

JSTOR Advanced Search Guide

JSTOR is a large archive of several thousand core academic journals. Subject coverage is particularly good in the humanities and social sciences, but also includes business and sciences. Journal contents are available in pdf from the first issue of each journal up to several years ago (the “moving wall” publisher embargo on current content is typically 4-6 years back from the current year).

From the library’s home page, click [Databases A-Z](#), then select JSTOR. When off campus, you will be prompted to log in using your S-Number to access full-text content. You will be taken directly to JSTOR’s advanced search page. You should see the "access provided by Saint Mary's University" notice at the top of the page.

Starting a Search

Under “Select an access type”, choose “Content I can access” to search for full-text articles. Searching “All content” will also retrieve items that are not part of SMU subscriptions, but which you can request via the library’s document delivery service.

JSTOR supports full-text, author and title field searching. It also supports searching in the abstracts field, but only about 10% of JSTOR articles have an abstract, so this is not a good way to search for most topics.

| Item Type |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Articles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reviews |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Books |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research Reports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pamphlets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous |

If you have too many results, consider searching one or more of your key words in the **title** field to reduce the number of search results. If you have too few results, you may need to consider synonyms and alternate words to describe your topic to capture all possible title variants.

You can also limit your searches to different types of resources.

The advanced search page includes several options to refine your search results. You can choose a language and a range of publication dates. Filtering by date can be very useful, as JSTOR contains many journals back to their volume 1, and searches will retrieve older materials along with more recent articles. You can also select a particular journal to search or a subject area, which will run your search in all journals for that subject in JSTOR.

Advanced Searching Tips

JSTOR supports a number of advanced search techniques that can greatly improve the accuracy and relevancy of your JSTOR search results:

- **Boolean operators** (AND, OR, NOT): Use to combine words to narrow or broaden searches. Select from the drop down menu between the search boxes or type them into the search box.

Operators need to be capitalized when typed (e.g., *dogs AND behavior*). Use the advanced search keyword boxes with Boolean operators to easily refine your search query.

Advanced Search [Search Help](#)

