

# The New BobCat

## Making Your Research Easier

JESSICA ALVERSON  
jessica.alverson@nyu.edu

---

*Jessica Alverson is the Librarian for Journalism, Culture, and Communication at Bobst Library.*

Google has changed the way people think about searching. Web users have come to expect the ability to satisfy all of their research needs with a single search box. Libraries have been competing with and managing this expectation for years while anticipating the next generation of library research platforms.

In July 2008, NYU Libraries introduced a new version of BobCat, coming one step closer. Powered by ExLibris' Primo, new BobCat represents the cutting edge of library catalogs and offers people the "one-stop shopping" search and features they have grown accustomed to when using sites such as Google and Amazon. This article will provide a brief behind-the-scenes look at BobCat and highlight new features and functionality.

### How Does New BobCat Work?

In the past, BobCat was used for finding books, videos, and journal titles owned by NYU Libraries. It was a traditional library catalog. New BobCat is not only a library catalog, it is also a robust search platform that enables you to search across multiple types of content. With new BobCat, you can search three different types of content, each represented by a tab: Books & More, Articles & Databases, and Course Reserves.

To get a better idea of what actually happens when you search new BobCat, let's look at the example of searching for books. When you enter your search terms into the Books & More search box, you are actually searching the Library catalog after it has been "enriched" behind the scenes by new BobCat. Your search results now also include related content and new options for further refining ("filtering") your results. Finally, new BobCat presents all of this information in one clean, consistent interface. The

benefit of having a single search platform will become even more obvious when we discuss searching across article content with new BobCat.

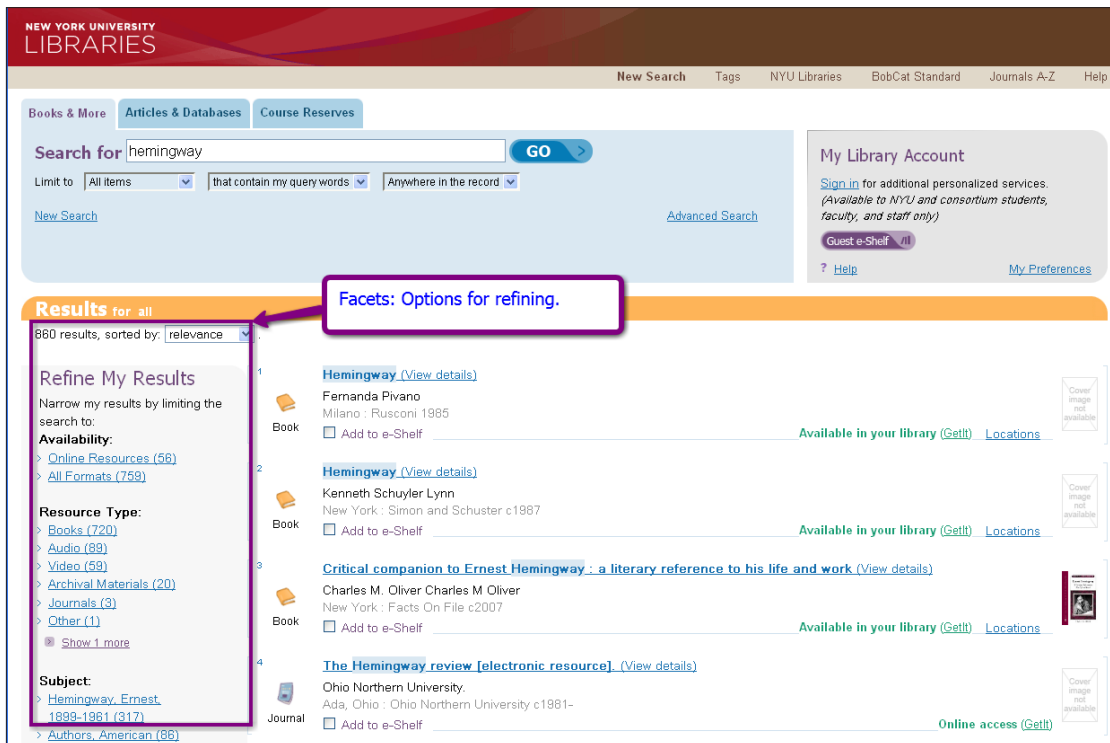
### Flexible Searching

As compared to old BobCat, searching in new BobCat is more flexible and works more like a Google search. When you search, BobCat automatically "ands" your search terms and looks for all of your keywords throughout each record. If BobCat does not find any matches for your keywords, it will return a "Did you mean?" message that suggests spelling corrections and alternate terms. New BobCat also supports searching in non-Roman scripts, including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Hebrew, Persian, and Arabic; this functionality was not available in old BobCat and was much needed.

New BobCat enables you to refine your results both before and after you search. Using "facets," you can filter your results by format type, subject, author, online availability, language, and date (among others). An unrestricted, all-item search for "Hemingway" in the Books & More tab, for example, yields 676 items and a list of facets. In the Hemingway search, facets present myriad possibilities for exploring Ernest Hemingway in the context of Spain, Paris, Cuba, novelists, journalism, social circle, and more.

