Search and Find SharePoint Content – Tips and Tricks
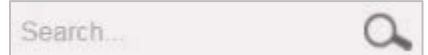
Refine your SharePoint searches with KQL, application searches, views, and more!

Getting Started

With SharePoint search, you are able to find relevant content. You can find documents by keywords or metadata. You can search for content assigned to you, or to a colleague.

- SharePoint search is built to help you **discover** content

- New or modified content is searchable after the "**indexing"** process; for example, it could take 15 minutes before new content is searchable

- SharePoint also indexes and searches **inside Microsoft Office** content

- SharePoint also indexes and searches inside machine-readable ("OCR") **PDF content** (but not image-scanned content)

- The Search box supports words, phrases, and KQL logic such as AND, NOT, and NEAR

- Use the **Refinement panel** to narrow results by content type, file format (result type), created by (author), modified date … and more options

- To leave search results, click the **Home link**

- SharePoint **Developers / Admins** may expose or hide content from searches

Step 1: Search Box

Step 2: Refinement Panel

Keyword Query Language (KQL)

The Search box supports words, phrases, and KQL logic such as AND, NOT, and NEAR.

Searching for Words and Phrases

Q: Case sensitive?

- Nope. SharePoint will search for words and phrases **regardless of case** – lower, upper, or mixed.

Topic	Example – Try it
One Word – Simple	• report
Two Words – Without quotation marks, you are searching for content that contains both terms	• report a
Phrase – Use quotation marks to define an exact phrase	• "report a"

Searching with Operators

Q: What's an operator?

- With operators, you can make your searches more relevant.

Q: Case sensitive?

- Yes. All operators are **ALL CAPS**!

Topic	Example – Try it
AND Result contains both words or phrases *TIP: AND is implied with a space, so you don't even have to type AND* *TIP: Remember, quotation marks indicate an exact phrase*	• report **AND** proposal • report proposal *Compare these two searches:* • new report proposal • "new report" proposal
OR Result contains either word or phrase	• report **OR** proposal • report **OR** proposal **OR** solution
NOT Result contains the first term, but not the second term	• report **NOT** proposal • proposal **NOT** report
NEAR Result contains both terms, and they are near to one another	*Compare these two searches:* • report AND proposal • report **NEAR** proposal
ONEAR Result contains both terms, and they are near to one another, and they are in order	• report **ONEAR** solution • solution **ONEAR** report
NEAR(), **ONEAR()** The default proximity is 8 words, but you can define another distance	• report **NEAR(3)** solution • report **NEAR(9)** solution

Topic	Example – Try it
WORDS Result contains synonyms, and ranks (prioritizes) multiple occurrences of any combo higher *EXAMPLE: TV and "television" are synonymous. When a document uses both terms interchangeably, then WORDS() would rank the document higher than OR.*	*Compare these two searches:* • notes OR abc • **WORDS(**notes, abc**)**
Wildcard * Use the asterisk to represent one or more unknown characters *NOTE: The asterisk is ineffective as the first character of a search; for example, *project is not a special search*	*Compare these two searches:* • shake • shake***** *Compare these two searches:* • pro • pro*****

Combining Searches

Topic	Example – Try it
Left to Right – In general, compound statements read left to right	*Compare these two searches:* • report OR proposal AND solution • solution AND report OR proposal
Parentheses – Use parentheses to combine elements together	*Compare these two searches:* • report OR (proposal AND solution) • (report OR proposal) AND solution *Compare these two searches:* • report OR (proposal NOT solution) • (report OR proposal) NOT solution

Reference Link

Learn more about KQL from Microsoft: Keyword Query Language (KQL) Syntax Reference

