Run a search

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Authors with the default Editor or Writer role can run find searches. If you're using a custom role, you'll need to have the **Tools > Find and replace** custom author role permission to **Run find searches**.

To run a find search that searches the underlying HTML of content:

1. Go to **Tools > Find and replace.**
2. In **Find**, in the **Search method** section, select the type of search you'd like to complete from these options:
    - Exact matches: Search for an exact value or string. This search is case sensitive.
    - Regex pattern: Search for variations on a string or value. This search is case insensitive.
3. Enter the text you'd like to search for in the box below those options:
    a. For an Exact match, enter the string you want to find. Refer to Exact match searches for more detailed instructions.
    b. For a Regex pattern, enter the regex pattern you want to find. Escape special characters like `/` with a `\` in front of them. Refer to Regex pattern searches for more detailed instructions.
4. By default, **Find** will search all articles with a Published or Needs Review status only. Use the **Content to search in** checkboxes to include draft or archived articles, snippets, homepage, or theme HTML and CSS.
5. Once you've finished your selections, select **Run search.**
6. Once the search is complete, the **Replace** section appears with your search term displayed. Below it, the results table shows all matching content, with the search term and total result count shown in the table header.
7. Select any result title to open it for editing, or select **View live** to view it in your live knowledge base. Select **Download as CSV** to download the results. To run a replace, refer to Replace content. To start over, select **New search.**

Exact matches searches

The exact matches search is the best place to begin learning **Find and replace**.

Exact matches searches for an exact, case-sensitive word or phrase in your knowledge base.

You can add things like:

- **Link to Article references:** Link to Article references get inserted as [[hg-id:*articleid*]]. Search for hg-id:*id* to find all articles that link to a given article.
  - **Example:** `hg-id:632b7cdc027d150f97264dfe`
- **Topic article references:** Topic article references get inserted as [[ko-topic:*id*]]. You can run an exact match search for the ko-topic:*id* portion to find all places a topic article has been embedded.
  - **Example:** `ko-topic:632b7cdc027d150f97264dfe`
- **Snippet merge code references:** Search for snippet.*mergeCode* to find all articles referencing a given snippet (though snippet references are usually a faster way to do this one!).
  - **Example:** `snippet.contactUs`
- **Exact URLs** referenced as hyperlinks in your articles.
  - **Example:** `https://calendly.com/knowledgeowl-support`
- **Words** that appear in the text of articles.
  - **Example:** `Find and replace` (or `find and replace` depending on case!)
- **Non-image files:** When you add a non-image file like a PDF, Excel spreadsheet, or Word document to an article (not embedded, but just the link to it), the link gets added with `class="fr-file"`. So if you're trying to find all articles that have a file uploaded to them, run a search for this class.
  - **Example:** `fr-file`
- **Raw HTML** like classes, hex codes, or rgb values.
  - **Example: Search for the** `alert-success` **class.**
  - **Example: Search for a color used, like** `rgb(29, 40, 79)` **or** `#1d284f`**.**
- **Manually-inserted glossary terms:** When you use the editor control to **Add Glossary Term**, this creates some underlying HTML that we can search, either to find all articles with manually inserted glossary terms, or with a specific manually-inserted glossary term
  - **Example: Find all articles with any manually-inserted glossary term: Search for the** `ko-glossary-term` **class.**
  - **Example:Ffind all articles with a specific manually-inserted glossary term:** `data-glossaryid="5ad52bc9ad121c0453099161"`**. (You'll need to know the ID of the glossary term--grab this by manually inserting it into an article and toggling to Code View!)**

Tips on using exact match search

Here are some tips to help you get the most from this type of search:

- Since the search is case sensitive, be sure you're using values exactly as they appear in your knowledge base.
- Since this is an exact match, enter any special characters exactly how they appear in your content. When in doubt, check Code View of an article to grab the exact HTML.
- To search HTML, you may want to hop into Code View on an article to see exactly what you want to grab. For example, if I want to find every article where I've used an Alert Success div, I can search for the alert-success class using an exact match:

Sample setup to search for content containing the Alert Success div

If you want to run a case-insensitive search or prefer to use regex searches, refer to Regex pattern searches for more information on running those searches!

Regex pattern searches

If exact matches won't get you what you need, the **Regex pattern** of **Find and replace** should.

Regex is a common abbreviation of 'regular expressions'. Regular expressions are:

> a sequence of characters that specifies a *search pattern*. Usually such patterns are used by string-searching algorithms for "find" or "find and replace" operations on strings, or for input validation. (from Wikipedia - Regular expression).

Regex can be very powerful, but it can look very complicated. Don't panic!

There are basically two ways to use regex in our Find and replace tool:

1. To run a case-insensitive search
2. To do a full regex pattern

For many of our authors, the case-insensitive search is all the further you'll need to go, so let's start there!

Regex for case insensitive search

To run a case insensitive search for individual words or phrases that do not contain any punctuation, you can often just run the regex pattern exactly as you would an exact match search.

If the word or phrase contains punctuation, though, you'll need to escape those characters by putting a `\` in front of them.

You should escape these punctuation marks, for example:

- Forward slash: /
- Plus sign: +
- Asterisk: *
- Question mark: ?
- Square brackets, opening or closing: [or]
- Parentheses, opening or closing: (or)
- Curly brackets, opening or closing: { or }
- Dollar sign: $
- Caret: ^
- Equals sign: =
- Exclamation point: !
- Greater than and less than symbols: < and >

- Vertical bar/pipe: |

So, for example, if Linus is using regex pattern search to find a URL, he'd add a backslash \ in front of any of any of the forward slashes /: `https://calendly.com/knowledgeowl-support` becomes: `https:\/\/calendly.com\/knowledgeowl-support`

Full regex patterns

Full regex patterns are generally best suited to advanced authors who are somewhat familiar with regex.

To construct your expression, we recommend using a tool like regex101, using the **PCRE2 (PHP >=7.3)** flavor of regex.

Then you can work with regex patterns to find what you're looking for. For more details on working with regex, refer to:

- W3 Schools PHP Regular Expressions: Refer to the Regular Expression Patterns and Metacharacters sections.
- The Quick Reference guide within regex101 (be sure you have the PCRE2 (PHP >=7.3) flavor selected!)

Some examples of using regex:

- **OR** searches: In regex, the pipe `|` means "or". Search for one term or another by separating them with a |. We recommend placing the entire phrase in parentheses, particularly if you're using phrases rather than individual words.
  - Example: Search for articles containing either the word author or reader: `(author|reader)`
- **Wildcard** searches: In regex, the period `.` acts as a wildcard.
  - Example: Search for articles that might contain either Berkshire or Cheshire by matching on shire with a wildcard: `.shire`

Tips on using regex pattern search

Here are some tips to help you get the most from this type of search:

- With regex patterns, it helps to have an article you know should match the pattern to test against.
- If your word or phrase contains punctuation, remember to escape it using a `\`. Refer to the list above in **Regex for case insensitive search** for more information.
- Only use this search type if you can't get what you need from exact matches!