### Streamlined Display

When BobCat returns results, they are relevancy-ranked and deduplicated. Results can also be sorted by date and popularity. Different versions or editions of a book are grouped together under one entry, making for a cleaner display. A search for "Camus Stranger" yields results that include an entry with a link stating "There are 8 versions of this item." Clicking the link allows



New BobCat enables you to refine your results both before and after you search. Using “facets,” you can filter your results by format type, subject, author, online availability, language, and date (among others).

you to view the additional versions, providing access to this information without cluttering the search results list.

Item availability is displayed directly on the results screen, and simply rolling over the Location link reveals the item’s call number. Old BobCat would have required several clicks to get to this information. If you have ever had a moment when you remembered what a book looked like, but couldn’t remember the exact title, you will appreciate the book jacket images included in the results.

To learn more about an item, you click on the item’s title. In the item record, you will see links to Amazon Search Inside and Google Books, both of which will allow you to search the content of books, helping you to determine if a book will be relevant for you.

## Saving and Exporting Your Results

New BobCat offers many ways to manage the items you find. Email, export, or tag items either individually or from a check-marked list that you store in your e-Shelf. The e-Shelf works like a folder or shopping cart. From here, items can be directly exported to reference citation managers including RefWorks and Endnote.

There are two ways to bookmark an item for later use. You can tag your item using Delicious, a social bookmarking tool, by selecting the How to Save drop-down menu option and choosing Push to Delicious.<sup>1</sup> Alternatively, you can tag the item within new BobCat. In order to tag items, you must be signed into your BobCat account.

<sup>1</sup> “Tagging” allows people to bookmark pages and items by applying their own labels.

(All NYU faculty, students, and staff with NYU Libraries borrowing privileges have accounts). Once you have tagged an item, you and others will be able to search your tags. For example, if you are working on a group project, group members could tag and share items in BobCat.

## Viewing Your Library Account and Renewing Items

As with old BobCat, you can view your library account online. From within BobCat, sign into My Account and click on e-Shelf. From here, you’ll be able to view and renew checked out items and see your fines.

## Searching for Articles

While old BobCat was used to search books, videos, and journal titles, new BobCat can also be used

to search for individual articles. Using the Articles & Databases tab in new BobCat, you can search across several article databases simultaneously using one search interface. For example, if you want to search for articles related to sociology, selecting the Sociology category enables you to search a pre-selected group of sociology-focused databases, which includes SocIndex, Sociological Abstracts, Web of Science, Criminal Justice Abstracts, and America: History & Life. Your search terms will be sent out to each of the article databases contained in that category, and the 30 most relevant results will be returned. By clicking the Display More Results link, you will be able to retrieve additional results. In the past, you would have searched each of these databases individually, requiring you to learn many different interfaces.

## Quick Link to Online Content

NYU Libraries provides access to lots of full-text content via e-books, e-journals, and our numerous subscription databases. You can now access that content with one click. When searching BobCat for books or articles, if the full-text is online, you'll see an option to access it. When searching books, just click the Online Access link. When searching Articles and More, click the Full Text Available link to view the full text.

## Planned Upgrades

NYU Libraries is working continually to improve BobCat. Upgrades over the next few months will allow people to set up RSS feeds for search results. Using your saved search terms, BobCat will feed you updates (via RSS) each time new items are added to BobCat

that match your terms. Results can be read via a feed reader (such as Google Reader). If you are working on a research project or just want to stay aware of new books in your area, this will be a great tool for you.

Additionally, the new BobCat platform will allow NYU Libraries to include and make searchable other types of content. For example, in the near future, content from the Faculty Digital Archive as well as digital collections from NYU Libraries may be included in your search results.

Gathering feedback from faculty and students has been an important part of the process, ensuring that BobCat truly reflects (and helps to enhance) the way NYU scholars' work methods, research goals, and expectations are evolving with technology. To ask questions, provide feedback, or view BobCat FAQs and tutorials, see *www.bobcat.nyu.edu*. §

**Details** Back to results list

**Green hills of Africa**  
**Author/Creator:** Ernest Hemingway 1899-1961 ;  
**Subjects:** Hemingway, Ernest, 1899-1961 — Travel — Kenya ; Hunting — Kenya ; Kenya — Description and travel ;  
**Edition:** 1st Scribner Classics ed.  
**Identifier:** ISBN: 068484463X  
**Related Titles:** Series: Scribner classics.  
**Publisher:** New York, NY : Scribner  
**Language:** English  
**Publication Date:** 1998  
**Description:** 207 p. : ill. ; 25 cm.  
[More bibliographic information](#)  
[Check for Amazon Search Inside](#)  
[Copy item link](#)  
[Check Amazon](#)  
[Check other libraries \(WorldCat®\)](#)  
 Add to e-Shelf Available in your library (GetIt)

**Availability and location:**  
**Available:** • NYU Bobst Main Collection (PS3515.E37 G7 1998)

**Reviews**  
 • [Sign in](#) to write a review

**Keeping this item**  
[E-mail](#)  
[Print](#)  
 Select how to save:  [Go](#)

**Options for saving the item.**

**Tagging** What is tagging? ?  
 Ignore my query and look for everything tagged:

**My tags for this item**  
[Sign in](#) to see your tags and add new ones

**Everybody's tags for this item:** [Cloud](#) / [List](#)  
 [Tags page](#)

Result 4

To learn more about an item, you click on the item's title. In the item record, you will see links to Amazon Search Inside and Google Books, both of which will allow you to search the content of books, helping you to determine if a book will be relevant for you.