

melvyl.txt

Searching the University of California's  
MELVYL online catalog

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WHAT IS MELVYL? MELVYL is an online catalog listing books owned by the  
nine University of California libraries, the California State Library,  
& the Center for Research Libraries. MELVYL also lists serials owned  
by UC, the California State Universities, Stanford University,  
University of Southern California, Getty Center, & Center for Research  
Libraries. MELVYL has over 5 million book records & over 640,000  
serial records. MELVYL lists all of the Scripps Institution of  
Oceanography Library's books and serials (Scripps Library's technical  
reports collection is listed by serial entry). Libraries vary in the  
completeness of their holdings on MELVYL; Scripps Library is converted  
(with technical reports collection searchable as serials).

Use MELVYL for subject searches, verifying incomplete references,  
getting the full titles of journals by searching journal title  
abbreviations, determining library holdings for subsequent interlibrary  
loan request, & getting MARC (cataloging) records for books.

GETTING THERE: The University of California's MELVYL online catalog can  
be accessed by Omnet/Sciencenet account holders and also directly  
through MELVYL's Internet address 31.0.0.11. In addition, MELVYL can  
be accessed by direct dial at long-distance telephone rates.

At ScienceNet's command prompt, type "goto xdata". At the "connect me  
to" prompt, type "melvyl". When finished, type "end" & then MELVYL  
asks you to type "logoff". At the "connect me to" prompt, type "goto  
mail" to return to ScienceNet. Respond "help" when asked for terminal  
type; IBMPC & VT100 are some choices. Avoid using MELVYL between 10am  
- 6pm PST & particularly between 1pm - 5pm PST.

GETTING STARTED: Search MELVYL in command mode & not lookup mode.  
Command mode will save you time (& \$\$). If you need help from MELVYL  
type "help". You can also type "help" followed by the name of the  
feature that you need help with, eg HELP FIND. Email Peter Brueggeman

melvyl.txt

at SCRIPPS.LIBRARY if you need advice.

Use the Boolean logical operators "and", "or", and "and not"; omit "and" between search terms since Melvyl automatically reads adjacent terms as having an implied "and" between them.

There are two basic commands "FIND" and "DISPLAY"; type them as "F" and "D" respectively. The FIND command is followed by the field in which the search is to be executed (AU, TI, SU) and then by the search terms. The DISPLAY command is entered by itself to see all records retrieved or followed by specific record numbers.

MELVYL's truncation (wild card) symbol is #. Truncation is used to search for all variations of a root term; for example specifying "ocean#" will yield "ocean", "oceans", "oceanic", "oceanographic", "oceanography" etc. Use truncation whenever possible.

**AUTHOR / TITLE SEARCHING:** If you know the author & title of a book, FIND it by the title. Exact title searching (XT) is the best because it is the fastest (saves \$\$). When searching exact titles, type in only the first four or five words of the title. MELVYL will automatically truncate after the last word typed in an exact title search & you can avoid unnecessary typing (costs \$\$). When title keyword searching for a book, type about four or five unique keywords (saves \$\$); don't type in every title keyword. Search ampersands as "&" and not as the word "and". Author searching should be avoided; one never knows how the author's first & middle names appear (complete or initials) & one is never certain how non-Roman alphabets are transliterated. Author authority file is not updated (1981 vintage).

Examples,

search for personal authors by F PA SMITH JOHN  
search for corporate authors by F CA CONGRESS FISHERIES

search for title keywords by F TW OCEANOGRAPHY ATLANTIC  
search for exact title by F XT PHYSICAL OCEANOGRAPHY

**BOOK SERIES SEARCHING:** F SE can search for the book series number in addition to the series name.

For example, F SE ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY 5.

**SUBJECT SEARCHING:** Subject search Library of Congress subject headings. Exact subject searching (XS) is the best because it is the fastest (saves \$\$). If you want to review appropriate headings online, use the BROWSE command. BROWSE BERMUDA will list all Bermuda subject headings. Use the SELECT command to pick out those on the marine

melvyl.txt

environment of Bermuda. Then DISPLAY their corresponding records. Combined title keyword & subject searches are best; do not rely solely on subject headings if comprehensive retrieval is desired.

For example,

search by LC subject headings by F SU SUBMARINE CANYONS  
search by exact LC subject heading by F XSU CORAL REEFS

PERIODICAL SEARCHING: F PE searches for keywords in periodical titles; F XPE searches for an exact title & is quicker (saves \$\$). Do not guess on periodical title abbreviations unless you are certain; use truncation. F PE REV# MICROPALEONTOL# finds REVUE DE MICROPALEONTOLOGIE. You cannot search on abbreviations less than three letters. Common abbreviations (REV, SCI, COMM, INT) will be rejected during peak usage periods & will be searched readily in low usage periods. F RPE or F RXPE will retrieve all records comprising the title history of the periodical being searched.

For example,

search for periodicals by F PE MARINE ECOLOGY PROGRESS  
search for exact periodical by F XPE JOURNAL OF GEOPHYSICAL

SERIES OR SERIAL??? Libraries vary in cataloging practice; what one catalogs as a serial could be a book series to another. "Symposium of the British Ecological Society" is found as a serial with a F PE search & as a book series with a F SE search. Different libraries appear with each search! Always search suspect series/serials as PE & SE.

LINKING SEARCHES: Several searches can be linked in one statement. Searches can be narrowed in subsequent statements. Use the BACKUP command to go back one search step.

- 1) F TW PACIFIC OCEAN OR SU PACIFIC OCEAN
- 2) AND NOT TW SAILING

LIMITING BY LANGUAGE & DATE: FIND search statements can be suffixed with limiting statements.

- AND LAN JPN (3 letter language codes)
- AND LAN ENGLISH (full language name)
- AND DATE CURRENT (last 3 years plus current year)
- AND DATE RECENT (last 10 years plus current year)
- AND DATE 1959 or earlier
  - AND DATE 1946 (individual years)
  - AND DATE 1931-1933 (3 year range 1900-1959)
  - AND DATE 1870-1874 (5 year range 1800s)

melvyl.txt

- AND ADDED SINCE MM/DD/YY (update a search)

DISPLAY: Records are displayed using the display command "D". Use the CONTINUOUS display format when downloading in order to avoid screen-by-screen display.

For example,

display all results by typing D CONT

display specific records by typing D CONT and specific record number(s)

display brief results by typing D CONT REV with or w/o nos.

display full record by typing D CONT LONG with or w/o nos.

Displaying the full record shows LC subject headings  
which suggest further searches that can be pursued.

display MARC record by typing D CONT MARC with or w/o nos.

Selected MARC fields can be specified for display:

D MARC AU

D TAG 100-24X

D TAG X00

D TAG 100,700

D TAG 6XX

SAVE & LIST: SAVE command is used to compile selected records into a LIST for subsequent DISPLAY. During (or after) scanning many records, use SAVE to place selected record numbers into a personal LIST. Then, after scanning is finished, DISPLAY LIST to get those selected records. SAVE & LIST are best used to scan & pick from large retrievals. First, download a large retrieval in title format, eg D TI. Logoff & review the title listing for desired records. Logon & rerun the same search. Then, SAVE the desired record numbers into a LIST, eg SAVE 1 14 22 35 53 67 88 101 121. Next, D LIST CONT to download the selected records. For small retrievals, it is better to simply download all records & then edit out the rejects offline using wordprocessor.

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