Monitor your library's FirstSearch usage

Learn how to use OCLC usage statistics and FirstSearch counts to monitor your library's FirstSearch usage.

Account information and usage statistics

The Home screen in the WorldCat Services Administrative Module contains information to help you monitor your FirstSearch account. If you have a per-search account, the screen contains the number of remaining searches and the expiration date of the account. If you have a subscription account, the screen contains the expiration date of the account. If you have a hybrid account, the screen contains both kinds of information.

OCLC Usage Statistics contains information about your library's use of FirstSearch. Monthly reports are included for individual and group (consortium) accounts. Each month, OCLC adds another month to the statistics service.

Overview reports provide data about the actual number of simultaneous users of the account. Other reports provide data about each database, including the number of searches and full-text documents used. They also combine data for all databases, including the number of sessions, searches, and full-text documents used.

Reports covering the Electronic Collections Online journals used by your library include the number of full-text displays viewed in all journals and in individual journals.

How to use OCLC Usage Statistics

How FirstSearch counts searches

FirstSearch counts each search performed. For per-search accounts, each search decreases the number of remaining searches.

What is counted

FirstSearch counts the following:

- Each search in multiple database searches (if three databases are included in a search, three searches are counted)
- Searching for a word or phrase using a search screen, previous search screen, or other screen on which searches can be entered
- Redoing a search with added words, phrases, or search limits
- Clicking a link that returns search results (clicking a subject or author link in a record or on the Related Subjects or Authors screen, clicking a link in a Limit Results screen, or clicking a subject heading link in a Preferred Subject Headings screen)
• Clicking the results link for a previously specified search, or combining two or more previously specified searches
• Viewing or e-mailing a full-text document when using the per-search method to purchase full text (each document viewed or e-mailed counts as five searches; viewing and e-mailing the same document is counted once as five searches)

Examples
The following are WorldCat database search examples.

First example (three to five searches counted):
• Search for **fetal alcohol syndrome** (one search).
• Redo the search adding the term **and education** (a second search).
• Redo the search using limits (**1980 to the present**, **English-language**, and **books**). If you set each limit separately and redo the previous search three times, FirstSearch counts three additional searches. If you set all the limits before redoing the search, FirstSearch counts only one additional search.

Second example (one search counted):
• Set the limits used in the first example and search for **fetal alcohol syndrome and education** to retrieve the same final results as the first example.

Exception
No search is counted if your search finds no records and at least one word or phrase in the search appears in no records. For example, the following search is not counted. You misspell **umpires** and enter the search **baseball and ympires** in WorldCat. Because **ympires** appears in no records, no records are found and no search is counted.

A search is counted if it finds one or more records. A search is also counted if it finds no records but each word or phrase in the search appears in one or more records. For example, the following search is counted although it finds no records. You enter the search **baseball and radishes** in WorldCat. No records are found because no record contains both **baseball** and **radishes**. However, a search is counted because baseball appears in one or more records and radishes appears in one or more other records.

What is not counted
FirstSearch does not count the following as searches:
• Selecting a database
• Asking FirstSearch to suggest a database
• Viewing, printing, emailing, or downloading records (Viewing or emailing full-text documents counts as five searches for per-search accounts.)
• Sorting search results
• Ordering documents through interlibrary loan
• Using help or searching within help
• Finding libraries that own an item
• Looking up words in a Browse Index (before clicking on a link to begin a search)
• Browse Titles (Article First, ECO)
• Finding a preferred subject heading or expanding a subject term
• Using the Expand or Limit feature available with lists of records (before clicking on a link in those features to begin a search)