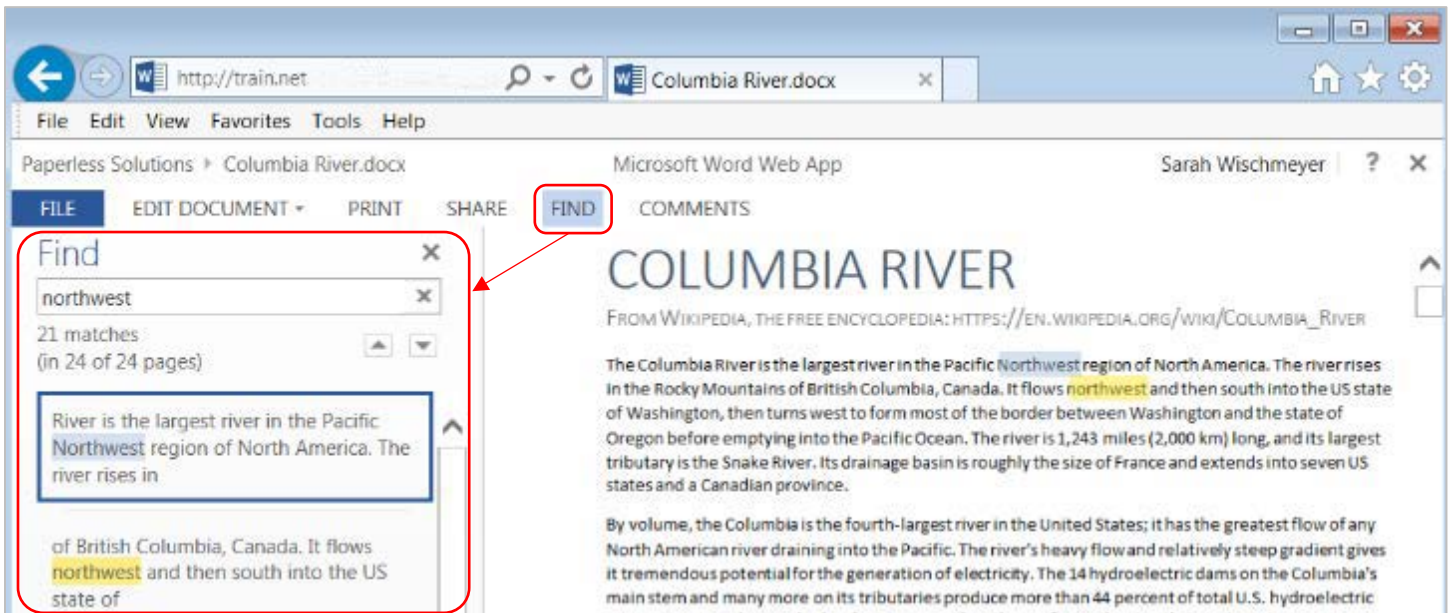## Discover Documents in SharePoint, Use Peripherals Tools to Search Inside

The SharePoint Search engine thoroughly indexes the contents of most file formats – including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Email, OneNote, Notes, and PDF.

