Searching Confluence

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Quick guide to searching in Confluence:

1. Use the search box at the top right of your Confluence screen. It offers you a quick navigation aid as well as a full site search.
2. You can search for administrative actions via the quick navigation aid too.
3. You can search Confluence directly from your browser's search box. Just add your Confluence site as a search provider using the dropdown menu in your browser's search box.
4. While editing a page or a blog post, you can find and replace text on the page. See Using the Editor.

Using the quick navigation aid to find content and administrative actions

When you enter text into the Confluence search box, the quick navigation aid automatically offers a dropdown list of pages, administrative options, and other items. The items are matched by page name to your search query. You can choose one of the offered items or ignore them altogether.

To use the quick navigation aid to find content:

1. Start typing your query into the search box located at the top right-hand corner of every screen. Confluence matches titles as you type, showing a quickly-adjusting dropdown list of pages, blog posts, personal profiles, attachments and so on.
2. Press the Enter key if you want to bypass the quick navigation aid and perform a full search, as described below.
3. To see the space to which an item belongs, let your mouse pointer hover over the item in the dropdown list.
4. Use the up- and down-arrows on your keyboard to move up and down the list of matching titles and select an item.
5. Press the Enter key to open the selected item.
6. If you do not find what you are looking for, click Search for at the bottom of the list to do a full search. This has the same effect as pressing Enter immediately after typing your search query. The full search is described below.

To use the quick navigation aid to get to administration functions: Start typing what you want to do into the Confluence search box. The matching administrative functions will appear with a cog icon at the top of the dropdown search results.

Even faster via ‘GG’: Press ‘G’ twice on your keyboard then continue typing the search term.

Screenshot: The quick navigation aid showing titles matching the query ‘st’

Here is more information about how the quick navigation feature works:

- Confluence will truncate any titles that are too long to be displayed.
- The matching items are grouped by type so that you can quickly find the type you want. Confluence shows a maximum of 3 administrative items, 6 pages and/or blog posts, 2 attachments, 3 people and 2 spaces. If no matches are found in a particular category, then that category does not appear in the list.
- Items are ordered with the most recent updates first.
- When the matching item is a person's name, their profile picture appears next to their name in the list.
- The part of the title that is matched by the search query is highlighted in bold text.
- Your Confluence Administrator can enable or disable the quick navigation feature using the Confluence Administration Console.

Notes about finding administrative options via the search box:

- Pressing ‘GG’ puts your cursor into the search box.
- The ‘GG’ combination is familiar to JIRA users, because the same shortcut opens the JIRA administration search dialog.
- System administration, Confluence administration and space administration options may appear in the search results.
- Confluence permissions determine the administrative options that appear in the search results. You will only see the options that you have permission to perform.

Performing a full search

When you perform a full search, Confluence will search all content in all spaces (site and personal), mail, personal profiles, attachments and the space description. The results will appear on a new screen.

To use the full search:

1. Type your query into the search box located at the top right-hand corner of every screen (or type it into the text box at the top of the Search screen).
2. Press the Enter key. (This means that you will ignore the dropdown list of titles offered by Confluence’s quick navigation aid, described above.)
3. The search screen appears, as shown below. If any Confluence pages or items match your search query, the search screen shows a list of the matching items.
4. Click an item's title to open the Confluence page or other item.

**Screenshot: Search results page**

On the right of the screen you will see a text block for each item that matched the search criteria, with the following information for each item:

- An icon representing the content type (user profile, space, page, blog post, etc).
- The title or name of the content item, linked to the item.
- The most relevant few lines of content from within the item. Any words that match your search query are highlighted within the content.
- The space to which the item belongs, displayed on the last line of the item's text block.
- The date when the content item was last modified.

You will see only search results which you have permission to view.

On the left of the screen are further options which allow you to tailor or filter your search results. See below.

**Filtering your search results**

The search screen, pictured above, appears when you do your first search. By default, Confluence will search all content across your Confluence site, including all spaces, mail archives, attachments and all other content types.

On the left of the screen are options which allow you to tailor (filter) the search results.

