

# Background Check vs. Criminal Record: What's the Difference?

by Amber Iven - Monday, June 28, 2021

<https://www.searchbug.com/info/background-check-vs-criminal-record/>

Background check vs. criminal record check: is there a difference? Yes, there is. And the main difference is the information that is returned for each search. Because of this, there are also different reasons to conduct each search, depending on what information you need.

So, when would you need to run a background check? When would you need to conduct a criminal record search? What information can you expect to receive from each? We've got the answers and the tools you'll need for either.

## What is a Background Check?

Background checks are typically conducted to verify that people are who they say they are. When people give you information about themselves, you can check the legitimacy by running a background check to confirm the details.

Where Does the Information Come From?

There are varying degrees of background checks. Not all checks return the same information. To get the best, most accurate check, you want to make sure you use a service that verifies information against multiple data sources. The more data feeds searched, the better quality the background check.

Searchbug's [advanced background check](#), for example, accesses multiple data [APIs](#) from top-tier data management firms. Searchbug contracts with over a half-dozen data firms with billions of records combined. This ensures the best background check possible.

These data records include public, civil, and criminal records (city, county, state, and federal) with matching social profiles (Facebook, LinkedIn) and associated web links.

## What Information is Returned?

It is important to note that not all information is available for all records. Reports include all of the information found, and you are only charged for information found. However, a background check attempts to verify the following information:

- Contact data - names, aliases, current (or last reported) and previous address history, phone numbers, email addresses
- Personal data - date of birth, SSN status, marital status, occupation type, gender, ethnicity
- Associates - relatives, neighbors
- Property data - property details, vehicles
- Financial data - reported bankruptcies, foreclosures, tax liens (city, county, state, and federal), tax

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warrants

- Judicial data - civil and federal judgments, notice of default, small claims, and suit filed
- Criminal data - criminal background check report with case details and dates, charge, probation, conviction, and sentence if applicable

You can view a sample report [here](#).

### How to Run a Background Check

There are two steps involved when running a background check. The first is a background search and the second is a background report.

The background search is conducted first to identify the subject, or the person you are searching for. You will enter the person's full name and city and state. The results include matching names, addresses, and date of birth so you can be sure the result is the person you are looking for information on.

If your subject is returned during the background search, then you can order the advanced background report. The advanced background report is the actual detailed report on your subject that includes the information above.

The background search is 200 [Search Tokens](#) (\$T), or about \$2. The background report is 900 \$T, or \$9. And there is no charge if no information is found.

### What is a Criminal Record Check?

A [criminal record search](#) specifically checks a person's criminal history. There are different levels of criminal records, from county to state to federal, so when running a criminal record check it's important to make sure you conduct the broadest search.

### Where Does the Information Come From?

There are 200 million federal, state, and county criminal records. Searchbug's criminal records check searches this entire set of records to get criminal history information back to you.

### What Information is Returned?

Again, not all information is available for all records, but when available, you can get the following information from a criminal records check:

#### Felonies, Misdemeanors, Traffic Offenses

These records are pulled from a database of over 200 million court records. If a felony or misdemeanor offense record is available for your subject, your report could include detailed information about the offense such as the state, city, and county where the offense was committed.

## **Background Check vs. Criminal Record: What's the Difference?**

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If your subject was arrested and convicted of a crime involving an accident, auto wreck, or other crimes involving a traffic offense crime, this information may also be reported on his or her record in other states (see [How to Run a Criminal Record Check](#) below).

### **Sexual Offenders, Court Information, Detailed Personal Information**

The sexual offenders list allows you to find out if there are sex offenders in your neighborhood. When available, you can get detailed information about a sex offender such as his or her registered address, specifics surrounding the offense, and even a photo of the offender.

Additionally, criminal records searches typically return information regarding the court and jurisdiction where charged. If it's available, you can find out the charge, offense, disposition type, sentence, probation, and conviction.

Personal information includes the subject's full name, aliases, age, race, eye and hair color, height, and weight. Click [here](#) to view a sample report.

### **How to Run a Criminal Record Check**

To conduct a federal, state, and county criminal records search, just enter the subject's first and last name and date of birth. You can search by a specific state or you can search for information from any state.

If you know what state your subject lives in, you can search by that specific state. But if your subject has a criminal history in multiple states (for example in the case of a traffic offense crime) and you want to know about it, you can search for any information that exists in any state.

It only costs 200 \$T to run a federal, state, and county criminal records search.

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 <b>CRIMINAL RECORD</b> check	 <b>BACKGROUND</b> check
<b>Criminal Records Search</b> includes all arrests, convictions, sentences and parole violations, as well as dismissals and "not guilty" verdicts, in Federal, State, County and other local jurisdictions.	<b>Advanced Background Check</b> provides a comprehensive report on your subject. Our background report data comes from accessing multiple data APIs from top-tier data management firms with billions of records combined.
<b>Reports</b> may include a photo of your subject, the specifics of the crimes they were convicted of or accused of, their registered address and contact information, and whether or not they are a registered sex offender.	The complete <b>background report</b> includes data from multiple sources and includes public, civil and criminal records, as well as matching social profiles and associated web links.
Persons' full name, aliases, age, race, eye and hair color, weight and height, jurisdiction, charge, offense, disposition type, sentence, probation and conviction, if applicable.	Names, aliases, date of birth, SSN status, ethnicity, occupation type, marital status, gender, neighbors, relatives, current (or last reported) and previous address history, phone numbers, email addresses, property details, vehicles, and other details.
Entire set of 200 Million federal, state and county criminal records.	Searches public, civil, criminal and social records, including city, county, state and federal criminal records. 
<b>VS</b>	<b>REPORT TYPICALLY INCLUDES INFORMATION SOURCES</b>

When it comes to comparing a background check vs. criminal record check, they are very similar. However, a background check is more broad whereas a criminal record check provides information specific to a person's criminal history. Additionally, a background check can include criminal record details.

In short, if you are looking to hire a new employee or bring someone into your home, you might want to conduct a criminal record check to ensure the safety of your company and household. Use a background check to verify personal details such as contact information.

A background check can give you a more complete picture of who someone is before you even ask. A criminal record check is a specific type of background check that returns information specific to someone's criminal history.

If you are interested in even more in-depth searches, you can hire a professional investigator to conduct a [professional background check](#). A professional investigator can conduct an exhaustive criminal search to produce comprehensive county or state felony, misdemeanor, sentencing, and incarcerations reports.

A [skip trace](#) can help you track down someone hard to find or someone intentionally trying to hide. Or,

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alternatively, if you just need to access contact information for someone, you can try Searchbug's [people search](#) tool. Whatever your information needs are, Searchbug has the solution. Try it today!

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