

Search Tools Frequently Asked Questions

What is Search Tools and why do I want to use it?

Search Tools is your customizable portal to UM library databases, indexes, networked electronic resources, e-journals, web resources, and catalogs. Access Search Tools at:

<http://searchtools.lib.umich.edu/>

How many databases can I search at one time?

You can search up to 8 databases at one time.

I only need to use ProQuest (or another specific database). How do I find it?

Use “Find Databases” to find a specific database. Search or browse until you find the database you want, and then follow the link directly to its native interface. You can click on the plus sign (+) next to the database name to add it to My Databases or click on the magnifying glass (🔍) next to the database name to search the database within Search Tools.

What if I want to go directly to the database and perform my search there?

At any time, you can click on the name of a particular database and be linked to it, in its original interface.

How can I find out more information about a specific database?

When displaying the “Find Databases” subject database list, click on the small (i) for a pop-up with more information, including a description of the database and the years it covers.

How can I tell whether I can search a database using the Search Tools interface (that is, whether the database is cross-searchable)?

If you see a magnifying glass (🔍) next to it in “Find Databases” database list or a check box next to it in the “Power Search” database name display, you can search the database through Search Tools. Most of the databases in the Quick Search categories are cross-searchable.

What is the difference between Quick Search and Power Search?

Quick Search allows you to perform a search within databases pre-selected for you by librarians who are experts in their fields. Power Search allows you to customize your own search by selecting the databases you want to search in specific subject categories or in your custom database sets. For example, when you create your own search sets, you can search for articles and books in ProQuest, Mirlyn, and PsycINFO all at once, rather than having to search each database individually.

Why can I search some databases and not others in Search Tools?

Not all database vendors allow their products to be cross-searchable in Search Tools. We expect the number of databases that can be searched to increase as vendors realize the advantages of this new technology.

What is the difference between the e-journals' list in Search Tools and the one on the University Library (Ann Arbor) web site?

We are working to better synchronize these, but as of this writing the e-Journals' list on the Library website is taken from Mirlyn, while the one in Search Tools uses our SFX (a.k.a. "Find It!") database. Note that this means that Search Tools is not 100% complete in terms of holdings. We try to keep these synchronized as closely as possible, but we had to choose either one or the other for Search Tools. We use the SFX version because that is the one that allows the most convenient linking to full-text articles.

What are the known limitations of the system?

Browser navigation buttons: Do not use them!

Search Tools can get confused if you use the browser's back and forward navigation buttons. Given the complex nature of Search Tools' interaction with many databases at once, this problem is unlikely to be something that we or the vendor, Ex Libris, can remedy any time soon.

Safari-specific: Export/Mail function doesn't work properly.

Specifically, it correctly allows users to email selected records to themselves, but it does **not** allow them to save or export the selected records to disk. Windows and other Macintosh browsers we've tested are not affected. And we have alerted Ex Libris, and they are working on this problem.

Search Tools requires JavaScript.

Search Tools will not function if you have JavaScript turned off.

Search Tools uses pop-ups.

You must enable pop-ups from the **searchtools.lib.umich.edu** domain. If your browser or pop-up blocker doesn't allow this selective enabling, you should probably upgrade/change your browser or software.

"Trash Can" deletes everything.

When displaying your customized list of databases, be sure to click on the "X" icon to delete individual items in your list rather than clicking on the "trash can" icon.

The search results I get using Search Tools aren't what I expected. What should I do and where can I get help?

Additional information on how to use Search Tools is available at:

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/help/searchtools/gettingstarted.pdf>

and at:

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/help/searchtools.usingsearchtools.pdf>.

The University Library (Ann Arbor) offers help via telephone, at service desks across the library system, and via email as well as text chat. See the Ask Us! Service options at: <http://www.lib.umich.edu/askus/>.