

HOW-TO GUIDE

Searching the OED:

Performing an advanced search

Advanced searches can be run as a continuation of the quick search by clicking the advanced search button or by following one of the suggested search links.

Or the query can start as an advanced search by clicking the advanced search link in the navigation bar.

The screenshot shows the OED website interface. At the top, the navigation bar includes the OED logo, a search bar with the text 'cat', and an 'Advanced search' link. Below the navigation bar, the main content area displays '8 results for "cat"'. A red dotted line points from the 'Advanced search' button in the navigation bar to the 'Advanced search' link in the main content area. Another red dotted line points from the 'Advanced search' link in the main content area to the 'Results for "cat" in:' sidebar on the right. The sidebar lists various search filters: Quotation author (6), Quotation work title (847), Quotation text (2,996), Meanings (362), Definitions (528), Etymologies (316), and Historical Thesaurus (320).

Old English-	cat, n. ¹
1769-	cat, v.
1975-	CAT, n. ⁴
1943-	cat, n. ³
1957-	C.A.T., n.
1699-1825	cat, n. ²
	cat-, in cata- cat- cath-, prefix

Results for "cat" in:

- Quotation author (6)
- Quotation work title (847)
- Quotation text (2,996)
- Meanings (362)
- Definitions (528)
- Etymologies (316)
- Historical Thesaurus (320)

Suggested onward searches are listed on the right hand side.

Clicking on one of these will take you to the set of results matching that query.

The 'Entries' tab, which is the default tab, returns all dictionary entries that contain the word originally searched for in the entry headword. For example, a search for 'rhythm' will return the dictionary entry for 'rhythm' as well as the entries for 'sinus rhythm', etc.

The results will be sorted in order of their frequency in English, so the most common words appear first. This sort order can be changed using the drop down.

The results set can be expanded or filtered using the items in the left hand panel. To expand the query, simply click 'Add Term' and then a Boolean operation can be used to add or exclude further terms.

Results can also be further filtered by part of speech, type of formation, language of origin, etc.

Results are separated into four tabs containing results matching the headword in the dictionary (the dictionary entry for the word), results matching the meanings of the word within a dictionary entry, results matching quotations cited within a dictionary entry, and results matching words within the Historical Thesaurus.

If you create a personal account, you can save searches to your profile to run again later. Additionally, if you have a subscription, you can export up to 1,000 search results for analysis offline.