

# MDLandRec Search Aid

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## :TL,DR (Too Long, Didn't Read)

The MDLandRec data has come from multiple sources with different data and rules. There can be misspellings, missing information such as no middle name or no suffix like JR or SR or a maiden name, narrowed down from a name listed as a middle name. The best advice is to put in less information so you capture more. Start broad and then narrow down. Start by using the multiple search options in MDLandRec such as contains, begins with, ends with, fuzzy and soundex to get a broad range of results. Then finetune the search to help narrow down what you are looking for. Use care when searching by middle name, suffix, and instrument type, because they have been used inconsistently and vary by county.

While new search fields have been added to the new version of the website, the functionality of the last/first name searches and book/page searches should remain the same. Individuals used to the current way of searching in MDLandRec are free to ignore any of the new search fields added and continue to just use the search fields they are familiar with.

## Overview

Through MDLANDREC.net, the Maryland State Archives (MSA) manages an extensive collection of electronic indexing and digital images relating to Maryland land records.

MDLandRec has two main components: an electronic index and digital images. The electronic index is further broken down to include the following components: Land record recordation data that is downloaded nightly from Judicial Information Services (JIS); Series inventories maintained by MSA; Imaging cataloging tables maintained by MSA that track all electronic images retrieved by MDLandRec.

The digital images retrieved by MDLandRec consist of land recordation instruments and historic land record indices and are maintained as part of the Archives' Electronic Archives. MDLandRec marries the electronic index with the digital images, permitting users to search for a specific land record and view the images associated with that recordation.

Per MOU between the Archives and the Courts:

"Land Records constitute one of the most voluminous and arguably most important record series created by the government. Court clerks have been vested with responsibility to record and maintain all land records which includes deeds, mortgages, releases, leases, assignments, powers of attorney, agreements, easements and other instruments affecting title to or interest in real property including plats."

"The responsibility for preserving and providing access to land records is vested in the Archives. The indices, both electronic and historic bound volumes, provide users with

the means to research land record instruments. Mdlandrec.net provides a comprehensive way to access these land record indices.”

## MDLandRec Data Groupings

MDLandRec Data is made from many different sources over the years.

### COTT

The oldest source is the COTT data, named after the vendor, which was a state level attempt to store and share the individual systems of land record electronic storage that each county was using at the time. Depending on the County, this data starts in the 1960s and ends in the early 1990s.

### CAIS

A more centralized system was created called CAIS that incorporated the COTT data, the individual systems that the larger counties were using and became the main entry and reporting tool until MDLandRec. The second set of data starts where the first set ends and continues into the early 2000s, for each county.

### ELROI

The current data comes from the ELROI system that also handles the scanning and verification of the data along with the data entry of the older systems.

Table of MDLandRec Data Group Year Ranges

<b><u>County</u></b>	<b><u>COTT</u></b>	<b><u>CAIS</u></b>	<b><u>ELROI</u></b>
Allegany	1984	1993	2004
Anne Arundel	1967	1992	2002
Baltimore	1964	1993	2005
Baltimore City	1972	2003	2005
Calvert	1969	1993	2004
Caroline	1968	1994	2004
Carroll	1969	1990	2002
Cecil	1970	1994	2005

Charles	1967	1993	2004
Dorchester	1968	1994	2004
Frederick	1972	1995	2002
Garrett	1982	1993	2004
Harford	1992	1992	2003
Howard	1965	1994	2004
Kent	1978	1993	2005
Montgomery	1977	1977	2002
Prince George's	1950	1995	2003
Queen Anne's	1966	1992	2005
St. Mary's	1969	1992	2002
Somerset	1970	1994	2004
Talbot	1966	1994	2005
Washington	1963	1993	2002
Wicomico	1966	1994	2004
Worcester	1967	1994	2004

## Searching MDLandRec

When thinking about searching the data, the origins of the data need to be considered. This data was recorded in 24 different counties, using different equipment with different capabilities and liabilities. Early books in Baltimore City can show this effect on record keeping. Each county also had similar but different rules and policies for entering the data. Add in the fact that there can be misspellings and missing information, it can make searching rather difficult. However, the best advice is to put in less information so you capture more. Start broad, narrow down from there. Use the multiple searches in MDLandRec such as contains, begins with, ends with, fuzzy search and soundex to help narrow down what you are looking for.

