

Map Finding Strategies

Finding just the right map is often a matter of trial and error. Maps are located in many different places in a library and are cataloged in a variety of ways. There is often no one way to catalog a map and there is no one right way to find a map. In general, you need to find your key words in the “bibliographic record.” Look on the back page of this handout for an example of a bibliographic record.

Keyword searching looks for your keywords in four kinds of data fields in the bibliographic record. These fields are *Title, Author, Subject,* and *Notes*. Notes include fields that are labeled on the record as Notes, Table of Contents, and Series. If your keyword occurs anywhere in any of these fields, the record will be retrieved.

Keywords can be either a word or a phrase.

A keyword search can (and usually should) consist of several words or phrases that are linked together with *Boolean operators*. This will more precisely describe your information need and will limit the retrieval to just the kinds of information you need.

Boolean operators include the words *and, or,* and *and not*.

And means that the record must contain all the words/phrases that are linked with *and*
This term will narrow a search (fewer records retrieved).

Or means that the record must contain at least one of the words/phrases that are linked with *or*
This term will broaden a search (more records retrieved).

And not means that the record must not contain the specified word/phrase when it is retrieved.
A record containing this phrase would not be retrieved. This term will narrow a search.

Descriptive words and phrases for finding maps in print and in books may not be intuitive. Because you will also be looking in the subject field, it is helpful to know the specific terms which may be used to describe “map” information. **Truncation symbols** are used with certain words (*atlas**) so that you can retrieve a record whether it contains the term *atlas* or *atlases*. Another example is *map** to retrieve *maps* or *map*.

Parenthesis () are used whenever you want to make sure the database sees two or more words as a linked phrase or concept, as in *maine and (description and travel)*

To develop your list of keywords, you will have to specify the geographic area of interest. You may have to think broader than the name of your town. You may have to search by the name of your county, your state, or a nearby, well known site or event.

Useful keywords and keyword phrases:

[state]	insert name of state, do not use the brackets
[county]	insert proper name of county, do not use the brackets <i>Delaware county</i>
map*	truncation to find map or maps
atlas*	truncation to find atlas or atlases
(cities and towns)	a library of congress subject term that can retrieve maps
(road map*)	a phrase that can limit to a specific kind of map
guidebook*	a term that can limit to a type of work that may contain maps
(description and travel)	a phrase that can limit to a type of work that may contain maps
(geographical distribution)	a phrase that may include range maps of species that live in the area of interest
(ghost towns)	a phrase that can limit to a work about specific types of areas that may contain maps
survey*	a type of work that may contain maps
(geol* or soil or usgs)	a phrase that will help to retrieve maps published by geologists, state soil surveys, or the US Geological survey –all prolific map-makers
(historical geography)	a phrase that will retrieve works that may contain maps as illustrations
(administrative and political subdivisions)	a phrase that will retrieve works that may show township, precinct, or other political boundaries

Once you have selected some keywords or key phrases, you will begin constructing and performing your searches. You will need to do several searches using a variety of keyword combinations. You will need to look at the retrieved records individually to decide if a record describes a work that may contain a map of your area. You will be gathering lists with the call numbers of items that you will need to actually look at and browse through to possibly find a map you can use.

Set aside plenty of time for this exercise. You will be looking at many records and browsing through many books. The items you need to look at may not be at Beeghly Library. You may well have to get them through CONSORT or OhioLINK loan. If you can't find anything, please make an appointment to work with Deb Peoples before giving up.

Examples of keyword searches:

Delaware and (map* or atlas*)
(cities and towns) and california
ohio and (road map*)
guidebook* and ohio
guidebook* and map* and ohio
ohio and (description and travel)
ohio and (geographical distribution)
ohio and survey* and (geol* or soil or usgs) and Delaware
(Delaware county) and map*
atlas* and ohio and franklin

Atlases

There are many good atlases. Atlases are shelved in the reference section of both Beeghly and Hobson Science Libraries. Older atlases may also be found in the stacks. Some good atlases include:

The Times Atlas of the World
Concise Atlas of the World
Encyclopedic World Atlas
Goode's World Atlas
Atlas of the World, National Geographic Society
Rand McNally Premier World Atlas
Rand McNally Commercial Atlas & Marketing Guide
Hammond Atlas of the World
Atlas of North America
Oxford Atlas of the World
Rand McNally Road Atlas

Do a Title search in CONSORT to find the call number and location for these atlases.

Sample Bibliographic Record

CONSORT Library Catalog You are searching: All Locations

Start Over Modify Search Search OhioLINK (Search History)

KEYWORD ohio and (cities and towns) All Libraries Search

Show only items which are not checked out (check and click search)

63 results found. sorted by date. Results: 1 2 Next >>

The Comparative guide to American suburbs : covers over 2,400 suburban comm 2005
 Millerton, N.Y. : Grey House Pub., 2005
 1295 p. : maps ; 28 cm

Display the Full Record

Item Location	Call Number	Current Status
OWU Beeghly Reference	HA214 .C66 2005	LIB USE ONLY
WOO Reference	HA214 .C66 2005	LIB USE ONLY
KEN Reference	HA214 .C66 2005	LIB USE ONLY

