

USING OCLC FIRSTSEARCH BASIC TUTORIAL

FirstSearch is a web-based information system for searching online databases. A database is a collection of related resources on a specific topic or from a specific source. Each entry in a database is called a record.

Parts of the screen

FirstSearch screens are divided into three main areas: *Navigation Menu* (on the left vertical column), *Control Panel* (horizontally across the top of the page), and the *Action/Task Area* (the rest of the page).

Use the Navigation Menu to move between functions such as selecting databases, searching and using results. Check the Control Panel for status information, tips, and specialized tools such as online help. Use the action/task area to enter searches, view search results, or perform other actions.

There is also a 'HELP' button (little blue icon with white question mark) to browse the context-sensitive online help in a pop-up-window.

Searching

Basic Search

The Basic Search screen provides up to three search indexes and a single search box. Use the Basic search if you are new to online searching or if you need quick results using a simple search statement. The screen always opens at the Basic search level.

Advanced Search

The Advanced Search screen lets you construct more complex search statements. Up to three search strings and three indexes can be combined using Boolean operators (AND, OR, and NOT) selected from drop-down menus. More search limits are available at this level.

Expert Search

The Expert Search screen is designed for experienced searchers who prefer to enter logical search strings. Reference information on constructing a search is displayed at the bottom of the search. A list of indexes and index labels is provided in a single drop-down menu. To search for all resources related to *coffee* that are written by *Elizabeth Alston*, you can enter **alston elizabeth and kw:coffee** (kw meaning keyword) and select the author index from the drop-down menu. The author index will apply only to the unlabeled terms *alston elizabeth*.

Other search features:

- Browse the indexes to verify the correct spelling or format for any search terms. Click the **Index button** (blue icon with up/down arrowheads and lines like stacked paper) to access the Browse Index feature
- Browse subject headings to find additional terms that may apply to your search. Click the **Subjects button** (blue icon with what looks like a capital 'A' – really shows connectivity) to access the Subject Headings list. This feature is available only in certain databases.
- Use **relevance ranking** to organize the results of your search. The most relevant records display at the top of the results lists. Moving down the list, records become less and less relevant to the key search terms entered.

If you would like more information on how to create search statements please e mail: librarian@trinitysem.edu

Selecting a database

In the Navigation Menu, FirstSearch provides three options for selecting a database under the **Databases** link. The *List Databases by Topic* screen groups databases by topic area while the *List All Databases* screen displays a merged list of all databases. If you need help selecting a database, use the *Suggest Best option* to scan databases for your key search term(s). You can then select the databases that contain the highest estimated results for your key term(s).

The Database list

Select - Click the checkbox in front of each database you would like to search (up to three). A default database may be pre-selected. If you do not want to include the default database in your search, click the checkbox in the first column to de-select it.

Est. Results – Displays estimated results for key terms (appears only in the Suggest Best screen).

Database – Displays the name of the database. Click to search in just one database.

Description – Displays a short description of the database.

Info - Click the Info button (blue icon with white 'i') to view detailed information on the database. Full

-text – Displays the Full Text icon (gold icon with stack of papers) if online full text is available **Using**

search results

Viewing a detailed record- To view a detailed record from the List of Records screen, click on the record title. To return to the **List of Records** screen, click the List of Records link in the Navigation Menu.

Sorting records – Click the **Sort** button (blue icon with lines in triangle on lower left) to select sort options for a set of results containing 200 or fewer records. Available sort options will vary by database.

Expanding and limiting a search – To find more records similar to those you have already found, click the **Expand button** (blue icon with pointer going up). To select a subset of the records you have already found, click the **Limit button** (blue icon pointing down).

Marking a subset of records – Mark records to work with a smaller subset of a results list. Click the checkbox for each record you would like to mark. Use the **Mark All** button to mark all records on a page or the **Clear Marks** button to unmark all records on the list. Click the **Marked Records** link in the Navigation Menu to view, e-mail or save to disk the records you have marked.

Viewing full text – The **Full Text** button (blue icon with stack of papers in a box) and full text format information appear with any record for which full text is available online. Click either the button or the format information to see the full text.

Printing – Click the **Print** button (blue icon with tiny printer) to reformat a page of results you would like to print. Reformatting will temporarily remove the Navigation Menu Control Panel. Use your browser's print function to print the reformatted screen (the "print" button on the button bar across the very top of your screen). Click the **Return** button (blue icon with arrow pointing to left) to return to the original format.

E-Mailing – Click the **E-mail** button (blue icon with mailing envelope) to e-mail records, holdings, information, or full text copy.

Library Ownership Information – The **Libraries** button (blue icon with a building with pillars) to view a list of libraries that hold a particular library resource.