## Clerk's Initials

This is mainly needed for older books, but to separate books when they were created, courthouses started to use the Court Clerk's Initials when identifying a Land Records book. The numbering did not change, so it is common to see the following listed as the Clerk's Initials:

- Liber <Old Clerk Initials> 26
- Liber <Old Clerk Initials> & <New Clerk Initials> 27
- Liber <New Clerk Initials> 28.

## Book

Books are groups of pages that are numbered consecutively starting with 1. There are different types of books such as Land Records, Mortgage Records, Notice of Sale Records, Home Owners Association and others. Each type of book can start with a 1 for that type of book. When searching for those really early records, it is possible to return multiple book ones, twos, threes, etc.

Baltimore City once had a technical limitation that would not allow them to create a book past 9999. From YEAR to YEAR, Baltimore City's books are affected by this unique numbering system. To get around the limitation, Baltimore City would reset the book number back to 1 and use a combination of the Clerk's Initials, Book Number and Book Year to keep track of the different books.

## Page

A group of consecutive pages define the contents of a book. The number of pages in the book depends on individual counties and the policies they used. It was common for each book to be 1000 pages, but now they have standardized on 500 pages per book. When a book is originally formed, each page is singular and consecutive. However, new pages can be entered into a book between two existing pages. These are called 'A Pages' and are lettered instead of numbered. So the following is allowed in a Land Records book: Page 1, 2, 3, 3a, 4, 5, 6, 6a, 6b, 6c, 7, 8, ..., 500, 500a, 500b. However, in MDLandRec, we do not have a search for the A Pages, but will return the page and all of the subpages for each page request. Jumping to Page 5 will return 1 image (Page 5), however jumping to Page 6 will return 4 images (Pages 6, 6a, 6b, 6c).

## Corporate Name

One single name field is used for corporations, i.e. corporations do not have first, middle or suffix names. However, there can be a Legal Capacity entered after the corporate name on some older data. Sometimes spaces or periods can be used when entering the corporate name, so starting general is always a good idea.

## Individual Name

The Legal Name of the interested party to the legal agreement for this Land Record. Common names or nicknames will not be found as they are rarely used on legal documents.

### First

The first name is a catch all for the older data, especially the COTT data. The first name can contain the actual First Name or include a Middle Name or a Maiden Name and possibly a Suffix or Legal Capacity. The name can also be misspelled.

### Middle

The middle name field contains the middle name, middle initial, maiden name or even part of first name. The middle name can also be misspelled.

### Last

The last name field contains the proper last name, possibly a middle name, the maiden name, the suffix or even the legal capacity. The last name can also be misspelled.

### Suffix

A suffix, in the context of an individual's name for land records, is a distinguishing title or indicator that follows the last name. It is used to differentiate between people who share the exact same name, particularly within the same family.

Common examples include:

- **Jr.** (Junior)
- **Sr.** (Senior)
- **II** (The Second)
- **III** (The Third)
- **IV** (The Fourth)

In the MDLandRec data, the suffix field is specifically meant to hold these indicators. However, due to the varying data sources and indexing practices over the years, the suffix may sometimes be incorrectly recorded in or intermixed with the **First**, **Middle**, or **Last** name fields, which can complicate searches.

