

# **Broken link checker overview**

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Are you worried that your knowledge base contains bad links that might lead to 404 pages and a bad reader experience? Use the **Broken link checker** to create a report that identifies broken links so you can fix them. Then rerun the checker periodically to be sure those links stay fixed.

Our default Editor and Writer roles have permission to use the broken link checker. If you're using a custom author role, that role must have the Tools custom author role permission to Run broken link reports.

The Broken link checker scans all your articles with Published or Needs Review publishing statuses to check for broken hyperlinks. It then generates a Broken links report CSV file containing all the detected broken links. It includes most hyperlinks across your knowledge base, though there are are some limitations.

Use controls in the checker to include additional content or ignore certain error codes that aren't cause for concern.

Once the report has been generated, it remains available in **Tools > Broken link checker** until you generate a new one, so you can start this report, go do other things, and then download it later.

# **Start using Broken link checker**

Review the information below on Which content is checked and Which content isn't checked so you can have clear expectations.

Follow the instructions to Generate a broken links report. Then follow the Use the broken links report guidelines to make sense of the report and fix your links.

## Which content is checked

Here are all the objects and fields the Broken link checker reviews as it creates the Broken Links Report:

- Article
  - Article Content: Always check all text entered in the editor of the article.
  - Redirect URL: If an article has the URL Redirect box checked, check the redirect URL.
  - Thumbnail URL and Banner URL: If an article has a designated thumbnail and banner, it checks those URLs.
- Category
  - Category description: Always check the category description text.
  - Redirect URL: If a category is set up as a URL Redirect category type, check the redirect URL.

- Icon URL: If a category has a designated icon, check that URL.
- Thumbnail URL and Banner URL: Topic display categories and Custom content categories can also have thumbnails and banners. If these categories have thumbnails or banners added, check those URLs.
- Category Content: If it's a Custom content category, check all text entered in the editor, just like an
  article.

#### Snippet

Snippet Content: Always check all text entered in the editor of the snippet.

#### Homepage

 Homepage Content: Always check all text entered in the Customize > Homepage > Custom content editor.

#### • Theme

- Custom HTML: Always check all HTML entered into any of the Custom HTML templates in Customize > Style (HTML & CSS).
- The report identifies which Custom HTML template is the issue in the Object Field column (404 Error, Article, Body, Homepage, Login, Manage Reader Subscriptions, Restricted Access Page, Right Column, or Top Navigation).

#### Article Versions:

Version Content: If versions are included, check all text entered in the editor of all article versions.
 Refer to Additional content options for more information on including version content checks in your broken link checker.



No checks for embedded images, videos, or iframes

For all Content checks, the report won't check img, video, and iframe sources (src), just straight hyperlinks. So if you've used the editor options to Insert Image or Insert Video, those URLs will not be checked. Refer to What is not checked for more information.

## Which content isn't checked

The Broken link checker has three known limitations:

- Displayed images, videos, and iframes: For all Content checks, the report won't check the source (src) value.
  It only checks explicit hyperlinks. So if you've used the editor options to Insert Image or Insert Video, or
  you've inserted your own iframe, those src URLs won't be checked. If you'd like to see image, video, or
  iframe sources included in these reports, please contact us and let us know.
- Anchors: The Broken links checker won't check the validity of anchor or other hash portions of a hyperlink.
   Issues with anchors don't surface as independent HTTP status codes, so we had no automated way to check these.
  - The checker completely ignores same-page anchors (hyperlinks beginning with #).
  - For external page URLs that include an anchor, the checker strips off the anchor and checks the base
     URL of the page only.
- 3. Private content: If you link to resources that require a login of some kind to view, such as within your

company intranet, or behind a VPN, or documentation elsewhere that is behind a login page, those links will generally show up in the report with some 400-level status code. While we can validate resources that are stored within KnowledgeOwl, we have no way to pass authorization to check private resources stored elsewhere.

- 4. mailto: links: Since these links aren't a true URL, they can't be verified through the automated process we use. The report ignores these links.
- 5. javascript links: Since these links usually perform an action rather than hitting a URL, they can't be verified through the automated process we use. The report ignores these links.
- 6. **tel: links:** As with the mailto links, these links can't be verified through the automated process we use. The report ignores these links.