Interlibrary loan – DOES NOT APPLY TO TRINITY STUDENTS with this authorization number. *Only your home library where you have a card can do this for you.* The information found here can be printed and given to your friendly public/other graduate institutional reference librarian for them to locate the book(s)/materials for you.

IMPORTANT THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS

Serving the Trinity community is a privilege and a joy. We need, however, to share some information concerning the volatile nature of the environment surrounding online information access.

Please be aware of the following:

1. Web sites and address changes

a. Web sites disappear or move at any given time. Keeping lists of any length current is a daunting task. Please be forgiving. Please report dead links to the librarian at: librarian@trinitysem.edu.

2. Regarding Interlibrary loans (ILL)

a. You must partake in ILL, if at all, at your local academic or public library. ILL is a service provided by that library for any card-holding patron. If you need a Trinity Student ID card, please contact: contact@trinitysem.edu.

b. ILL is a service that takes place between participating libraries. Trinity itself does not currently participate as a contributing member to ILL.

c. Reference librarians will be glad to help you locate and suggest places close to your geographic location listing the required material in their library catalog. The Trinity librarian can help you locate materials as well.

d. Lending institutions (public, academic, special libraries) set up their own lending and borrowing policies; so there can be no real guarantee that any library is willing to lend to any large/small public library. It is solely at the lending institution's discretion.

3. Magazine article coverage

a. Digital conversion to computer/online full text of any magazine title will vary. Because standardized computer (digital) conversion of data is fairly recent, one must expect that back (retrospective) coverage of any title will not usually be found past the 1980s.

a. There are always exceptions and many prestigious magazines keep going back further to convert. Most, however, do not exceed the 1970s or 1960s.

c. Please know this as you ask for retrospective (back) coverage of magazine articles.

4. Non-book materials

a. Be aware that few libraries lend non-book materials outside their usual service area.

5. All things to all men

a. Most libraries are service-oriented and desire to fill your informational needs. There are, however, always exceptions. We function under the assumption that information will be provided when it is asked for and that any online search will produce useful results. But please realize that as the attempt is made to "be all things to all men" it is sometimes not possible.

b. It may be good to remember that even though we handle each request as the only one we have at the time we are serving you, there are other students you will not see/know about needing help. If you have a lengthy request, you may be asked to break it into sections or limit them and come back later with the rest.

6. Tutorials

a. There are tutorial written by the online librarian presently available at the Student Research Link site (which is hyperlinked directly to Trinity's homepage: www.trinitysem.edu). These tutorials will teach you how to do beneficial searches in each database available.

* This statement and disclaimer has been prepared by and is endorsed by the Trinity Online Librarian staff and Trinity Academic Department.

REMEMBER: The Trinity Information Specialist is always ready to help you at this e mail address:
librarian@trinitysem.edu.

HOW TO DO A SEARCH WITH THE NEW OCLC FIRSTSEARCH TUTORIAL II

Database Selection

Before you perform your search, FirstSearch can help you locate the best database by scanning subject groupings of available databases and reporting the estimated number of matches in each.

At the FirstSearch Home screen:

- Type in your word or phrase in the "Suggest best database" search box.
- Select the index you want to search.
- Choose a database topic area.
- Click "List".

FirstSearch quickly scans each database for your search terms and displays a ranking based on the estimated number of postings. From this list, you may select up to three databases to search simultaneously.

If you know which database you want to search:

- Select the database in the "Search a database" box.
- Choose the index you want to search.
- Enter your word or phrase in the search box.
- Click "Search".

You can also click on the Databases link in the Navigation Menu for more information on FirstSearch databases and to select a database to search.

Searching

Once you select a database, a basic search screen displays. The Basic Search is the quickest way to search for information you need.

- Type in the word or phrase in the search box.
- Select the index you want to search.
- Indicate what search limits you want (these vary by database and found below the entry)
- Choose how you want your results ranked
- Click "Search".

The Advanced Search gives you more options, allowing you to structure a more precise search.

- Use Boolean (AND, OR, and NOT) operators to search up to three indexes simultaneously.
- Limit search results by category, such as publication, date, language, library holding code, and document type (These vary by database).
- Choose how you want your results ranked.
- Click "Search"

An Expert Search mode is also provided for users who prefer command-line searching.

Search Results

Search results are shown in a numbered list of records in abbreviated form.

Browse the results by scrolling up and down the pages.

- Click on the title to view a full record.
- Click on the "full-text" icon, *if available*, to see the article online.
- Mark records in the box to view a subset of the full list of results, e-mail a set of records, print a set of records or save a set of records to disk.
- Print the record or article from the screen or e-mail to an Internet address.

For more information on searching FirstSearch, click the Searching link in the Navigational menu and then click 'Help'

Take a special guided tour of OCLC FirstSearch: <http://www.oclc.org/firstsearch/about/tour/default.htm#top>

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