

The Times Digital Archive : A basic guide to searching

What is The Times Digital Archive?

The Times Digital Archive allows you to search and view online every issue of The Times (London) newspaper, Monday to Saturday, from 1785 to 1985. This amounts to over seven and a half million articles.

Accessing The Times Digital Archive

The Wellcome Library offers free access to all registered Readers in the Library from any public PC within the Library. Our subscription also currently allows offsite use. If you wish to access this resource from a PC situated outside the Library you just need to follow this link and log-in with your card number: http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/doc_WT007829.html

Searching The Times Digital Archive

Good start is to type your keywords into the main entry box. This automatically searches in entire content of all articles. The keywords must appear within two words of each other, in either direction.

Limiting your search

Too many results – try to use **AND**. This retrieves only those articles that contain both the words you specify
e.g. *Wellcome AND Burroughs*

No results - broaden your results – try to use **OR** – retrieves all articles that contain any of the words you specify
e.g. *Wellcome OR Burroughs*

NOT – excludes the word(s) you specify
e.g. *Wellcome NOT Burroughs*

This is particularly useful if you do not want a keyword *Burroughs* to be included in your search on *Wellcome*.

If you do not want to use exact matches to your keyword you can use **wildcards**, symbols that substitute one or more letters. This option is useful if you want to find singular and plural forms of a certain keyword, words with the same root and keywords that can be spelled in different ways.

Use an **asterisk (*)** to substitute any number of letters in a keyword. This will retrieve all words that share the same root
e.g. *midwi* matches midwife, midwives, midwifery*

Use an **exclamation point (!)** after a word to retrieve singular and plural versions of a word
e.g. *product! matches product or products but not productive or productivity.*

Use a **question mark (?)** to replace exactly one letter inside a keyword to search for cases where you are unsure of a spelling inside a keyword
e.g. *defen?e or psych????y*

You can also select one of the following search limits:

- Search only for words in the title, citation and abstract of articles
- Limit by date of publication
- Limit by the theme of the piece, such as advertising. Referred to as 'category'



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Viewing your results

- The results are summarised at the top of the screen by category, followed by a citations list- starting with the earliest published articles first.
- Click on the thumbnail image or Article link to view the piece.
- Click on Page to view from your browser what other material appeared alongside the article.
- Click on PDF 1 page portrait for a 'clean' (full facsimile image) version of the page.

It can be unclear from the title attached to the citation why the article has been included. Click into the article to find out. Your keywords are highlighted in purple. Occasionally the OCR technology used to index the newspaper has logged a word incorrectly. This is particularly true for the older issues where the quality of print and paper is poor.

Still too many results?

- Try to refine your search by clicking Back to...
- Search in the blue margin on the left side of the screen. You can select any of the earlier limits.

Relevance search

Ranks articles by the number of times the keywords appear.

Advanced search

Combines earlier limits with a greater breakdown by categorisation, such as obituary notices or birth announcements.

Browse by date

If you know which issue you need, this search option lets you go straight to it.

History

Your search history is displayed at the bottom of the screens of the keyword, relevance and advanced search options.

Printing

Articles can be printed in two main ways:

- Browser print reformats article for printing from your browser
- Acrobat Reader PDF option prints the entire newspaper page containing the article in a couple of minutes. Just click on the print icon on the PDF toolbar.
- The 1 page option is found by many to be too small to read easily. Choose a half-page option instead.

E-mailing

- Citations, not whole articles, can be emailed to your personal account.
- Scroll to the bottom of the screen, past the print options, to type in your email address. Click on the Submit E-mail Request button to send the citations.
- If the citations fail to arrive in your e-mail account within five minutes, please check your junk folder. The email may have been blocked by your spam filter.

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Revised December 2010



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