Even if the term is not associated with any property, SharePoint will help you discover files that contain the term.
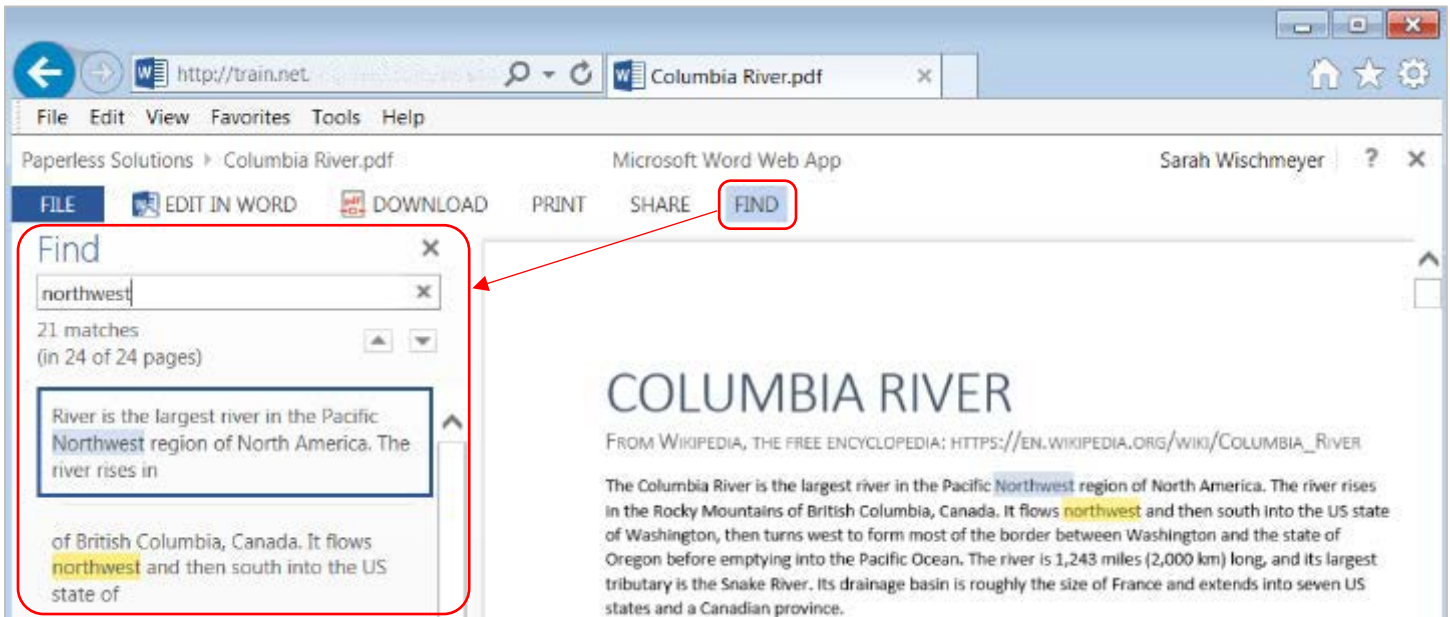
Moreover, you can open on-line files and search them