
Save	Full Record
	Fishman, Joel. Pittsburgh, [Pa.] : Allegheny County Bar Association, 1989. Third ed.viii, 50 p. ; 28 cm.
2	Acquiring A Pennsylvania Law Library : Prepared Especially For Members Of The Allegheny County Bar A / by Joel Fishman 1985
Save	Full Record
	Fishman, Joel Pittsburgh, Pa. : Allegheny County Bar Association, 1985 Second ed.vii, 38 p. ; 22 cm

Specific Records

Specific records show all of the bibliographic information. They also show the location, call number, and status information necessary for finding a book in the stacks. If a book is currently checked out, it will display the due date in the status column. To navigate to the next record use the **Prev** and **Next** links at the top of the record.

Record 1 of 32
Record: [Prev](#) [Next](#) ←

<i>Author</i>	Fishman, Joel
<i>Title</i>	Acquiring a Pennsylvania law library : prepared especially for members of the Allegheny County Bar Association / by Joel Fishman.
<i>Imprint</i>	Pittsburgh, [Pa.] : Allegheny County Bar Association, 1989.
<i>Edition</i>	Third ed.

LOCATION	CALL #	STATUS
DCLI Pa. Collection 2nd Floor	KFP75 .F5 1989	CHECK SHELF
ACLL Main Reading Room	KFP75 .F5 1989	CHECK SHELF
ACLL Reserve Room	KFP75 .F5 1989 c.2	CHECK SHELF

<i>Descript</i>	viii, 50 p. ; 28 cm.
<i>Note</i>	Cover title.
<i>Subject</i>	Law libraries -- Pennsylvania -- Bibliography. Legal research -- Pennsylvania -- Bibliography.
<i>Alt author</i>	Allegheny County Bar Association.

Record 1 of 32
Record: [Prev](#) [Next](#)

Links to Electronic Resources

Records can also contain links to resources available on the web. The following example is available in paper in both libraries. But the link under the Online Version heading also shows it is available electronically by simply clicking the link.

<i>Title</i>	Bankruptcy basics.
<i>Imprint</i>	Washington, D.C. : Bankruptcy Judges Division, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, [1998]
<i>Edition</i>	2nd ed.

Online version: ←

[Connect to http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS10046](http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS10046)

LOCATION	CALL #	STATUS
DCLI Govt Docs Collection	KF1524.3 .B215 1998	CHECK SHELF
ACLL Govt Docs	KF1524.3 .B215 1998	CHECK SHELF

<i>Descript</i>	67 p. ; 23 cm.
<i>Series</i>	Public information series Public information series (United States. Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Bankruptcy Judges Division)
<i>Note</i>	Shipping list no.: 99-0190-P. "December 1998." Includes bibliographical references.
<i>Subject</i>	Bankruptcy -- United States -- Handbooks, manuals, etc.
<i>Alt author</i>	United States. Administrative Office of the United States Courts. Bankruptcy Judges Division.

Searching SOLCAT

Searching is slightly different in SOLCAT than searching using a web search engine such as Google or Yahoo or searching in legal databases such as Lexis or Westlaw. The most important difference to remember is that SOLCAT is a database of records describing the books, periodicals, electronic resources, etc. owned by the libraries. It searches the information contained in the descriptive records not the word-for-word (full-text) information of the actual resource.

<i>Author</i>	Aman, Alfred C.	
<i>Title</i>	Administrative law / by Alfred C. Aman, Jr., William T. Mayton.	
<i>Imprint</i>	St. Paul, Minn. : West Group, 2001.	
<i>Edition</i>	2nd ed.	
LOCATION	CALL #	STATUS
DCLI Reserve Collection	KF5402 .A8 2001	CHECK SHELF
<i>Descript</i>	xxv, 971 p. ; 27 cm.	
<i>Series</i>	Hornbook series	
<i>Note</i>	Includes index.	
<i>Contents</i>	The delegation doctrine -- Rulemaking -- Rulemaking and the rule of law -- The zone of rulemaking -- Allocation of judicial power -- The Seventh Amendment and the agencies -- Due process -- Formal agency adjudication -- Informal agency processes and actions -- Consistency according to formal rules and standards -- Consistency, and the doctrines of res judicata and estoppel -- The availability and timing of judicial review -- Judicial review of agency discretion -- Money damages -- Executive control of agency discretion -- Citizens' access to governmentally held information -- The Privacy Act -- Government in the Sunshine Act -- Agency acquisition of information.	
<i>Note</i>	Kept up to date by supplements.	
<i>Subject</i>	Administrative law -- United States. Administrative procedure -- United States.	
<i>Alt author</i>	Mayton, William T., 1941-	
<i>ISBN</i>	0314238751 (hard cover : alk. paper)	