Table of Common Suffixes in MDLandRec

<u>Common Suffixes</u>	<u>Total</u>
1ST	26
2ND	7264
3RD	897
4TH	144
5TH	26
I	513
II	221872
III	1172142
IIII	119
IV	87644
V	3191
VI	377
VII	148
VIII	24
IX	48
X	13
JR	4261098
SR	875868

## Ownership

The "Ownership" field in MDLandRec distinguishes between the two main types of entities that can be a party to a land record transaction:

- **Corporate:** The party is a legal entity separate from an individual person, such as a company, corporation, limited liability company (LLC), partnership, or association. When searching by name, you would use the "Corporate Name/Last Name" field.
- **Individual:** The party is a natural person. When searching by name, you would use the "Individual Name" fields (First, Middle, Last, Suffix).

This distinction is crucial for searching, as the indexing rules and fields used to record names differ between corporate entities and individuals.

## Party Type

A Grantor or Grantee refers to the parties involved in a transaction that affects real property, such as those documented in a land record.

- **Grantor:** The party who **grants** an interest in real property (e.g., transfers a deed, executes a mortgage, or assigns a lease). The grantor is the party *selling or giving* something.
- **Grantee:** The party to whom the interest in real property is **granted** (e.g., the recipient of a deed, the lender on a mortgage, or the assignee of a lease). The grantee is the party *buying or receiving* something.

In the context of the document's section "Party Type," these are the two main ways a name will be indexed in MDLandRec, identifying their role in the legal instrument.

## Instrument Type

An Instrument Type is the category assigned to a legal document being recorded in a land records system (like MDLandRec), which indicates the legal transaction related to real property. The recording provides public notice of the transaction. Common Instrument Types include:

- **Deed:** Transfers property ownership (title).
- **Mortgage/Deed of Trust (DOT):** Places a lien on the property as loan security.
- **Release:** Removes a lien when the debt is satisfied.
- **Assignment:** Transfers an interest in property or a lien.
- **Easement:** Grants a limited right to use another's property for a specific purpose.
- **Power of Attorney (POA):** Grants authority to an agent for property matters.

Table of Common Instrument Types in MDLandRec

<u>Instrument Types</u>	<u>Total</u>
*NO DESCR*	77712
*NO NAME*	2755
DEED OF TRUST	9616099
RELEASE	8725486
DEED	8684799
ASSIGNMENT	2780722



RELEASE, CERTS OF SATISFACTION	2332938
DOT, MORTGAGE/REFINANCE	2257503
MORTGAGE	1970158
CERTIFICATE OF SATISFACTION	736789
POWER OF ATTORNEY	652444
ASSIGNMENT OF DEED OF TRUST	627645
PARTIAL RELEASE	578359
AGREEMENT	565088
REFINANCE MORTGAGE OR DEED	551284
ASSIGNMENT OF DOT/MTG	410328
PROMISSORY NOTE	388272
LIEN	380733
APPOINTMENT SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE	354278
ASSIGNMENT OF MORTGAGE	269901
FINANCING STATEMENT	260620
SUBORDINATION AGREEMENT	258738
SHT REL	187458
APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEE	113464
EASEMENT GENERAL	109508
AFFIDAVIT	48389

## Cross Reference Book and Page

Some counties put in cross references to other books and pages that are related to the referenced book and page. This can be other deeds, a release, or other land records documents.

## Legal Capacity

Legal Capacity defines the role or status of the individual or entity in the land record transaction. It indicates the *quality* or *position* in which a party acts.

Common examples include:

- **Trustee:** A person or entity holding property for the benefit of another.
- **Personal Representative/Executor:** A person appointed to administer the estate of a deceased person.
- **Guardian:** A person legally responsible for the care and management of the property or person of a minor or incapacitated person.
- **Attorney-in-Fact:** A person authorized to act for another under a Power of Attorney (POA).
- **Life Estate/Remainder:** Indicating the nature of the property interest held.

This field helps clarify *who* is acting and *in what authority* they are executing the instrument. For older records, Legal Capacity may sometimes be found concatenated with the Last Name, First Name, Middle Name or Corporate Name fields.