via Microsoft Office, Office Web Apps, the Adobe web browser plug in, or browser search.
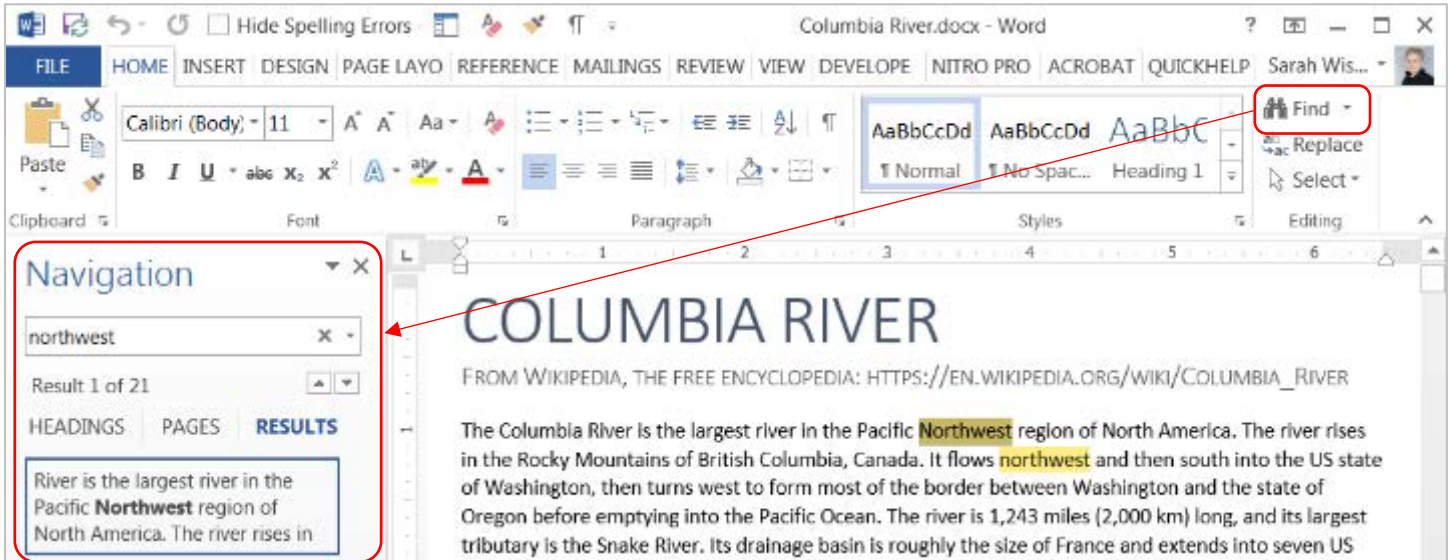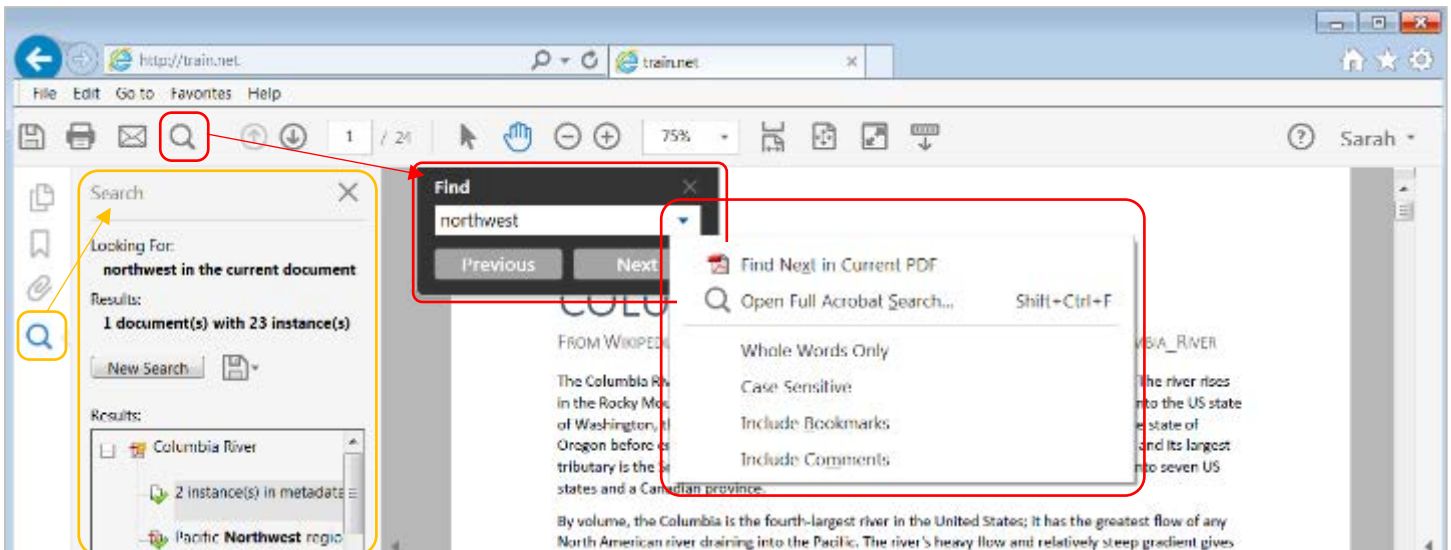
Microsoft Word Web App
Word Document