The information contained in the descriptive records (also called *bibliographic records*) is very useful. The following is just a sampling of the information contained in the descriptive records used by SOLCAT:

- ▶ Titles (exact from title page, commonly known as titles, citation titles, series titles)
- ▶ Authors (individual people, department or agencies, conferences)
- ▶ Publisher information including publication dates
- ▶ Subject headings
- ▶ Table of contents headings (in selective resources)

Important Things to Remember

Do not be afraid to ask a Librarian for help

Spelling counts

Capitalization does not matter

Punctuation is treated as spaces

Types of Searches Available in SOLCAT

The type of search you choose depends upon the information you have available and whether you are looking for something specific or just a general subject area.

Searches may be selected from the drop-down menu or by selecting one of the listed search types.



The screenshot shows the 'Search the Catalog' interface. At the top, there is a search box with a dropdown menu labeled 'WORD' and a 'Go' button. Below the search box, there is a magnifying glass icon and the text 'Use the search box or select a search type below:'. Underneath, there are six search options arranged in two columns: 'A Author Search', 'K Keyword Search', 'T Title Search', 'Course Reserves', 'S Subject Search', and '+ Additional Searches'.

Keyword (Word) Searches

Keyword searches are the best place to begin research if you are unsure of the exact wording of a topic. Simply enter the words you think best describe the topic you are researching into the search box. Then select the Go or Submit button.

SOLCAT automatically adds an AND between multiple search words. To search for the words

as a phrase, surround them with quotation marks. To search for multiple word endings use an asterisk. The following will retrieve different results:

tort damages tort* damages
torts damages "tort damages"

The results screen displays stars to indicate how relevant SOLCAT believes the results are.

There are many additional features to keyword searching that are outside of the scope of this tutorial. Please ask a librarian for help.

Hint: In most cases it is not necessary to include the word "law" as a search term as virtually everything that is in SOLCAT deals with law.



The screenshot shows three search results for tort law books. Each result includes a star rating, a 'Save' button, and a 'Book Cart' icon. The first result is 'Unification Of Tort Law : Damages / U. Magnus (Editor) ; F.D. Busnelli ... [Et Al.]' with a 6-star rating. The second result is 'Jury Instructions On Damages In Tort Actions / Ronald W. Eades.' with a 7-star rating. The third result is 'Crossing The Contract-Tort Boundary : An Economic Argument For The Imposition Of Extracompensatory D / Barry Perlestein.' with an 8-star rating.

Title Searches

Title searches look for specific titles or series titles. If you are unsure of the exact title, try a KEYWORD search instead.

If you only know the beginning few words of a title, you can enter just those words in order and then browse for the specific title. For example, a title search for “law of real



The screenshot shows a search interface with a search bar containing 'law of real property' and a dropdown menu set to 'TITLE'. Below the search bar are buttons for 'System Sorted', 'Sort', and 'Search'. There are also buttons for 'Save Marked Records' and 'Save All On Page'. The results are displayed in a table with columns for 'Num Save', 'TITLES (1-8 of 8)', and 'Entries 16 Found'.

Num Save	TITLES (1-8 of 8)	Entries 16 Found
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Law Of Real Property	9
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Law Of Real Property And Deeds	1
3	<input type="checkbox"/> Law Of Real Property And Other Interests In Land	1
4	<input type="checkbox"/> Law Of Real Property Based On Minors Institutes	1
5	<input type="checkbox"/> Law Of Real Property Chiefly In Relation To Conveyance	1
6	<input type="checkbox"/> Law Of Real Property In Its Present State Practically Arranged And Digested In All Its Branches Incl	1
7	<input type="checkbox"/> Law Of Real Property In New York	1
8	<input type="checkbox"/> Law Of Real Property Including Also General Rules Of Law Relative To The Purchase And Sale Of Land O	1

property” will retrieve records with that exact title but also titles with additional words following the search words.

