

Cell Online Help

Finding information

You can use the search facilities at Cell Online to locate articles you require.

The following topics cover:

- the [basics of searching](#) for articles at Cell Online
- components of the [Search dialog](#)
- [search techniques](#)

Basics of searching

To search Cell Online for information, you can use either:

- a [quick search](#)
- a [standard search](#).

Quick search

The quick search is a simplified, easily-accessible version of the standard search available on all pages of the journal.

To use the quick search:

1. Enter one of three search criteria.
 - a word to search in the title or abstract of the article
 - the last name of an author (you can refine the search by using the format lastname, first initial)
 - the volume and first page of the article you are looking for.
 - The same rules apply to quick search terms as to standard search terms; there are simply fewer fields available here. The information in [Components of the Search Dialog](#) and in [Search Techniques](#) applies to the quick search. Click the **Search** button.
2. Access the text or summary for the article you require, by either:
 - clicking the 'Full Text' or 'Summary' link for the article you require
 - checking the checkbox next to each summary you require, then clicking the **Get All Checked Summary(s)** button to view all the marked summaries on a single page.

If you click the 'Full Text' or 'Summary' link, your search terms and similar terms are highlighted in bold letters in the title and text of the article.

Standard search

The standard search enables you to generate a list of articles which match your search criteria. The list will begin with the article which matches your criteria the most closely.

To use the standard search:

1. Access the Cell Online home page.
2. Click the Black Search button, on the top line of all Cell pages. Enter the search criteria you require.

NB

It does not matter whether you enter your search terms in lower-case or upper-case letters.

3. Click the **Search** button, at the bottom of the dialog boxes.
4. Access the text or summary for the article you require, by either:
 - clicking the 'Full Text' or 'Summary' link for the article you require
 - checking the checkbox next to each summary you require, then clicking the **Get All Checked Summary(s)** button to view all the selected summaries on a single page.

If you click the 'Full Text' or 'Summary' link, your search terms and similar terms are highlighted in bold letters in the title and text of the article.

Components of the Search dialog

This topic discusses the components of the Search dialog.

All fields in this dialog are implicitly connected by *and*. So, if you enter 5 in the **Volume** field, 12 in the **First Page** field, and *Morgan* in the **Author** field, a result will be retrieved only if there is an article at page 12 in volume 5 by an author called *Morgan*.

In addition, all the words in a field are implicitly connected by *or*. For example, imagine you want the article *My Experiences with Squamous Epithelium* by *Derek Morgan*. Entering *Derek Morgan* in the **Author** field and *squamous epithelium* in the **Word(s) in Title or Summary** field will retrieve all articles for which the author's last name is either *Derek* or *Morgan* and for which the title or summary includes the word *squamous* or the word *epithelium*. Although this example will retrieve the article you require, it will retrieve many irrelevant entries. To specify the article more precisely, enter *Morgan, D.* in the **Author** field and "*squamous epithelium*" (in quotes) in the **Word(s) in Title or Summary** field. Methods for specifying articles precisely are described in [Search techniques](#).

Volume

You can uniquely identify an article, so that you do not need to enter further search criteria, by specifying its **Volume** and **First Page**.

The **Volume** in conjunction with the **Author or Word(s) in Title or Summary** should also be sufficient to locate the article you want.

First Page

You can specify a **First Page** number even if you do not know the **Volume**. This should retrieve a fairly small number of articles. If too many articles are retrieved, try also specifying the **Author** or **Word(s) in Title or Summary**.

Author

You can enter the last name of an author in the **Author** field.

Note the following points:

- a more precise way of searching for an author is by entering the last name, a comma, a space, the initial, then a period. For example, to search for Derek Morgan, enter *Morgan, D.*
- if you want to search for non-English characters, you can enter the equivalent English character or the question mark wildcard (?). For example, if you want to search for the author *Kündgen*, you can enter *Kundgen* or *K?ndgen*
- you can search for hyphenated last names using the first half, the second half, or the complete last name. For example, to find articles by *Fortesque-Smythe*, you can search for *Fortesque*, *Smythe*, or *Fortesque-Smythe*.

Word(s) in Title or Summary

You should enter titles or phrases from titles in quotation marks (for example, "*squamous epithelium*"). If you do not, you will search for each occurrence of each word (in effect, *squamous or epithelium*).

Word(s) Anywhere in Article

The main disadvantage of full text searches (using the **Word(s) Anywhere in Article** field) is that if the search terms are not particularly unique, far too many articles may be retrieved.

However, you can use full-text searches to identify articles from information in the text, for example:

- articles that cite a specific author
- articles that mention the use of a particular technique.

You should enter phrases in quotation marks (for example "*squamous epithelium*"). If you do not, you will search for each occurrence of each word (in effect, *squamous or epithelium*).

From... through

You can specify a date range in order to limit your search to:

- recent articles or the particular year when an article was published
- articles for which the full text is available on-line (1996 onward).

Closest matches

As some searches may retrieve many matches, you can use this field to display a manageable number of results on a page.

You can view the next set of matches by clicking the 'View next *n* results' link at the bottom of each page of results.

Journal

By default, you will search the journal from which you accessed the Search dialog (for example, if you clicked the Search link on the Neuron home page, you will search Neuron).

You can specify a different set of journals, if required, by checking and unchecking the **Journal** checkboxes.

