How to... Create a Reference Answer Set

Find references quickly and easily

In SciFinder, you are searching the world’s largest, publicly available reference database for chemistry and related sciences as well as MEDLINE® (also called MEDLars onLINE from the U.S. National Library of Medicine). Select from various reference search options based on the information at hand and your research needs. When you have your answer set, refer to “How to ... Work with Reference Answer Sets” for ways to evaluate the results and target the most relevant answers. For more detailed information about SciFinder, consult the online help or visit www.cas.org/training/scifinder.

Types of Reference Searches

1. To begin, click the Explore References icon at the top of the page.

2. Select the type of reference search you want to conduct. Your options include:
   A. Research Topic search
   B. Author Name search
   C. Company Name search
   D. Document Identifier search
   E. Journal search
   F. Patent search
   G. Tags search

3. To make your query more specific, you can add more search criteria by selecting limiters such as Publication Year(s).
   - The search limiters are available as part of the Refine and Analysis functions, so you can also apply them later in your search process.

Tip
Unless you are looking for a specific reference, start with a broad search and narrow the results later.
A. Search by Research Topic

To begin, click **Research Topic**.

1. Enter your search concept(s) in the query entry text box.
   - Enter up to seven concepts, in English.
   - Recommendation: enter two to three concepts, separating each concept with a preposition. If you have additional concepts, use them later to refine your answer set.
   - Use “not” or “except” to exclude a term.

2. Click **Search**.

3. Select the answer set that you want to use from the list of **Research Topic Candidates** that SciFinder retrieves.

4. Click the box to select an option. A green checkmark indicates it has been selected.

5. **Tip**
   - All concepts “present anywhere in the reference” is often a good starting point. If the number of references is too large or you find many non-relevant references, consider selecting the narrower option in which all of the concepts are “closely associated with one another.”

6. **Tip**
   - You can include up to three synonyms for a concept. Place synonyms (or acronyms) in parentheses immediately following the concept and separate the synonyms with commas. E.g., cat (kitten, feline, felis catus)

**Now what?**

After you click **Search**, SciFinder will retrieve the answers which meet your query requirements. To learn about working with the answers, please see the companion document titled, “How to... Work with Reference Answer Sets.”
B. Search by Author Name

1. To begin, click Author Name.
2. Enter as much of the name as you know.
   • Only the Last name is required, but including the First and Middle names or initials improves the search results.
   • Enter punctuation (spaces, hyphens, etc.) as if you were writing the name.
   • Replace special characters with equivalent character(s), i.e., ae replaces å.
     Learn more about special characters in the online help.
   • For optimal retrieval, check the option to “Look for alternative spellings of the last name.”
3. Click Search.
4. SciFinder returns a list of Author Name Candidates. The number of references associated with each name appears on the right.
   • Click the box(es) next to the name(s) you want to select. A green checkmark appears.
5. Click Get References.

Tips
- For complicated names, try multiple searches and determine which search gives the best results.
- If you are unsure which name is the first and which is the last, try them in both orders.

Tip
Create a Keep Me Posted (KMP) automatic alert for this search if you want to know when new records for this author have been added to the database. See the “Create and Manage Alerts (KMPs)” guide.

Now what?
After you click Search, SciFinder will retrieve the answers which meet your query requirements. To learn about working with the answers, please see the companion document titled, “How to... Work with Reference Answer Sets.”
C. Search by Company Name

To begin, click **Company Name**.

Enter the name of one organization into the query entry text box.

Click **Search**.

**Company Name Searching Guidelines**

- SciFinder considers various spellings, acronyms, abbreviations, and related terms when retrieving results. It does not consider mergers and acquisitions.
- SciFinder automatically searches common synonyms and abbreviations. For example, entering “Company” or “Co.” returns the same results.

**Tip**
To see all of the name variations that SciFinder considered, analyze the answer set by Company/Organization. See “How to … Work with Reference Answer Sets” for more details.

**Now what?**
After you click **Search**, SciFinder will retrieve the answers which meet your query requirements. To learn about working with the answers, please see the companion document titled, “How to... Work with Reference Answer Sets.”
D. Search by Document Identifier

To begin, click **Document Identifier**.