Author Searches

Author searches are used to retrieve all of the works by a particular author that either library owns. Author searches should be entered with the author’s last name, then first name.

Author searches include more than just individuals. An author may be an organization, a government agency, a specific court, or even a conference name.

To distinguish between common names, SOLCAT may use an expanded form of the name or add a birth year to the name to help display all of an author’s works together.



The screenshot shows a search interface with a search bar containing 'murray, john' and a dropdown menu set to 'AUTHOR'. Below the search bar are buttons for 'System Sorted', 'Sort', and 'Search'. There are also buttons for 'Save Marked Records' and 'Save All On Page'. The results are displayed in a table with columns for 'Num Save', 'AUTHORS (1-5 of 5)', and 'Entries 19 Found'.

Num Save	AUTHORS (1-5 of 5)	Entries 19 Found
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Murray John Courtney	3
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Murray John E John Edward -- See --Murray John Edward	1
3	<input type="checkbox"/> Murray John Edward	13
4	<input type="checkbox"/> Murray John S 1939	1
5	<input type="checkbox"/> Murray John Walsh	1

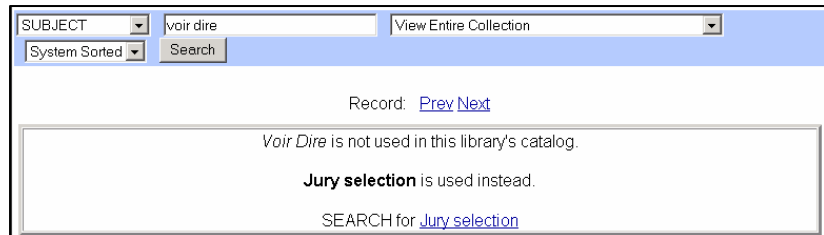
For example, John Murray is a very common name. To keep all of the works of the John Murray who is associated with Duquesne University together, his middle name “Edward” is used.

Subject Searches

Subject searches look for a concept as an exact Library of Congress Subject Heading. Subject headings bring all of the possible ways to describe a concept into a controlled set of terms to help improve retrieval.

In SOLCAT, subject headings are assigned based on the overall subject of a work. This means that sometimes a broader heading may be used to describe a book that includes the narrower topic you are researching. If you have difficulty finding the exact Library of Congress Subject Heading, try doing a KEYWORD search first. When you find a hit that closely matches the topic you are researching, simply select the hyperlinked subject heading within the record to retrieve additional relevant hits.

SOLCAT also tries to offer redirects from invalid subject headings to valid subject headings. For example, *voir dire* is a common research subject. However, the valid heading is *jury selection*. If you enter the search terms "voir dire" SOLCAT will automatically display a link to the appropriate term.



SUBJECT searches generally retrieve fewer records than KEYWORD searches. But the records retrieved by SUBJECT searches will probably be more relevant to topic you are researching.

As you become familiar with using subject headings, you may notice that they are developed according to certain patterns. Many headings are formulated as: Topic--Law and legislation--Place

Some sample headings are:

- ▶ Taxation Law and legislation United States
- ▶ Torts united states
- ▶ Electronic commerce law and legislation united states

Additional qualifiers are then added to headings. If you are unsure of the extended heading, simply enter as much of the heading as you know. SOLCAT will display a browse screen for you to explore further headings.

The screenshot shows a search interface with a search bar containing 'Electronic commerce Law and legislation United States'. Below the search bar, a message states: 'Nearby SUBJECTS are:'. There are also links for 'Save Marked Records' and 'Save All On Page'. Below the message is a table with columns 'Save' and 'Entries'.

Save	Entries
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Law And Legislation European Union Countries	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Law And Legislation Great Britain	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Law And Legislation Pennsylvania	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Law And Legislation United States	49
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Law And Legislation United States Cases	2
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Law And Legislation United States Documentation	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Law And Legislation United States Forms	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Law And Legislation United States Periodicals	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Law And Legislation United States States	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Mexico Sonora State	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Security Measures	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Commerce Taxation	2