PDF with Machine-Readable (OCR) Text

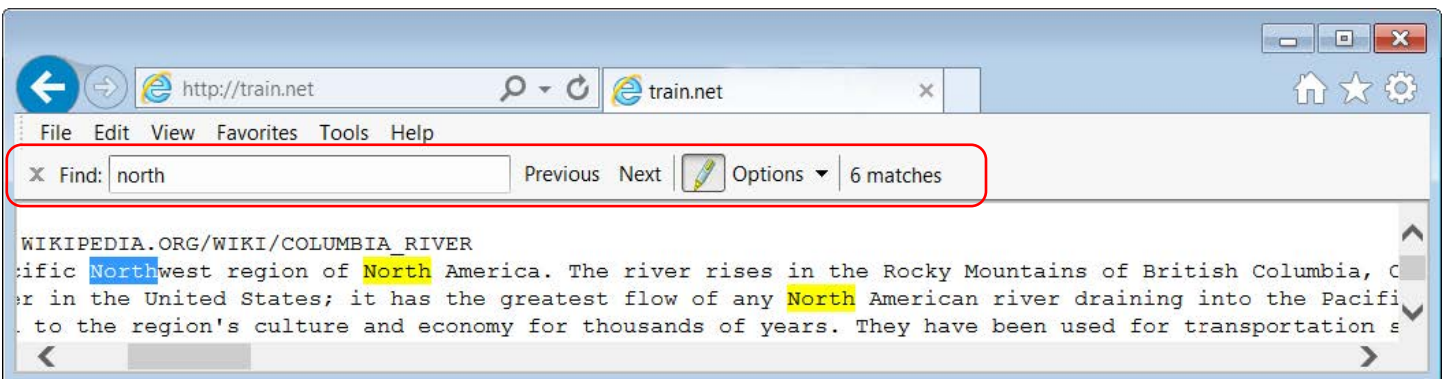## Search Microsoft Word (Client Application)
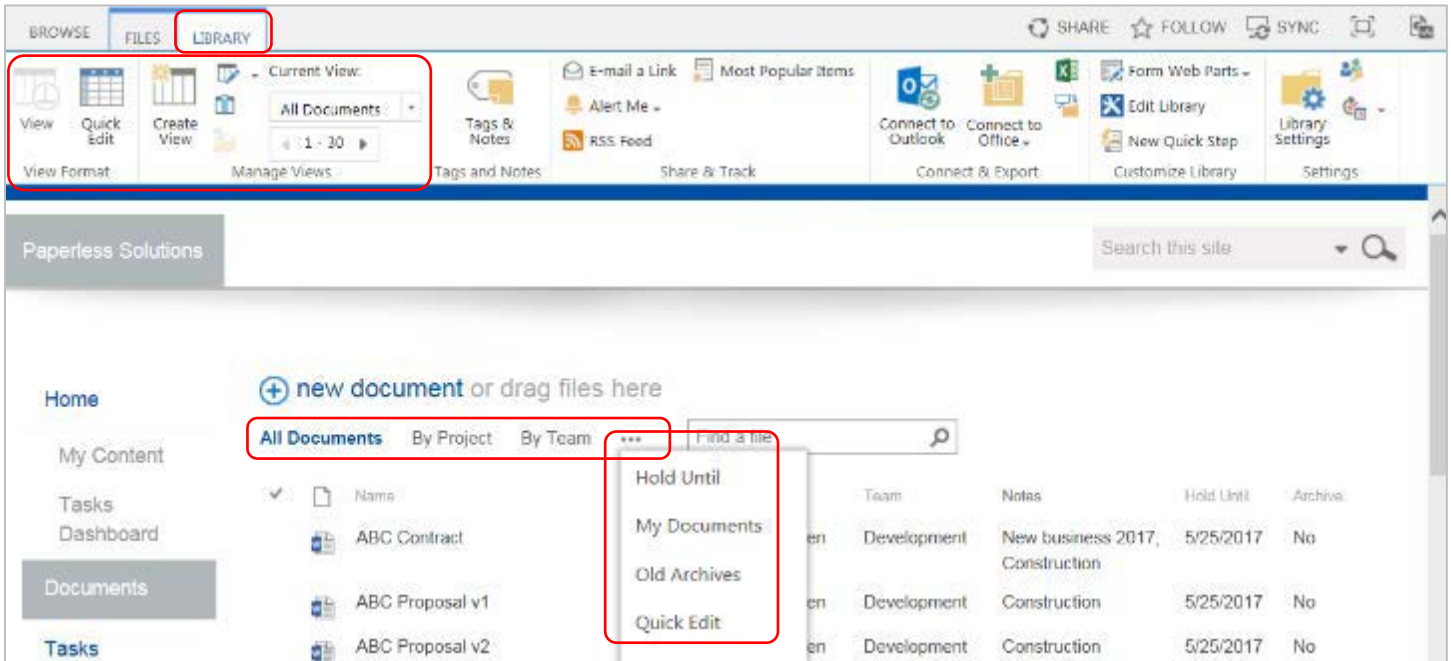