This list below are common Legal Capacities within MDLandRec. Since the courts did not have a standardization in the early years, many different instrument types have been added during that time period. If using this search, please use multiple versions of the legal capacities to help find what is required.

Table of Common Legal Capacities in MDLandRec

<u>Legal Capacity</u>	<u>Total</u>
A I F	27908
A IN F	7964
A/I/F	4053
A/K/A	7903
AGENT	3353
AGT	1132
AIF	108689
AKA	280158
ASGNEE	17631
ASSIGNEE	3305
ATTY	69962
ATTYFACT	1043
ATY IN F	2251

BENF	143766
BY &C	25286
BY AIF	74105
BY ATTY	43295
BY PA	26862
BY S/TR	27989
BY TR	116842
CO TR	9088
CUST	5980
DBA	31005
DECEASED	30758
EST	52196
EST OF	122470
ESTATE	99660
ETC	539282
FKA	78737
GP	5931
GUARN	10674
IND AIF	25156
INDV &C	14001
MGR	2655
NOMINEE	493810
P/A	9106
PA	48848
PER REP	170673
PERS REP	51363
SUB TR	542067
SUB TRUS	289247

SUB TST	20787
SUBT TR	46485
SUC TRUS	15315
SUCCESSO	26315
TR	8885049
TR ETC	80328
TRS	29934
TRUS	1981964
TRUSTEE	6058808
TST	83759

## SDAT Tax Account Identifier

This field is only available for searching in Montgomery County as this is the only county that consistently supplies the MDLandRec system with Tax Account Identifier numbers.

On the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxations Real Property Data Search system, account numbers for Montgomery county typically take the form of a 2-digit number followed by a 6-10 digit number. An example format is DD-AAAAAA where “DD” stands for the **district number** and the “AAAAAA” stands for the **account identifier**.

The MDLandRec system however, only contains account identifier numbers for Montgomery County. The district number is not supplied and searching for land records using both the district number and account identifier will not return results. You will typically see the account identifier number also referred to as “Tax ID” in the MDLandRec system.

## Address

This field is only available for searching in Baltimore City as this is the only county that consistently supplies the MDLandRec system with addresses.

## House No.

The House Number portion of the Address. This field consists of the number of the house address entered into the Remarks field by the Baltimore City Circuit Court. This field can also be supplied into the Street field instead.

## Street

The Street Name portion of the Address. This field consists of the name of the street entered into the Remarks field by the Baltimore City Circuit Court. The field can contain the street type (avenue, street, lane, etc.) as well as the street direction (N, S, E, W). While supplying a street type and street direction is allowed in the search system, we recommend to only supply the street name in order to capture more results in the event of inconsistent indexing.

## Block

The Block field is broken up into two parts, the block number along with a block letter. The block number is the 4-digit number portion of the Block field while the block letter is just a single letter. Not all Block fields contain the block letter.

It is possible that the land record was recorded without a definite block location added. In that event, the property was indexed in the "unlocated" index rather than in a "block book" index.

# MDLandRec Tables

Table of MDLandRec Data Group Year Ranges

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Calvert	1969	1993	2004
Caroline	1968	1994	2004
Carroll	1969	1990	2002
Cecil	1970	1994	2005
Charles	1967	1993	2004
Dorchester	1968	1994	2004
Frederick	1972	1995	2002
Garrett	1982	1993	2004
Harford	1992	1992	2003
Howard	1965	1994	2004
Kent	1978	1993	2005
Montgomery	1977	1977	2002
Prince George's	1950	1995	2003
Queen Anne's	1966	1992	2005
St. Mary's	1969	1992	2002
Somerset	1970	1994	2004
Talbot	1966	1994	2005
Washington	1963	1993	2002
Wicomico	1966	1994	2004
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GP	5931
GUARN	10674
IND AIF	25156
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NOMINEE	493810
P/A	9106
PA	48848
PER REP	170673
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SUB TR	542067
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