Define your filter criteria:

- **Type** – Restrict your search results to a particular content type (pages, blog posts, comments, etc).
- **Last modified** – Restrict your search results to content updated within a particular period of time (within the previous 24 hours, within a week, within a month, or within a year).
- **Space** – Restrict your search results to a particular space, your favourite spaces, or choose from a list of suggested spaces. You can also set an option to include archived spaces. (See Archiving a Space.)
- **By** – Restrict your search results to content last modified by a particular person. You can start typing the person's username or part of their name into the text box as follows:
  - Type the username (for example: ‘jsmith’).
  - Or start typing the person's first name (for example: 'john')
  - Or their last name (for example: 'smith').
  - Or another part of their name, such as a middle name.
  Confluence will offer you a list of possible matches. Use your mouse to select the person you want, then press the Enter key to filter the search results.

More information about the user-matching filter:

- The user-matching filter is **not** case sensitive. You can enter upper or lower case letters and will receive the same results.
- When looking for users to match the name you entered, Confluence divides a person's name into logical units corresponding to first name, middle name (one or more) and last name. It matches the letters of each unit in the name you entered against the letters of each unit in the user directory. For example, you can enter 'jo sm' to look for John Smith. The search is triggered after you have entered at least two letters.
- For each part of the name, you need to enter at least two letters. For example, if you enter just 'john s', the filter will look for users called 'john' and will ignore the 's'. Similarly, if you enter 'jsmith' you will see everyone with the name 'smith' even if their first name does not start with a 'j'.
- You are not forced to use the auto-complete list. You can just type 'jsmith' or 'jo sm' and filter on that without choosing a match from the dropdown list. Confluence will warn you if there is more than one user corresponding to the name you have entered.

**Searching for labels**

Use the `labelText:` prefix to search specifically for content that has a specific label. The table below gives examples of search terms that you can enter into Confluence's search box, and the search results that you can expect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Searching for ...</th>
<th>Returns content that ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recipe labelText:chocolate</td>
<td>contains the word 'recipe' or has the label 'chocolate'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recipe AND labelText:chocolate</td>
<td>contains the word 'recipe' and has the label 'chocolate'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>labelText:cake OR labelText:chocolate</td>
<td>has the label 'cake' or the label 'chocolate'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>labelText:cake AND labelText:chocolate</td>
<td>has both labels 'cake' and 'chocolate'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The `labelText:` prefix is an example of a search field. See more about Confluence Search Fields.

**Searching the content of attachments**
When you search Confluence, by default the search will include the content of the following types of attachments:

- Word
- Text
- PowerPoint
- Excel
- PDF
- HTML

To search the content of other attachment types, you will need to use an attachment content extractor plugin. For more information, take a look at the following:

- Existing extractor plugins which you can install on your Confluence site. See this search on Atlassian Marketplace.
- Guidelines on developing your own attachment content extractor plugin. See our developer documentation on extractor plugins.

Search options when using the Documentation theme

When using the Documentation theme, the Confluence search offers a few options as described below.

Using the search box at the top right of the page:

- By default, the main Confluence search is configured to search the entire Confluence site. You will see the words ‘Search Confluence’ in the search box at top right of the page.
- A space administrator can configure the Documentation theme to restrict the search to the current space. You will see the words ‘Search this space’ in the search box at top right of the page.
- You can override the search restriction. Enter ‘all:’ and your search term to search the entire site. For example, enter the following into the search box at top right of the page to search the entire site for ‘technical writing’:

  all: technical writing

Using the search box in the left-hand panel:

- By default, the Documentation theme’s left-hand panel includes a search box. Enter your search term there, to restrict the search to the current space. Specifically, this will search only the pages that are children of the space’s home page.
- If your administrator has restricted the main search to the current space, there will not be a search box in the left-hand panel.

For screenshots and a full description, see Using the Documentation Theme.

Advanced search syntax

See Confluence Search Syntax for more ways to refine the text you enter into the search box.

Additionally, see Confluence Search Fields for special parameters you can use in the search box to search on various metadata.

Searching Confluence from your browser’s search box

If you are using Firefox or Internet Explorer 7 or later, you can add add your Confluence site as a search provider, using the dropdown menu next to the browser’s search box.

The example below shows the ‘Extranet’ Confluence site offered for inclusion as a search engine in the browser’s search box.

Screenshot: Adding your Confluence site to your browser’s search box

Information about OpenSearch:

- Confluence supports the autodiscovery part of the OpenSearch standard, by supplying an OpenSearch description document. This is an XML file that describes the web interface provided by Confluence’s search function.
- Any client applications that support OpenSearch will be able to add Confluence to their list of search engines.
- Your Confluence Administrator can enable or disable the Open Search feature using the Confluence Administration Console.