# Tips & tricks for using the links report

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The URL checker can generate a lot of links. Some links with a **Fail** status may not seem broken. Here are some tips and tricks we've learned while working with these reports.

## Use the Link Text

The URL checker links report includes a column for the **Link Text** for all hyperlinks. If you're looking at a link that has **Article Content** in the **Object Field**, the Link Text is your best way to find that link in your article.

We usually use either the Editor Link or Live Link and then use browser search to find the text.

### Article Content link has no Link Text

Some links have **Article Content** in the **Object Field**, but a [No visible link text] entry for **Link Text**, as in the first row of results in this table:

| Object Field | Link URL | Link Text | HTML Tag | Link Type | Status Code |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Article Content | https://www.knowledgeowl.com/fake-page | [No visible link text] | a | External | 404 |
| Article Content | https://www.knowledgeowl.com/fake-page | our setup guide | a | External | 404 |

The problem with these links is that you have nothing to search for. In fact, since these links have no text, they're not displayed in the live article or in the article WYSIWYG editor.

This situation is usually caused by a specific workflow:

- At some point, the link was inserted.
- When someone went to remove it, they didn't use the **Unlink** option; they just deleted the text itself.

Sometimes with this set of steps, the WYSIWYG editor keeps the hyperlink in the code, but just deletes the text from it.

To find these hyperlinks:

1. Open the article in the editor using the **Editor Link** provided in the report.
2. In the upper left of the editor, select the </> **Code View** editor control:
3. Use a browser search for the **Link URL**. For really long articles, you can also copy that code view into a text editor and use that editor's search functionality.

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4. Generally, these hyperlinks should be deleted (they haven't been visible/used since that text was deleted), though this might also prompt you to revisit if there should be a link here and where it should point.

5. Be sure to **Save** your changes.

To avoid having these types of links show up in your report in the future, we recommend this workflow whenever you remove a hyperlink:

1. Find the text for the link and click on it to open the Hyperlink menu.

2. Select the **Unlink** option:



3. Once the hyperlink has been unlinked, delete the text as usual.

## Article Content link has   Link Text

Some links might have ` ` in the **Link Text** column, as in the first row of results in this table:

| Object Field | Link URL | Link Text | HTML Tag | Link Type | Status Code |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Article Content | https://www.knowledgeowl.com/fake-page |   | a | External | 404 |
| Article Content | https://www.knowledgeowl.com/fake-page | Apple | a | External | 404 |
| Article Content | https://www.knowledgeowl.com/fake-page | our setup guide | a | External | 404 |

` ` is the HTML encoded version of a space, so this is another situation where the hyperlink won't display in the WYSIWYG editor or the live article. Follow the Article Content link has no Link Text instructions to find and remove or edit this link.

# LinkedIn link has 999 code

999 is not part of the HTTP status code spec definition, so it's not a "real" error code. You most likely won't see these error codes for pages outside of LinkedIn.

LinkedIn does not like automated URL checks and has set up their pages to return a 999 code when these kinds of link checks are made, regardless of whether the URL is valid or invalid.

For these links, it's probably good to review them the first time you run the report to be sure they seem to work, but we generally filter them out after that since they're not informative at all.

# Demio link has 502 code

Links to Demio resources will generally show up with a 502 error in the reports.

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We contacted Demio and discovered that they don't support the automated checks our URL checker runs, so these links will always generate a 502. 

You can skip these in the report or manually check them.

# External link has 404 code but loads fine for me

Most of us are trained that a 404 page is an error, so these are often the status codes we prioritize first when reviewing a report.

But there are cases where some external links throw a 404 code in the report but seem to load fine for you when you check them. What's going on?

This can happen for a few different reasons.

## Page takes too long to load

Our URL checker waits five seconds when it checks a URL. If it doesn't get a response within those five seconds, it logs the URL as a 404 and moves on. We do this to try to keep the reports from taking a long time to generate.

So if the page loads for you, but it loads slowly, this may be why it's showing up in the report. There's no good way to fix this and get the page to stop showing up in your reports, but if it's a link to a page you have control over, see if you can speed up the page load times.

## Accepted security risk

Sometimes these pages load for you because you've accepted a security risk such as an expired SSL certificate or otherwise saved a cookie that makes a resource available to you. Since our URL checker can't accept a security risk or store a cookie, it throws a 404 error.

Try testing the URL in an Incognito or Private window. These browser windows don't allow cookies, so they should give you the cleanest slate to test with to reproduce the error.

## Intermittent server availability

External links are very much at the mercy of availability at the exact time the report was run. If the server the page or resource is hosted on had a small blip while the URL checker was running, it might trigger a 404 in our report but open just fine.

We try to take note of links like this and check them again in future reports.

## Automated link checking blocked

Like LinkedIn, the provider who hosts that site might not like automated link checkers and may throw 404s on perfectly valid resources just because they can.

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**We've noticed this with Google's documentation, all of which loads perfectly fine during regular browsing. There's no way to resolve these errors.**

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