Koha’s Staff Client provides multiple search interfaces. This tip sheet describes each interface and offers suggestions for optimizing your search experience in each environment.

Basic Search

Basic Search is the default view in Koha. It is a keyword search box that can also accommodate indexed searching with qualifiers and Boolean operators.

Basic Searching works very well if you have a standard number like ISBN, ISSN, Barcode, Koha Bib# or Koha Item#.

In the absence of such a unique identifier, search precision is low, and you will most likely need to employ the side-bar facets to “Refine your search.” For example, if you do a keyword search on “sweden,” you get 767 results.

Alternatively, you can use Common Command Language to perform sophisticated searches from the Basic Search box by combining qualifiers and Boolean operators. For example, if you know want to see if anyone has Raymond Brown’s Gospel of John, you could use the basic search box but combine qualifiers in the following text string to produce better results:
This search yields 2 results with the object of our quest being result #2.

Contrast that with other possible searches:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text String in Basic Search Box</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brown, raymond</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>au=brown, raymond</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gospel of john</td>
<td>1523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ti=gospel of john</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>au=brown and ti=gospel</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>au=brown and ti=gospel and yr&gt;1960</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>au=brown, raymond and ti=gospel of john</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>au=brown and ti=gospel and yr=1960-1970</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Any index can be searched directly. Manual 3.6 included details on the search indexes if you wish to explore this further.

For many common indexes, however, Koha provides qualifiers like those used above (ti, au, ...) that save on keystrokes. For a complete list of the qualifiers, see Manual 3.18 Common Command Language Searching.

Additional bib-1 attributes can be added to a qualifying search to further refine your search query. Simple place a comma after the index term or qualifying prefix and then add one of these qualifying terms:

- **phr** (returns only those records where the search terms are a complete phrase in the selected index)
- **complete-field** or **complete-subfield** (returns only those records where the search terms are an exact match for the terms in the selected index)
**first-in-field** or **first-in-subfield** (returns only those records where the search terms are at the beginning of the terms in the selected index)

It is also possible to include additional limiters. For example, if you want to limit your results based on item types, you could add **itype**

So, for example, if we wanted to do a very precise search for a DVD of The Last of the Mohicans you could enter this query in your search box:

\[
\text{ti,complete-field} = \text{"the last of the mohicans" + itype=DVD}
\]

**NOTE:** You must include the initial article in any complete or first-in-field search.

**Cataloging Basic Search**

This search interface appears if you select Cataloging Module from the Top Level navigation bar under More dropdown:

It works exactly the same as the Basic Search box, but it produces results that look like this:

Also, when you click on the hyperlink for the title, it opens the MARC view of the record rather than the Normal View.
**Advanced Search**

Advanced Search provides an interface for selecting and combining types of searches and also limiting results based on Item Type, Collection, Holding Library, etc. It also allows you to indicate a sort preference for your search other than the default “Relevance”.

If we wanted to replicate our initial search for Raymond Brown’s *Gospel of John*, it would look like this:
Most of the available limits on the search are fairly straightforward. You can limit by one or more item type(s), collections, language, and location. **Koha also allows some subtype limits.** Use these with extreme caution because they rely on information coded in the control and fixed fields in the MARC record and may return inaccurate results. For example, the Any Format drop-down box bases its search criteria on the 007 field in the MARC record. This is probably fine for “VHS tape” but useless for “Regular Print” because few of our MARC records for printed text have encoding in the 007 field.

**Search by Item Codes**

Search by Item Codes is designed for interacting with Koha at the item level and its first two sets of search options are based on item record level information. You have the option to Output to Screen or CSV.

The next set of options allows a variety of search options, some of which are bib level record information.
A call number range search interface is also included on this page.

If you output to screen, you can then sort the list by call number. The system sorts call numbers from left to right so Dewey with is XXX.xxxx sorts just fine. This same type of search with LC does not work very well. For example, this search produces the following results after the list has been sorted by call number. Note how RS431 is not even in the call number range specified, and the system has sorted it as though RS51 comes immediately after RS431. This would seem to be something that could be fixed because the shelf browsing feature in the OPAC works just fine interpreting LC numbers, but just be warned that it does not work in the Search by Item Codes.

Search by Authorities

You can also search the authority files if you want to find everything by a particular author while eliminating close matches. For example, we can do an authority search on Raymond Brown:
That search yields the following results:

You can click on details to view the authority record or, if you know which one you want, you can click on the link that indicates the number of records that personal name is used in and that will pull up all the bibliographic records that apply.