Search Adobe Web App

Search Web Page with Browser Search
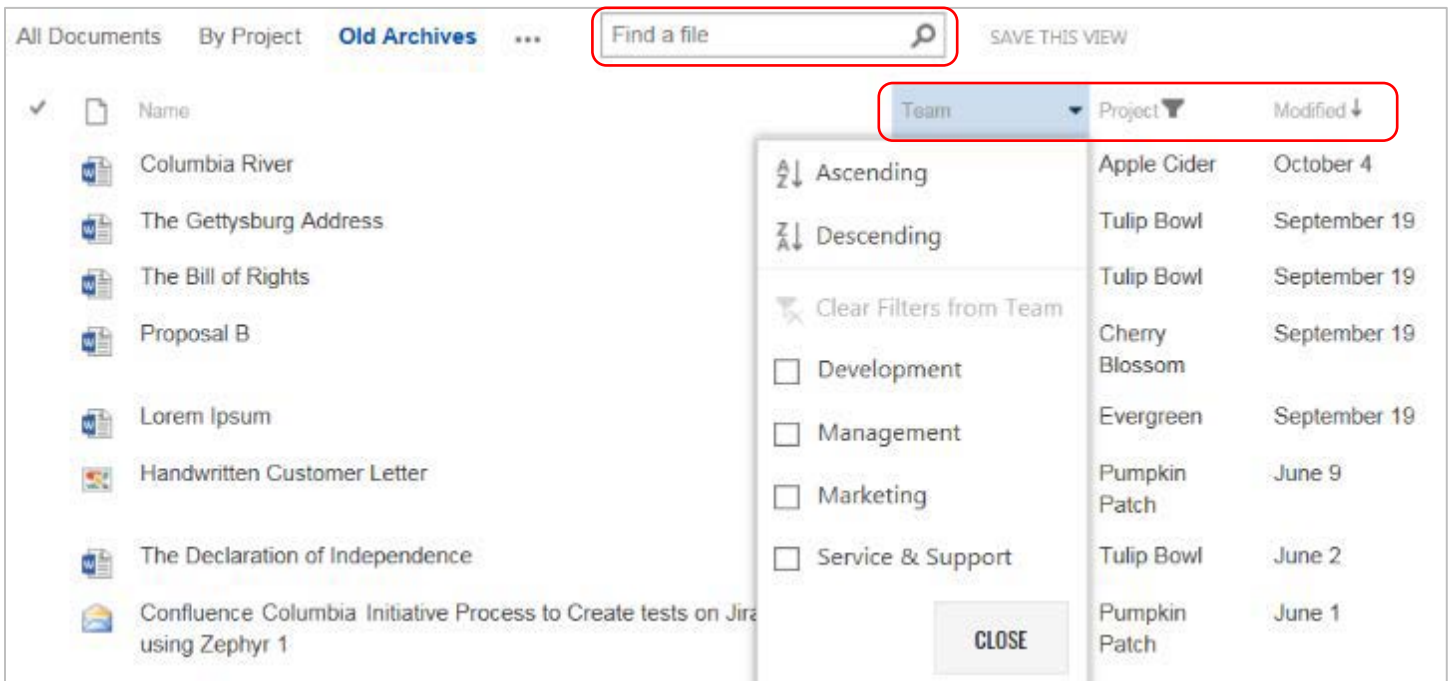
Press **F3** to turn on. Click [X] to close.

List and Library Views, Sort, Filter

Take advantage of list and library **views**, **sort** and **filter** by columns, or filter via **Find an item/file**!

Example: Default view is All Document, and more public views available such as By Team, Hold Until

Example: Sort or filter by column headings or keywords