Enter up to 25 identifiers, one per line, in the query entry text box.

Click **Search**.

**Searchable Document Identifiers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF IDENTIFIER</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accession number: A unique number applied to a record when it is put into the database. It begins with the year that the document entered the database.</td>
<td>CAplus: 2012:1527010 MEDLINE: 1998010009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document number: A sequential identification number that is assigned to a document (before the document enters the database).</td>
<td>CAplus: 107:12935 Medline: 22893704 (also called a PubMed ID number)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital object identifier (DOI): an alphanumeric character string that uniquely identifies an electronic document over the course of its lifetime.</td>
<td>10.1021/jp204843r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tip**
SciFinder ignores punctuation and accepts both two-digit and four-digit formats for years. Therefore, the search term 1983:4296 will retrieve both the PubMed ID 834296 and the CAplus Accession Number 1983:4296. Select the document of interest when you review the answers.

**Now what?**
After you click **Search**, SciFinder will retrieve the answers which meet your query requirements. To learn about working with the answers, please see the companion document titled, “How to... Work with Reference Answer Sets.”
To begin, click **Journal**.

1. **Enter a Journal Name** (required).
   - Enter data in the additional fields to retrieve more specific answers.
2. **Click Search**.

**E. Search by Journal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIELD</th>
<th>DATA ACCEPTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal Name</td>
<td>• Full name, abbreviation, or acronym&lt;br&gt;○ Abbreviations or acronyms must not contain spaces or punctuation&lt;br&gt;• Maximum of 30 characters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>Number (38) or alphanumeric string (45a)&lt;br&gt;• A Journal Name must be specified before a Volume, Issue, or Starting Page can be recognized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Number (16) or month (June)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting Page</td>
<td>Number (46), letters (iii), or alphanumeric string (m287)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title Word(s)</td>
<td>Key words, a partial title or a full title</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tip**
Create a broad search by using key words, only a journal name or only a last name. Narrow search results by using a full title, the journal name, issue and starting page, the author’s full name, or a combination of these items.

Now what?
After you click **Search**, SciFinder will retrieve the answers which meet your query requirements. To learn about working with the answers, please see the companion document titled, “How to… Work with Reference Answer Sets.”
F. Search by Patent

To begin, click **Patent**.

Enter a **Patent Number**.
- Acceptable patent numbers include any number that identifies a patent, such as patent application numbers, priority application numbers, and patent numbers.

Alternatively, you can enter an **Assignee Name** or **Inventor Name**.
- Enter data in several fields to create a narrower search.

Click **Search**.

Tip
One number can retrieve both a granted patent and a patent application that may be unrelated. You can easily select the record of interest while reviewing the search results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF IDENTIFIER</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority Application Number</td>
<td>US 1996-15450P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patent Number</td>
<td>JP 2001519650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now what?
After you click **Search**, SciFinder will retrieve the answers which meet your query requirements. To learn about working with the answers, please see the companion document titled, “How to... Work with Reference Answer Sets.”
G. Search by Tags

**Background:** You can apply tags to records when reviewing your search results by selecting **Add Tag** from the **Tools** menu. In the dialog box, enter the key word(s) that you want to apply as a tag. After they are created, tags become searchable.

A tag is a user-defined key word that you can apply to references in one or more answer sets. When you save an answer set, the tag is saved with the associated reference. Search a tag to retrieve any references to which the tag was applied.

1. **To begin,** click **Tags**.
2. **Select** the tag that you want to search from the list displayed.

SciFinder retrieves all of the records to which that tag has been applied.

**Tip**
Search a tag to create a new answer set that contains documents from different answer sets that have the same tag.

**Now what?**
After you click **Search,** SciFinder will retrieve the answers which meet your query requirements. To learn about working with the answers, please see the companion document titled, “How to… Work with Reference Answer Sets.”
Manage Your Searching

1. Start a new references, substances or reactions search.

2. Access commonly used features such as Saved Answer Sets, KMP Alert Results, Help, Preferences.

Tip: Other Ways to Create a Reference Answer Set
- You can also create a reference answer set by starting with a reaction or substance search. After you get a reaction or substance answer set, just click the “Get References” icon at the top of the page!