All content Images

KEYWORD

"prisoners of war" OR pows All fields

SECOND KEYWORD

AND repatriat* All fields

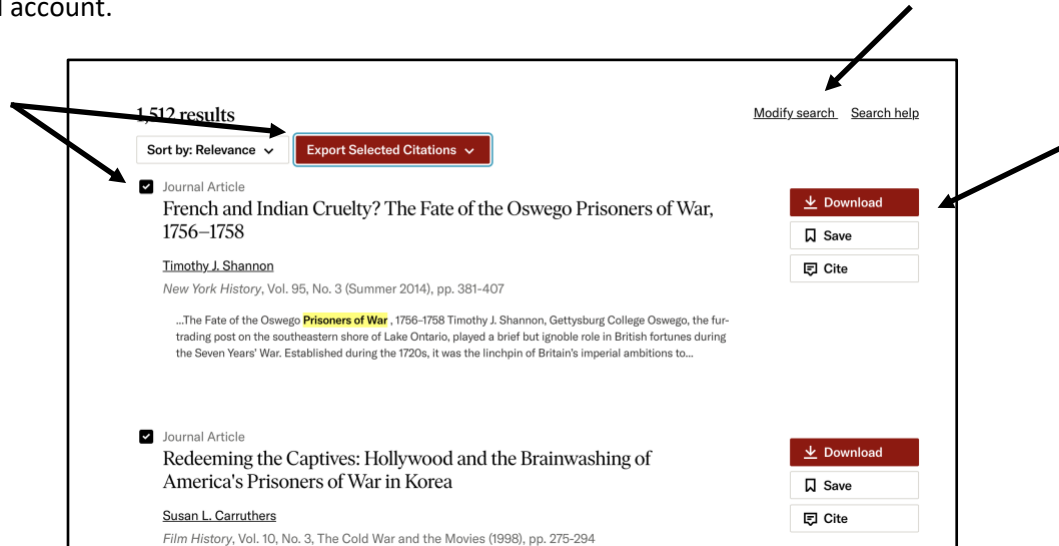
Add a search box

- **Exact search:** Place words inside quotation marks (" ") to search for an exact phrase. E.g., "*the handmaid's tale*" will find results about the novel and its adaptations.
- **Wildcards:** Wildcards are used to search for variant spellings and variations on a root word. The question mark (?) replaces one character (e.g., *wom?n*), and the asterisk (*) searches for multiple characters and variant endings (e.g., *mark** will retrieve *mark*, *marks*, *markings*, *marked*, etc.). Wildcards cannot be used in place of the first letter of a word or within an exact phrase search. Root words need to be at least three letters.
- **Similar spellings:** A tilde (~) at the end of a word will find variant spellings of the word. E.g., to find articles about the Russian composer Tchaikovsky, whose name has been translated into multiple spellings (e.g., *Tschaikowsky*, *Tchaikovski*) you can use *Tchaikovsky~*.
- **Proximity Search:** You can search for two words appearing close together by using a tilde (~) and a number to indicate the desired proximity range (e.g., *media literacy~10*). Also note: on the Advanced Search page, the drop down box for AND/OR/NOT includes several proximity search options: NEAR 5/10/25. NEAR will only work with searches of two words (e.g., *dogs NEAR 5 heartworm* will work, but *dogs NEAR 5 heart attack* won't).
- **Relevance boosting:** Placing a caret (^) followed by a number after a word will give the term that much more weight when sorting your results. E.g., "*climate change*" *migration*⁵ means that the term *migration* is 5 times more important than the phrase "*climate change*" in the search.

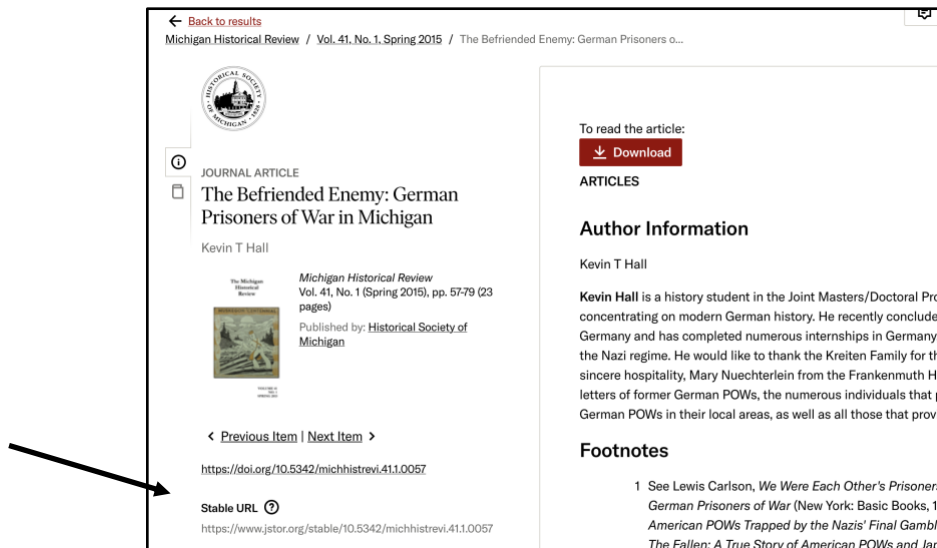
Working with Your Results

From your search results page, you can sort the articles, modify your search, select one or more articles and export them to your citation manager, download the PDF of an article, create a citation for the item in several major styles, or export the citation to RefWorks or an RIS file.

To export the item to your citation manager, click "Cite." You can also select multiple articles and then click "export selected citations." To save an article or search, or to set up alerts, you will need to set up an individual account within JSTOR. Click the "Log In" button to set up an account or to log in to your individual account.



Click on the title of an article to open and see more information.



JSTOR gives you a stable URL for each item, which you can use to permanently link to that item. More recent articles will also have a DOI (digital object identifier).

For more tips and ideas for best searching in JSTOR, please contact [Library Research Help](#).