

THE LIBRARY CARD CATALOG, Part 1

By Jill Jennings



For many of us, the library card catalog conjures up images of a large, wooden cabinet full of tiny drawers and even tinier cards. So many cards! It took a little time, but if you knew what you were doing, you could locate the book you were looking for. Today, the cabinet has been replaced by the computer. The card catalog has been digitized and is online. Don't let that scare you! It really isn't difficult to find what you are looking for on the Spirit Lake Public Library's online library catalog. Keep reading to get a basic tutorial on locating that perfect book via the SLPL online library catalog.

The on-line catalog is available for your use from any Internet capable device (computer, phone, tablet, etc.) in the library, at home, or anywhere. There are two primary capabilities: the catalog and your library account. Instructions on the catalog are provided here. (Account information will be covered in a future article.) If you need help, please ask a staff member for assistance.

ACCESSING THE CATALOG: From *slpublib.com*, click "On-line Catalog." **SEARCHING:** There are 3 ways of searching: "Search All Fields", "More Search Options", and "What's Hot". Search All Fields: most likely, you'll want to use this simple search. It performs a Google® type search (including putting phrases in quotes). It searches all titles, subtitles, authors' first and last names, various notes, and several other fields. You'll be presented with the list of titles based on their relevancy to your search. Word order and letter case do not matter. To use this method, simply type a word, words, or phrase, into the blank at the top of the screen. Then either push the Enter key on your keyboard or click the GO! button. Other search options in the drop-down menu are "Title Starts With," "Title Contains," and "Author."

Keyword Search Examples:

- DVDs based on books by John Grisham: **grisham dvd**
- The Lord of the Rings series: **"lord of the rings"**
- Snakes in Texas: **snakes Texas**
- Items involving a particular fictitious character: **jack ryan**
- That book you heard about, written by somebody named Fred that has "Sea" somewhere in the title:
fred sea

NOTE: For searches with "AND", "OR" use More Search Options.