Type of article

You can specify a particular type of article in order to qualify the information you want to retrieve. If you select the **Review** radio button, both reviews and minireviews are retrieved.

Sort by

You can list retrieved articles by:

- date- the most recent articles will be listed first
- relevance. For example, if you enter *adenosine triphosphate* in the **Word(s) Anywhere in Article** field, all articles that include either

adenosine or *triphosphate* will be retrieved. They will be listed so that articles:

- which use both terms are shown before those which use only one
- which use the terms most frequently are shown earliest.

Clear

If you make a mistake when entering search terms, you can click the **Clear** button to remove the search terms from the the Search dialog. The left hand **Clear** button clears criteria from the **Volume** and **First Page** fields, and the right hand **Clear** button clears the other fields.

Search

When you are satisfied with your search terms, you can click the **Search** button to perform the search. The left hand **Search** button executes a search based on the criteria in the **Volume** and **First Page** fields, and the right hand **Search** button executes a search based on the criteria in the other fields.

Search techniques

This topic describes techniques you can use to improve your searches and covers:

- [searching efficiently](#)
- searching for [non-English characters](#)
- searching for phrases or [groups of words](#)
- searching for [partial information](#)
- specifying [relationships between search term](#)

Efficient searches

When performing a search, you should aim to strike an appropriate balance between:

- being specific enough to identify uniquely the article you require
- entering as few criteria and complex expressions as possible to increase the speed of the search.

For best results, you should enter exactly the minimum amount of information necessary to identify uniquely the article or articles. For example, if you know the volume and page number, this information is enough to identify the article uniquely.

Searching for non-English characters

If you want to search for characters not in the English alphabet, and you do not have those characters on your keyboard, you can enter the equivalent English characters. If there is no easy translation (for example, for the Greek character gamma), use the question mark wildcard (?).

For example, to find the author *Kündgen*, you can search for *Kundgen* or *K?ndgen*.

Searching for groups of words

Words in a field are implicitly connected by an *or*. So, a search for *adenosine triphosphate* will retrieve all articles that contain either *adenosine* or *triphosphate*.

To search only for groups of words rather than for each individual word, enclose the whole phrase in quotation marks. For example, to find articles on *adenosine triphosphate*, enter "*adenosine triphosphate*".

NB

You cannot use wildcards, stemming, or Boolean operators within quotation marks, as anything within the quotation marks is treated as part of the search phrase.

Searching for partial information

You can search for partial information by using either of these two types of wildcard characters:

- a question mark (?) to represent any single character. For example, a search for *b?y* will retrieve articles containing *boy* or *bay* but not articles containing *berry*
- an asterisk (*) at the end of a search term to represent any sequence of characters. For example, a search for *onco** will retrieve articles containing *oncogene*, *oncology*, *oncologist*, etc.

NB

You can include an asterisk wildcard only at the end of a word. Any letters after the asterisk will be discarded and may cause an error.

You can use wildcards to search for:

- related topics derived from a common word or root. For example, a search for *onco** will retrieve articles containing *oncogene* and *oncologist*
- words which contain non-English characters, if you do not have the characters on your keyboard. For example, you can search for *Andr?* if you require the author name *André*.

Relating search terms

You can use Boolean expressions to relate search terms to each other in sophisticated ways. For example, you can search for articles about *fish* while specifically excluding articles that mention *halibut*.

Basic useful Boolean terms include:

- [or](#)
- [and](#)
- [not](#)
- [parentheses](#).

These can be used individually or in combination.

Or

When you use the Boolean expression *or* between search terms, articles containing any of these expressions will be retrieved. For example, a search for "*adenosine triphosphate*" *or* *ATP* will retrieve articles that mention either of the terms whether or not they mention the other.

Words within a field are already implicitly connected by *or*. For example, a search for *adenosine triphosphate* is the same as a search for *adenosine or triphosphate*. So, it is pointless using *or* between single words.

And

When you use the Boolean expression *and* between search terms, only articles containing each of the expressions will be retrieved. For example, a search for *cats and dogs* will retrieve articles that mention both *cats* and *dogs* but not articles that mention *cats* only or *dogs* only.

So, if you are interested in human diseases, a search for:

- *human diseases* would probably retrieve too many articles - all those that contain either the term *human* or the term *diseases*. You would retrieve an article containing, for example, the phrase *human DNA* whether or not it mentioned *diseases*.
- "*human diseases*" will retrieve an article with the phrase *human diseases* but not necessarily an article with the sentence *The diseases of*

humans are fascinating. This search would probably retrieve too few articles.

- *Human and diseases* would retrieve an article with the phrase *human diseases* as well as one with the sentence *The diseases of humans are fascinating*. This search would probably retrieve the set of articles you want to read.

Not

When you use the Boolean expression *not* before a search term, articles containing that term will be excluded.

For example, if you want to find articles about *fish* but not articles that mention the fish *halibut*, you should search for *fish not halibut*.

Parentheses

You can use several instances of each of the *or*, *and* and *not* operators in the same search. To avoid ambiguity in complex searches, you should use parentheses to group operators and terms.

For example, to find only those articles which refer to either *fish* or *cod*, as well as either *french fries* or *potatoes*, but do not mention the fish *halibut*, you should search for:

(fish or cod) and ("French fries" or potatoes) not halibut

See Also:

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